

September 13, 2010

Poonam Alaigh, MD, Commissioner
NJ Department of Health and Senior Services
P.O. Box 360
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Re: Letter of Support/Merger of Newton Memorial Hospital and Atlantic Health System

Dear Commissioner Alaigh:

On behalf of the Sussex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, I wish to express the Board's full support of the merger of Newton Memorial Hospital and Atlantic Health System.

For over 75 years, Newton Memorial Hospital has been an integral part of Sussex County, providing exceptional healthcare to local residents through its commitment to maintain the highest of medical standards by staying abreast of the latest advancements in technology and medicine. It is because of the Hospital's long, successful history that the Board of Chosen Freeholders applauds its efforts to meet today's medical challenges, and offers its support of Newton Memorial's quest to secure a merger with Atlantic Health System which will clearly provide enhanced healthcare benefits to the communities it services.

New Jersey hospitals are experiencing enormous challenges during these strained economic times. Hospital mergers enable larger medical centers and community hospitals, such as Newton Memorial, to remain financially viable. A merger with Atlantic Health System will allow for more outpatient and preventive medicine services in the local area; broader access to pediatric and other specialists; clinical trials; and interventions and advanced protocols for emergent care, including complex stroke care, the latest cardiac interventions and sophisticated neonatal care. Additionally, a strengthened primary care network will make it easier for the Hospital to cope with increased demand for service that healthcare reform is expected to generate.

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It is in the spirit of community and commitment to the residents of Sussex County that the Board of Chosen Freeholders expresses its support for Newton Memorial Hospital's desire to secure a merger with Atlantic Health System, allowing the Hospital to not only continue to provide the highest quality of healthcare it has become known for, but to augment its medical services through the added benefit of an increased healthcare network.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Parrott
Freeholder Director
Board of Chosen Freeholders
County of Sussex

/dse

C: SC Board of Chosen Freeholders
John H. Eskilson, SC Administrator