



STATE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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December 29, 2021

CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Narinder Kumar
CEO
Aasta Hospice, Corporation
20700 Northridge Rd.
Chatsworth, CA 91311

Dear Mr. Kumar:

The State Health Planning and Development Agency (the "Agency") has evaluated Aasta Hospice, Corporation's Certificate of Need application #21-16A for the establishment of hospice services at 677 Ala Moana Blvd., Ste. 614, Honolulu, HI, at a capital cost of \$210,000 (the "Proposal").

On July 7, 2021, Aasta Hospice, Corporation (the "applicant") filed a certificate of need application with the Agency. On August 13, 2021 and September 23, 2021, the applicant filed revisions to the application. On October 21, 2021, the Agency determined the application to be complete.

In its completed application, the applicant provided a description of how its project proposed to meet the certificate of need criteria, namely: Relationship to the State of Hawai'i Health Services and Facilities Plan, Need and Accessibility, Quality of Service/Care, Cost and Finances, Relationship to the Existing Health Care System and Availability of Resources.

The Agency makes the following findings of fact with respect to Title 11, Chapter 186 of the Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) 11-186-15(a). The Agency finds each of the following statements to be true and accurate.

1. In written testimony dated October 28, 2021, Patricia Pancner, Executive Director, Bristol Hospice Hawaii-LLC, states¹ that "Hospice utilization percentages do not support the need. You can see the comparisons of Death Service ratio for Honolulu County, the

¹ For clarity, when the Agency quotes statements from the applicant in this section, it does so because the Agency finds such testimony to be persuasive and because the Agency has incorporated the referenced testimony as a finding of fact.

State of Hawaii and the nation, for the 12 months ending March 31, 2021

	Medicare Hospice Death Service Ratio for 2021
Nation	45.2%
Hawaii	48.1%
Honolulu County	48.4%

2. In written testimony dated October 28, 2021, Tori Abe Carapelho, President & CEO, Navian Hawaii, states "Aasta Hospice also stated that Hawaii is the 40th state of Medicare Decedents serviced by Hospice. However, according to Medicare Claims data, Hawaii ranks 19th in Hospice utilization... And Hawaii has seen a steady increase in Hospice Penetration since 2007, surpassing the National Hospice Utilization Trend. This confirms that the "gap" Aasta describes does not exist."
3. In written testimony dated November 2, 2021, Dianne Winter Brookins states "...the Application fails to establish a need for additional outpatient hospice services in Honolulu (the designated Service Area) or anywhere on 'Oahu. The Application attempts to justify the need for additional hospice capacity using national statistics regarding hospice usage by Asians which do not accurately reflect the market in Hawai'i. As set forth in the October 28, 2021 letter to SHPDA from Bristol Hospice, the Hawai'i data makes clear that the existing hospice providers are already meeting the need for hospice care. Hospice providers serving Honolulu County are meeting the needs of county residents with levels of care that exceed the national and state averages."
4. In written testimony dated December 3, 2021, Michael Duick, M.D. states "The Applicant does not establish a need for an additional hospice provider in Honolulu, which is the designated service area. Instead, the Applicant erroneously extrapolates national data in an attempt to establish a local need. The Applicant aims to use this national data to claim that Asians and Pacific Islanders are not receiving appropriate levels of hospice care. This claim is false. Year-to-date service statistics for Malama Ola Health Services are as follows:
 - 1) Asian 66.67%
 - 2) Caucasian 22.42%
 - 3) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 10.71%

As Bristol Hospice states in their letter dated October 28th, the State of Hawaii has a higher than national average hospice use rate... As such, no service gaps currently exist as claimed by the Applicant, and the Need and Accessibility criterion is not met."

5. In her written testimony dated October 28, 2021, Ms. Carapelho, states "It does not appear that Aasta Hospice has a solid understanding of the Hawaii market. The data they provided is based on National numbers which differs drastically from State data. Nationally hospice utilization is predominantly Caucasian (85.3%) with Asian at (1.8%). But looking closely at Hawaii's hospice utilization, we see that Caucasian (30.10%) and Asian (34.97%), is much more in line with the US Census Bureau data quoted."

Conclusions and Order

The Agency finds that the Proposal fails to meet the criterion in HAR 11-186-15(a)(1). The Agency finds that the hospice utilization for the service area is above the national average and that the applicant has not proven by a preponderance of the evidence that there is a need for an additional Hospice service provider in the proposed service area.

Accordingly, the Agency hereby determines, pursuant to HAR 11-186-99.1(f), that the application does not meet the criteria for certificate of need established in HAR section 11-186-15(a) and therefore, the State Health Planning and Development Agency hereby DISAPPROVES and DENIES a Certificate of Need to Aasta Hospice, Corporation for the Proposal described in Certificate of Need application #21-16A.

As the Proposal fails to meet the criteria in HAR 11-186-15(a) (1), the Agency makes no findings as to the Proposal's relationship to the remaining criteria in HAR 11-186-15(a).



Serafin Colmenares, Jr.
Administrator