

OHS' Certificate of Need Program

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Health Systems Planning Unit

- Certificate of Need
- Acute Care and Specialty Hospitals Annual Financial Data Filings, Audited Financial Statements, Organizational Charts, etc.
- Utilization data collection (Inpatient, Outpatient and Emergency Department).
- Inventory of health care services, facilities and imaging equipment (Bi-Annually)
- Publications:
 - Acute Care Hospitals Financial Stability Report, (Annually) and
 - Connecticut's Health Care Facilities and Services Plan (Bi-Annually).
- Work Groups (internally and New England States):
 - Market Oversight Group (formerly CON Group), and
 - Community Benefits.

What is a *Certificate of Need* and what does it do?

- Certificate of Need (CON) process regulates, monitors and improves Connecticut's health care system.
- CON deliberations and public hearings are an Office of Health Strategy's (OHS) regulatory responsibility that ensure that a health care facility and service development address the needs in our communities.
- The CON process protects the accessibility of healthcare services for consumers while limiting duplication of excess capacity of facilities and services in any given geographical area. *OHS holds public hearings and encourages residents to give input on every CON application.*

What Requires a CON?

19a-638 C.G.S.

1. Est. of a new health care facility (HCF)
2. Transfer ownership of a HCF
3. Transfer ownership of a large Group Practice
4. Est. of a Free Standing ED
5. Termination of a service (hospital)
6. Est. of an O/P Surgical Facility
7. Termination of a surgical services by an O/P (exemptions may apply)
8. Termination of an ED by a hospital
9. Est. of cardiac services
10. Acq. of CT, MRI, PET, PET-CT,
11. Acq. Of nonhospital LinAc
12. Increase in lic. bed capacity of a HCF
13. Acq. Of new tech. equip. (1st in State)
14. An increase of 2 or more ORs in 3 yrs
15. Termination of I/P, O/P services by any facility that is eligible for Medicare or Medicaid

How many *and* what type of CON applications are filed each year?

- Last year, 31 applications were filed with OHS:
 - 10 for Termination of Service,
 - 7 for Changes of Ownership (OSF/ASC, Group Practice),
 - 5 for acquisition of imaging equipment,
 - 5 for behavioral health.
- Over the past 8 years, annual CON applications filings have averaged approx. 28-30 new filings per year.

Who is part of the CON process?

- Applicant(s)
- Other providers (opposing or supporting the application/proposal)
- Applicant(s) Employees
- Public/Consumers
- Legislators
- Media
- Local Municipalities
- Other States (Not directly but indirectly)

Opportunities for Engagement by Public/Consumers/Communities

- Public comments are accepted *anytime* by OHS, however, once an application has been filed with OHS any comments filed are made part of the file.
- Public has right to *request a public hearing* (Company representing 3 or more individuals or 5 or more individuals from public).
- At a public hearing, general public can provide comment to OHS (written, oral or both).
- Public may request status in a public hearing *if* they meet the statutory criteria (19a-639 C.G.S).

OHS' Current Efforts to Engage Public/Consumers/Community

- Notice upcoming hearing in the region's major newspaper(s).
- Post public hearing information on our website.
- Hearing information is disseminated via social media via (Twitter & Facebook).
- OHS relay's information to local town halls, public libraries and any public associations, that we may be aware of.

OHS' Current Efforts to Engage Public/Consumers/Community (Continued)

- OHS' Consumer Information Representative (CIR) plays a pivotal role between OHS and public.
- Dedicated email to illicit public comment (concomment@ct.gov).
- Video recording of our public hearings (posted to our webpage w/in 24 hrs).
- OHS YouTube Channel (Public Hearings recorded on and posted there).

OHS' Current Efforts to Engage Public/Consumers/Community (Continued)

- A newly developed Public Hearings Page on our website (one-stop-shop).
- OHS has a significant presence at its hearings. This provides public attending a direct person to ask questions regarding the application, hearing and process. As well as submit information to OHS.
- If an issue is brought up by public that has not yet been addressed, OHS will have the Applicant(s) address it directly at the hearing, while the public is present in the audience.

OHS' Current Efforts to Engage Public/Consumers/Community (Continued)

- Some examples of public engagement's effects on CONs:
 - Development of Portals, since Sept 2017 (CON, HRS, Notifications/Filings).
 - Hearings starting later in the day *and* OHS hearing staff present at least until 6 pm,
 - Hearings being adjourned (not closed the day off) to provide ample time for comments on record,

OHS' Current Efforts to Engage Public/Consumers/Community (Continued)

- In certain CON decisions, **conditions** are included (Agreed Settlements).
Examples of some past and current areas of conditions:
 - Public forums,
 - Community member on local boards,
 - Independent monitors,
 - Requirement to develop and participate in local Community Health Needs Assessments/Reports, and
 - Requiring an increase in Hospital Community Benefits.

Next Steps

- With OHS, comes new opportunities....
 - Under one umbrella (OHS), we have State Innovation Model, Health Information Technology (& HIE), Health Care Cabinet, Consumer Advisory Board, Consumer Engagement Office, Communications Office, etc.
 - Increase our messaging, education and awareness of CON. CON may be the instrument that can be used to “improve” healthcare in our state (planning, partnerships, data sharing, consumer engagement).

Next Steps (Continued)

- Specifically for Consumer Engagement, CON process is an opportunity for a public member to become aware of healthcare changes that may affect them directly and an opportunity to engage and be part of the CON process.

- For your consideration:
 - How do we, as OHS reach our consumers?
 - How can we better engage consumers and have them participate?
 - What role does CAB and it's partners play in the CON process?
 - Level of interest?
 - How do we partner?
 - Share information and ideas?
 - Areas for future discussion.

“The customer’s perception is *your* reality.” –Kate Zabriskie

The End