

September 8, 2017

Deborah Mizeur, MS, MHA, LDN, Co-Chair, Rural Health Workgroup
Joseph A. Ciotola, Jr., MD, Co-Chair, Rural Health Workgroup
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215

Dear Ms. Mizeur and Dr. Ciotola:

Thank you and the Rural Health Workgroup for your careful study of health care services on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Anne Arundel Medical Center (AAMC) is a major healthcare provider for residents of the five counties on which you focused—Queen Anne's, Talbot, Kent, Caroline, and Dorchester. Dr. Margaret Malaro, a family medicine physician with Anne Arundel Medical Group (AAMG) Centreville Family Medicine, has been AAMC's representative on the Workgroup. In November 2016, AAMC leaders were invited to make a presentation to the Workgroup to describe our services on the Eastern Shore. We have been pleased to share with you the role that AAMC plays in caring for the Eastern Shore's patients and families. Along with University of Maryland Shore Regional Health (UM SRH) and Peninsula Regional Medical Center (PRMC), we are committed to serving the growing health needs of this region and offering the choice of a lower-cost healthcare provider.

After our presentation in November, we were asked to propose initiatives for collaboration among the three health systems to meet the health care needs of the five-county region. In December, I shared the following initiatives with Mr. Kozel and Ms. Naleppa, CEOs of the other two systems:

1. Address and collaborate on meeting the community's top health priorities as identified in our health systems' Community Health Needs Assessments.
2. Collaborate on implementing and expanding access to Epic (electronic health record software).
3. Expand the Bay Area Transformation Partnership. Currently, this is a partnership between AAMC and the University of Maryland's Baltimore Washington Medical Center, funded through the Health Services Cost Review Commission.
4. Expand palliative care services.
5. Collaborate on The Conversation Project, a grassroots campaign to help people talk about their wishes for care at the end-of-life or during a serious illness.
6. Expand community paramedicine.
7. Improve infant mortality through improved access to prenatal care and maternal fetal medical services.

We look forward to a response to the above proposal and to a collaborative effort to meet not only the needs of the region, but the goals of the Workgroup.

We are writing to offer our full support of the Workgroup's Guiding Principles for Healthy Rural Communities. Through AAMC's own outreach and experience on the Eastern Shore, we have heard from patients and community members that improved access to high-quality, low-cost health services—both primary and specialty—is a critical community need. The Guiding Principles also align nicely with the goals of Maryland's Medicare waiver, national health reform efforts towards value-based care, and the Triple Aim (better care, better health, and lower costs).

AAMC

As the Workgroup's study comes to a close, we wish to provide you with an updated and complete picture of AAMC's presence in the mid-Shore's five counties. It begins with AAMC's mission, vision, and values. AAMC's mission is to enhance the health of the people we serve. Our vision is Living Healthier Together. Our values are Compassion, Trust, Dedication, Innovation, Quality, Diversity, and Collaboration. In every community that we serve and every patient and family that we care for, we keep these front and center. Our ten-year strategic plan, adopted in February 2010, is based on the following principles which define our vision of *Living Healthier Together*:

We are creating a new system of care...

- Centered on the patient.
- Operating beyond the walls of the hospital.
- Built on partnerships, relationships and connectivity.
- With shared accountability among patients, physicians, hospital, employees and community.
- Driven by standards based on evidence and outcomes.
- Serving a broader geography and diversity of patients.
- Remaining viable, cost-effective, and responsible.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, our community benefit reached \$47 million, a 38 percent increase since 2014. We expanded mental health services, palliative care, education and research, outpatient primary and specialty care and provided free and low cost care to underserved communities.

AAMC serves a population of approximately 1.2 million people who live within 92 zip codes and eight counties. Eighty-nine percent of our inpatients originated from this region (AAMC's Primary or Secondary Service Areas) in FY 2017. Twenty-four Eastern Shore zip codes are in AAMC's Primary or Secondary Service Areas. More than 50 zip codes are included in our overall Eastern Shore Region, which includes Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, and Dorchester Counties (please see the map in Exhibit A). AAMC's hospital is the third busiest in the state with 26,192 discharges (excluding newborns) in calendar year 2016.

AAMC owns and operates five “hubs” (medical service pavilions) in Odenton, Bowie, Pasadena, Waugh Chapel, and Kent Island. We are planning a sixth hub in Easton. Our approach is to take care where the patient is, provided in the lowest-cost setting possible. We are not focused on using the hospital as the locus of healthcare delivery.

AAMC has 4,710 employees. Of these, 632 employees (13 percent) live on the Eastern Shore in the five-county region. Also, AAMG employs nearly 300 providers (205 physicians and 85 advanced practice providers).

AAMC on the Eastern Shore

AAMC has a longtime presence on the Eastern Shore as a trusted healthcare provider. AAMC’s role as a healthcare provider for the Eastern Shore began when the first span of the Bay Bridge opened in 1952. Over the years, physicians have approached AAMC with interest in building local partnerships. Many patients have selected us as a healthcare provider, both locally and by traveling to Annapolis for higher levels of care. We are grateful that residents of the Eastern Shore have a positive view of AAMC’s brand and choose us as a high-quality, low-cost healthcare provider. To better serve the mid-Shore communities, AAMC has carefully evaluated opportunities to grow and offer services that meet the community’s health needs.

As of August 2017, there are 115 affiliated (employed and independent) members of the AAMC medical staff who directly serve the mid-Shore’s five counties. Specifically, AAMG practices on the Eastern Shore offer access to primary care, immediate care, Ob/Gyn, and six specialties. The practices include:

- Breast Center
- Cardiology Specialists
- Centreville Family Medicine
- Chesapeake Women’s Health
- Chester River Ob/Gyn
- Eastern Shore Primary Care
- Easton Family Care
- Kent Island Primary Care
- Kent Island Urgent Care
- River Family Physicians
- Surgical Specialists
- Surgical Oncology/Annapolis Surgical Oncology
- Women’s Center for Pelvic Health

In the last two years¹, these AAMG practices saw 48,493 unique patients in the five-county area. These patients represent nearly 30 percent of the total population (171,000) of the five-county area. In FY 2017, AAMG providers in the five counties had 115,087 office visits.

¹ Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017

In FY 2017, AAMG Chesapeake Women's Health delivered 955 babies on the Eastern Shore. For high-risk obstetric patients, our Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM) specialists have served the Eastern Shore for more than a decade, both as consultants to Eastern Shore practitioners, as well as a trusted source to whom they could transfer their patients for tertiary level care. Many high-risk antepartum patients are hospitalized for extensive periods and AAMC is the closest regional referral center. Our Hackerman Patz Hospitality House provides a low-cost option for Eastern Shore families to stay close to their families during this critical time. As part of a long-standing relationship, PRMC has also requested our MFM medical director to provide consultation to their obstetricians for high risk patients. Also, at PRMC's request, AAMC has consulted on the development of a combined pediatric inpatient and emergency department service.

For inpatient care, mid-Shore residents not only have access to UM SRH's excellent local hospitals, but also to regional referral centers such as AAMC and PRMC. In FY 2017, when mid-Shore residents required inpatient care, 2,732 patients chose AAMC as their hospital. This represented 10 percent of AAMC's inpatient discharges in FY 2017.

Partnerships

Collaboration is one of AAMC's core values, and is essential to better serving patients, especially when healthcare providers are being asked to do more with less. Several examples of how AAMC is collaborating with partners to provide healthcare services are noted here:

- **Transitions of care back home.** AAMC partners with the Queen Anne's County EMS for the Mobile Community Health (MICH) program. MICH paramedics visit patients at home to do a home assessment and assist with needs such as transportation, meals, health insurance, and referrals to other services. AAMC helps by identifying Queen Anne's County residents who could benefit from this service while they are in the hospital, and then makes the referral.
- **Preventive health.** AAMC has long-standing relationships with Queen Anne's County and Kent County Departments of Health to perform breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screenings.
- **Collaborative Care Network (CCN).** AAMC is building a platform to allow for greater care coordination and information sharing among physician practices. The CCN includes both AAMG practices as well as independent community physicians. There are 72 physicians who practice on the Eastern Shore and are members of the CCN. The goal is to enable a more seamless, high-quality care experience for the patient. For example, the CCN supports provider access to DocHalo, a secure, HIPAA-compliant text message application that helps providers communicate much more quickly and directly.
- **Health fairs and events.** AAMC participates in public-serving education and screening events on the Eastern Shore. These have included a Senior Summit in Queen Anne's County, the HomePorts Health and Wellness Fair in Kent County, and events with local fire departments.

AAMC continues to build partnerships and invest in ways to bring care locally to mid-Shore residents. AAMC recently partnered with the University of Maryland's Baltimore Washington

Medical Center for the Bay Area Transformation Partnership (BATP). BATP programs place special focus on care coordination, population health, and expanding access to community-based services. These are BATP initiatives directly serving Eastern Shore residents that could be expanded throughout the region (as suggested in my December email):

- **Embedded mental health social worker.** Greater access to behavioral health resources is frequently mentioned as a critical need. In January 2017, AAMG Centreville Family Medicine added a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) to work alongside the primary care physicians to address any psychiatric and/or substance use concerns identified during the family physician's assessment.
- **One-Call Care Management.** One-Call Care Management is a service for local healthcare providers who are seeking non-medical assistance for their patients. Providers can call a phone number or place a referral via Epic, and licensed clinical social workers will assist their patients with finding transportation, meals, health insurance, and other support resources.
- **Behavioral health navigators.** Two behavioral health navigators are now helping patients link up to available behavioral health resources in the community. When a patient needs an urgent behavioral health intervention, as identified by community medical practices, the behavioral health navigators work to identify local care providers who can help the patient.

Growing our Commitment

A major AAMC investment is coming to Easton. In the fall of 2018, we will open a new Easton hub, a 24,000 square foot building that will accommodate 350 to 400 patients daily. This building will house a variety of primary and specialty care services, including Primary Care, Orthopedics, Physical Therapy, Cardiology, Neurology, Women's Pelvic Health, Surgical Specialists, Maternal Fetal Medicine, Diabetes/Endocrinology, Radiology, and lab services. Aligning with our mission to enhance the health of the people we serve, we will also promote wellness by hosting education seminars on-site.

AAMC is investing in telehealth. Telehealth services will help all of our patients, especially those who live in more rural and remote areas. Using telehealth, our patients will gain access to all of AAMC's physicians from the convenience of their home Internet connection. To further enable access and convenience, AAMC is adding self-scheduling capabilities so a patient can book doctor's appointments and plan their care at a time convenient to them.

In conclusion, as has been our tradition since 1902, AAMC is committed to working with others to provide high-quality, low-cost services within patients' communities. Contrary to the recent report "Commitment to Meeting the Health Care Needs of our Vulnerable Rural Communities" prepared by UM SRH dated, May 23, 2017 Shore Regional Health is not the sole community provider of health care in this region. We are pleased to offer residents of the five-county area choice in healthcare providers. Residents can most benefit from the competition of—or ideally, the collaboration among—the three excellent health systems located in, or in close proximity to, the mid-Shore. AAMC welcomes the opportunity to partner with the two other health systems.

We are grateful that the many mid-Shore residents recognize AAMC as a regional referral center and choose us for their care. We look forward to strengthening and broadening local care closer to home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria W. Bayless", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

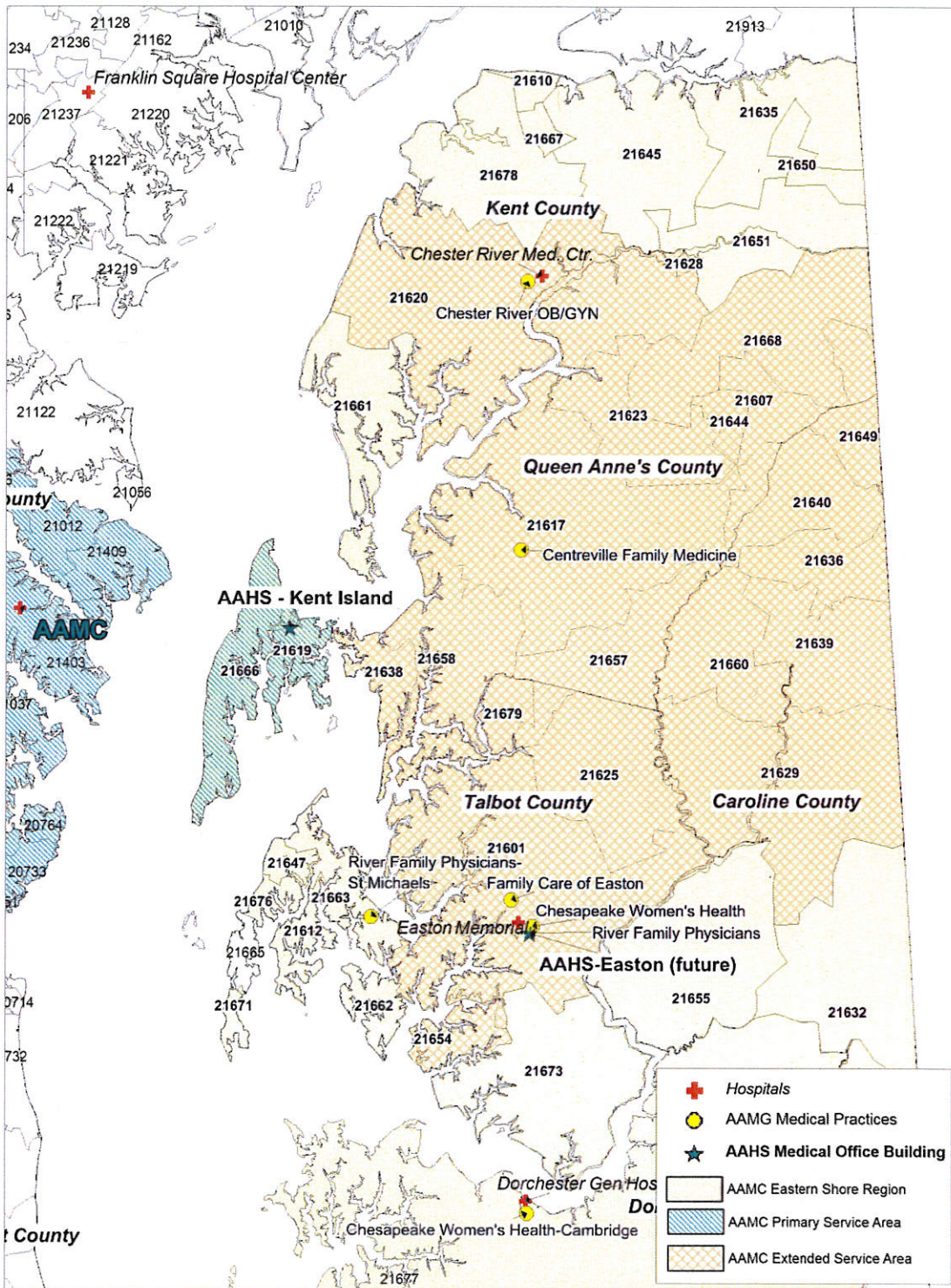
Victoria W. Bayless
President & Chief Executive Officer
Anne Arundel Medical Center

cc: Rural Health Workgroup

Enclosures:

Exhibit A: Map of AAMC's Eastern Shore Region
AAMC and the Eastern Shore: By the Numbers

Exhibit A – Map of AAMC’s Eastern Shore Region



AAMC and the Eastern Shore:

By the Numbers

- There are 115 affiliated (employed and independent) members of AAMC's Medical Staff who directly serve the mid-Shore.
- Anne Arundel Medical Group (AAMG) providers offer primary care, immediate care, OB-GYN, and six specialty services. AAMG practices cared for 48,493 unique patients in the last two years. In the past year, these providers had 115,087 office visits.
- AAMG Chesapeake Women's Health helped deliver 955 babies on the Eastern Shore.
- The new Easton multi-specialty building will include:
 - A 24,000 SF building to accommodate 350-400 patients daily,
 - An Ambulatory Surgery Center,
 - Primary care,
 - Orthopedics,
 - Physical Therapy,
 - Cardiology,
 - Neurology,
 - Women's Pelvic Health,
 - Surgical Specialists (Bariatrics, general, etc.),
 - Maternal Fetal Medicine,
 - Diabetes Endocrinology,
 - Radiology and Lab Services, and
 - A shared waiting area designed to allow for education seminars to be held after hours and/or on weekends.
- AAMC has 632 employees living in the mid-Shore five counties. There are 398 employees living in Queen Anne's, 111 in Talbot, 74 in Caroline, 29 in Dorchester, and 20 in Kent County.

