

EXHIBIT 17(a)

Cardiology Specialists

888 Bestgate Road
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Annapolis, MD 21401

Phone: 410-897-0822
Fax: 410-897-0095
www.aamgcardiologyspecialists.org

November 10th, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief
Certificate of Need
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215

Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as an interventional cardiologist for over 20 years and am currently Clinical Professor of medicine at George Washington University. I currently practice as a cardiologist in Anne Arundel County and as the Director of the Heart Institute at Anne Arundel Medical Center. In this role I have supervisory responsibilities over all divisions of the cardiology services at AAMC. I have been impressed in the manner in which AAMC strives to maintain its position as a regional leader in health care delivery and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community

In my practice as an interventional cardiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately 15 patients for cardiac surgery yearly. Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred either out of state to the District of Columbia or to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office. Most of these patients currently have their preoperative testing including cardiac catheterizations at AAMC and they would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent programs. An example of this is the highly successful CPORT program at AAMC. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area. Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would refer all of my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,


Jerome Segal, MD

Director, AAMC Heart Institute

Cardiology Specialists

888 Bestgate Road
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Annapolis, MD 21401

Phone: 410-897-0822
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Salvatore S Lauria M.D., FACC
888 Best Gate Rd., Suite 208
Annapolis, MD 21401
September 29, 2014

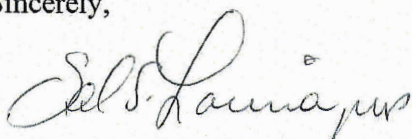
To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to pledge my support to Anne Arundel Medical Center's open-heart surgical program. I have served as a cardiologist in Annapolis for 15 years, all of which as a member of the AAMC medical staff and most recently as an employee of the Medical Center and a member of the Anne Arundel Medical Group. During my tenure in Annapolis I have watched our hospital grow from a small, competent community health center to regional leader in health care delivery, constantly striving to exceed the standards of care and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner.

As an invasive cardiologist I perform approximately 70 diagnostic cardiac catheterizations yearly and refer 20 patients for cardiothoracic surgery. I know from years of direct patient care that our community appreciates the care it receives through the Anne Arundel Health System, both in the hospital and in outpatient settings. My patients also prefer to receive all of their care locally. If a cardiac surgical program were available at AAMC, I would refer all of these patients to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

I have heard patient's comment often that they appreciate having the CPORT program at AAMC. The success of this program stands as proof that the hospital can develop and implement valuable new medical services. I believe the same would be true for an open open-heart surgical program and I fully support the hospital in this endeavor. It would be important and extremely reassuring for patients to know that they can receive all of their cardiac care locally and that family members can visit them without having to drive long distances, or even out-of-state.

Sincerely,



Salvatore S Lauria M.D., FACC

Cardiology Specialists

888 Bestgate Road
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www.aamgcardiologyspecialists.org

October 31, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief
Certificate of Need
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215

Dear Mr. McDonald:

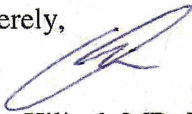
I am writing this letter in support of the certificate of need application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as a cardiologist in Anne Arundel County and as a physician on staff at Anne Arundel Medical Center since 2009. I have watched AAMC grow from a small hospital in downtown Annapolis to regional leader in health care delivery, constantly striving to exceed the standards of care and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community. I often have patients inquire if we will have such a program in the near future.

In my practice as a cardiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately fifteen patients for cardiac surgery each year. Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred either out of state to the District of Columbia or to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office. Many of these patients currently have their preoperative testing and cardiac care at AAMC and would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area. Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would likely refer nearly all of my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

It is not just the patients who require cardiac surgery that are affected by the absence of a cardiac surgery program at AAMC. There is a significant down-stream effect as the lack of a cardiac surgery program at AAMC limits the percutaneous coronary options as well as electrophysiology procedures that we can offer. For instance, my procedures that include laser lead extractions, complex arrhythmia ablations, pulmonary vein isolations, all require cardiac surgery back-up on site. Thus, I am now required to move these patients and end up performing these procedures in Washington D.C. All of these can be performed at AAMC with a cardiac surgery program.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,



Baran Kilical, MD, FACC

Cardiology and Cardiac Electrophysiology
Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine
Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine
Diplomate, ABIM Cardiology
Diplomate, ABIM Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology



Annapolis Cardiology Consultants

2002 Medical Parkway, #310

Annapolis, MD 21401

Phone: 410-224-0040

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Marco A. Mejia, M.D., F.A.C.C.

S. Ingo Ender, M.D.

Boaz Rosen, M.D.

October 28, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief

Certificate of Need

Maryland Health Care Commission

4160 Patterson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215

Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as a cardiologist in Anne Arundel County and as a physician on staff at Anne Arundel Medical Center for 16 years. I have watched AAMC grow from a small hospital in downtown Annapolis to regional leader in health care delivery, constantly striving to exceed the standards of care and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community

In my practice as an interventional cardiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately 70 patients for cardiac surgery yearly. Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office. Many of these patients currently have their preoperative testing and cardiac care at AAMC and would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area. Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would likely refer all my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,


Marco A. Mejia, M.D.



Annapolis Cardiology Consultants, LLC

2002 Medical Parkway, Suite 310

Annapolis, MD 21401-7901

Phone: 410-224-0040 Fax: 410-224-4232

Marco A. Mejia, M.D., F.A.C.C.

S.Ingo Ender, M.D., F.A.C.C.

Boaz D. Rosen, M.D., F.A.C.C.

Sadia J. Shafi, M.D.

December 9, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief
Certificate of Need
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215

Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center (AAMC) for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as a cardiologist in Annapolis, MD and as a physician on staff at AAMC for about one month. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community.

Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred either out of state to the District of Columbia or to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my practice. Many of these patients have their preoperative testing and cardiac care at AAMC and would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgery procedures. As a "fresh graduate" from Cardiovascular Medicine training and a recent appointee to the AAMC medical staff, I'm impressed by AAMC's overall superior quality of care, especially with the institution's ability to manage its acutely ill community members. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent centers in the region and on par with its other programs. Based on the expected high quality of the program, I would likely refer the majority of my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their procedures.

Sincerely,

SS 12/10/14

Sadia Shafi, MD
Annapolis Cardiology Consultants
2002 Medical Parkway, Suite 310
Annapolis, MD 21401



Annapolis Cardiology Consultants

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Annapolis, MD 21401

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Marco A. Mejia, M.D., F.A.C.C.

S. Ingo Ender, M.D.

Boaz Rosen, M.D.

October 28, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief

Certificate of Need

Maryland Health Care Commission

4160 Patterson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215

Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program.

In my practice as a cardiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately 25 patients for cardiac surgery yearly. Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office. Many of these patients currently have their preoperative testing and cardiac care at AAMC and would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area. Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would likely refer all my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Boaz Rosen, M.D.



Annapolis Cardiology Consultants

2002 Medical Parkway, #310

Annapolis, MD 21401

Phone: 410-224-0040

Fax: 410-224-4232

Marco A. Mejia, M.D., F.A.C.C.

S. Ingo Ender, M.D.

Boaz Rosen, M.D.

October 28, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief

Certificate of Need

Maryland Health Care Commission

4160 Patterson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215

Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as a cardiologist in Anne Arundel County and as a physician on staff at Anne Arundel Medical Center for 13 years. I have watched AAMC grow from a small hospital in downtown Annapolis to regional leader in health care delivery, constantly striving to exceed the standards of care and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community

In my practice as an electrophysiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately 15 patients for cardiac surgery yearly. Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred to other hospitals in Washington Dc and within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office. Many of these patients currently have their preoperative testing and cardiac care at AAMC and would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area. Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would likely refer all my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

S. Ingo Ender, M.D.

November 11, 2014

Mr. Kevin McDonald, Chief
Certificate of Need
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Md. 21215

Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as a cardiologist in Anne Arundel County and as a physician on staff at Anne Arundel Medical Center for 14 years. I have watched AAMC grow from a small hospital in downtown Annapolis to a regional leader in health care delivery, constantly striving to exceed the standards of care and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community.

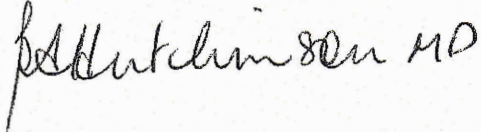
In my practice as a cardiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately 20 patients for cardiac surgery yearly. Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred either out of state to the District of Columbia or to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office. Many of these patients currently have their pre-operative testing and cardiac care at AAMC and would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area.

Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would likely refer the majority of my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

Please feel free to contact me directly with any comments or questions.

Thank you, in advance, for your attention and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Hutchinson MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara Hutchinson, M.D., Ph.D., F.A.C.C.

Jerry,

Today I was called by the Emergency Room physician to do an emergency catheterization procedure on a 56 year old diabetic having severe chest pain and a suspected acute heart attack. The catheterization revealed severe triple vessel coronary artery disease requiring bypass surgery. I called a surgeon at Washington Hospital Center who accepted the patient over the phone but 15 min later called back and apologized that WHC would not take the patient because of the type of insurance he has. I then called a surgeon at the Univ. of Maryland who accepted the patient and arranged for helicopter transport. Transport did not arrive for 1.5 hours, too long a time to have to wait in this emergency type of situation. Once before in an emergency setting with a man in his 40's with a dissecting aortic aneurysm, the patient died en route to the Univ. of Maryland whereas I would have expected him to survive had surgery been available at AAMC.

To summarize, we currently have serious problems with

1. Access, as some hospitals pick and choose who they will accept based on their insurance or ability to pay and
2. Transport delay. Hopefully this patient will survive but I have had 2 patient deaths attributable to transport delays in the last 5 years.

I would anticipate approximately a dozen patients a year from my practice would need transfer for open heart surgery as things now stand. An open heart surgery program @ AAMC would obviate this problem.



Staff Warren, MD, FACC

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Washington, DC 20010

BAY CARDIOLOGY
1204 West Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410)263-0799

4000 Mitchellville Road
Suite 406, Bowie, MD 20716

November 1, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief
Certificate of Need
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215

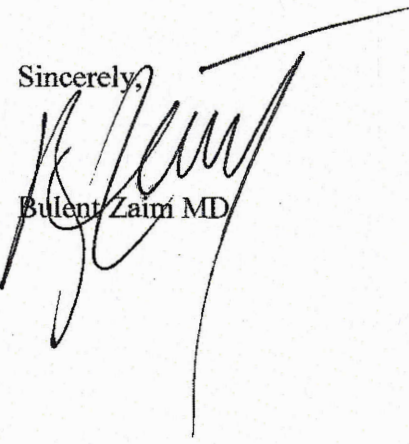
Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as a cardiologist in Ann Arundel County and as a physician on staff at Anne Arundel Medical Center for 15 years. I have watched AAMC grow from a small hospital in downtown Annapolis to regional leader in health care delivery, constantly striving to exceed the standards of care and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community

In my practice as a cardiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately 10 patients for cardiac surgery yearly. Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred either out of state to the District of Columbia or to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office.. Many of these patients currently have their preoperative testing and cardiac care at AAMC and would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area. Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would likely refer nearly all of my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,



Bulent Zaim MD

Chestertown Cardiology, LLC
George Panas, M.D., FACC
Juan Cordero, M.D., FACC
120 Speer Road
Suite 2
Chestertown, MD 21620
410-778-1311
Fax: 410-778-0623

November 21, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief
Certificate of Need
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215

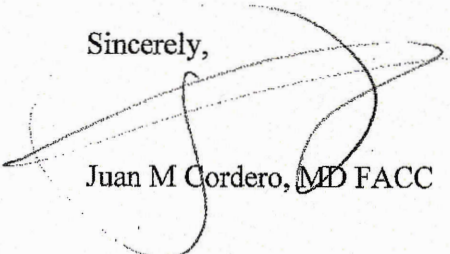
Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as an invasive cardiologist in Kent County for the past 13 years and as a physician on staff at Anne Arundel Medical Center for more than a year. I have watched AAMC grow from a small hospital in downtown Annapolis to regional leader in health care delivery, constantly striving to exceed the standards of care and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community. It will definitely help me attract higher risk cases to AAMC, cases that for the most part end up being referred to other institutions where surgical backup is available.

In my practice as a cardiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately 5-10 patients for cardiac surgery yearly. Currently all of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred either out of state to the District of Columbia or to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office. Many of these patients currently have their preoperative testing and cardiac care at AAMC and would prefer to remain at AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area. Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would likely refer a majority of my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,



Juan M Cordero, MD FACC

October 30, 2014

Mr. Kevin R. McDonald, Chief
Certificate of Need
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215

Dear Mr. McDonald:

I am writing this letter in support of the CON application filed by Anne Arundel Medical Center for a new cardiac surgery program. I have practiced as a cardiologist in Kent County. I have watched AAMC grow from a small hospital in downtown Annapolis to regional leader in health care delivery, constantly striving to exceed the standards of care and provide the very best medicine in a cost-conscious manner. I feel that my patients would clearly benefit from a cardiac surgery program at AAMC and that such a program is both needed and desired by our community.

In my practice as a cardiologist, I estimate that I refer approximately 50 patients for cardiac surgery yearly. Currently most of my patients referred for cardiac surgery are referred either out of state, to the District of Columbia, or to other hospitals within Maryland. These hospitals are relatively distant from my patients' homes and from my office. Many of these patients currently have their preoperative testing and cardiac care in Kent County and would prefer to remain at near Kent County for their cardiac surgical procedures. AAMC has a proven track record of creating and maintaining excellent surgery programs. I am confident that AAMC will create a high quality cardiac surgery program that is on par with other excellent cardiac surgery programs in our area. Based on the expected high quality of this program, I would likely refer a significant amount of my patients requiring cardiac surgery to AAMC for their cardiac surgical procedures.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,



George Panas, MD FACC

Chestertown Cardiology

Chestertown MD 21620

410 778 1311