

# Payers

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December 15, 2014

Kevin R. McDonald, Chief  
Certificate of Need  
Maryland Health Care Commission  
4160 Patterson Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21215-2299

Subject: Letter of Support- Anne Arundel Medical Centers Certificate of Need Application for Cardiac Surgery Services

Dear Mr. McDonald,

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for the establishment of a cardiac surgery program at the Anne Arundel Medical Center as set forth in the hospital's Certificate of Need application. As the largest private health insurer in Maryland, CareFirst recognizes the improved patient care experience afforded by the increase in access to cardiac surgery services that the AAMC program will provide, the contribution to the health of the patient population of the Upper Shore Health Planning Region that a cardiac surgery program at AAMC represents, and the reduction in per capita costs that will result. The proposed AAMC program is, therefore, fully consistent with CMS's Triple Aim of improved patient care experience, improved population health, and reduced per capita expenditures.

For CareFirst, it is also important that the AAMC program will support both CareFirst's patient centered medical home (PCMH) initiative and the All-Payer Model Demonstration (the Demonstration), each of which have objectives that are in accord with the Triple Aim.

A key objective of the PCMH program is to provide each of its groups of participating PCPs (Medical Panels) with clear incentives to maximize the value of the specialist and hospital referrals that are made by the particular Medical Panel for services to CareFirst members. The value of such referrals is measured in terms of improved access, lower costs, and higher quality.

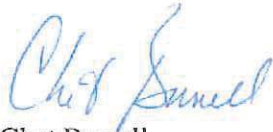
As a cardiac surgery service in the Upper Shore Health Planning Region, including Baltimore, the AAMC program will offer improved access to the residents of the region. As AAMC is one of the lowest cost hospitals in Maryland, the cardiac surgery program's relocation of cases from the regional AMCs will result in substantial savings to all payers, including both CareFirst and Medicare. As AAMC's quality of care makes it the hospital of choice for several of the PCMH program's Medical Panels, the cardiac surgery program will provide an attractive referral option

for these Medical Panels, with the program's quality of care enhanced by its affiliation with Johns Hopkins.

The AAMC program will, therefore, qualify as a high value cardiac surgery service. The value represented by the AAMC program will ensure a substantial number of referrals not only of CareFirst members under the PCMH arrangement, but also of Medicare beneficiaries whose referrals are likely to mirror those of the PCMH.

For the reasons outlined above, I fully support the AAMC CON and trust that the MHCC will appreciate the multiple contributions that the program will make to realize the objectives of the Triple Aim, of the PCMH program, and of the Demonstration.

Thank you for your consideration.



Chet Burrell  
President & CEO

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February 5, 2015

Kevin R. McDonald, Chief  
Certificate of Need  
Maryland Health Care Commission  
4160 Patterson Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21215-2299

**Subject: Letter of Support – Anne Arundel Medical Center’s Certificate of Need  
Application for Cardiac Surgery Services**

Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing to lend my full support to Anne Arundel Medical Center in its application for a Certificate of Need to provide cardiac surgery for the people it serves.

As a former Anne Arundel County Executive, a member of the Maryland State Senate, a member of the Maryland House of Delegates and a resident of Anne Arundel County, I am well aware of the need for comprehensive cardiac services in this region of our state. Anne Arundel is Maryland’s largest county without a cardiac surgery program. Given the growing senior population here, let alone AAMC’s growth in the past decade as a major health care provider for more than a million people in its serviced area, it’s time that such a program be made available here.

As if AAMC’s own record of clinical excellence were not sufficient, another strong element of the AAMC program is its partnership with Johns Hopkins Medicine. As President of Priority Partners, a Hopkins affiliate, I have watched the relationship between Hopkins and AAMC develop and mature over the past seven years. It’s exciting to witness plans for a comprehensive cardiac program at AAMC with Hopkins, a program assured to bring the latest advances in research, education, training and clinical expertise to hundreds of patients every year.

The numbers tell a compelling story. With more than 500 people transferred out of the county for cardiac surgery every year, and at least 200 directly from AAMC – many in the throes of a medical crisis – it’s hard to contemplate why AAMC would not be allowed to provide this missing service.

Finally, if high quality care and access to heart health services matter at all for Maryland citizens, then a cardiac surgery program at AAMC again makes eminent sense. Plans call for the program to serve more than 300 patients in its first few years of operation.

For all these reasons I urge the Maryland Health Care Commission to support AAMC in its request to serve our citizens and to provide this missing cardiac link – with Johns Hopkins – for the region it serves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob. Neall", written over a horizontal line.

Robert Neall  
Chief Executive Officer  
Priority Partners, MCO