

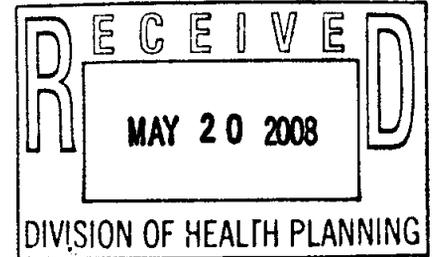


**HAMILTON  
MEDICAL CENTER**

PO BOX 11054 DUBLIN GA 30127-1105

May 19, 2008

Clyde Reese, Esquire  
Executive Director  
Division of Health Planning  
Department of Community Health  
Two Peachtree Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3159



Dear Mr. Reese,

**RE: Hamilton Medical Center Imaging Project**

The purpose of this letter is to acquire approval to commence Hamilton Medical Center's (HMC) Imaging Project. Below is a summary of the proposed project.

In relation to Senate Bill 433, HMC seeks to obtain permission to proceed with the Imaging Project outlined below without CON review. Specifically, the proposed project implementation period will lead into and beyond July 1, 2008. The project consists of three replacement pieces of equipment:

- 1.5 Tesla Open Magnet for Outpatient Center
- Dual Slice CT with Fluoroscopy
- Radiographic/Fluoroscopic RF Unit

MRI services at Hamilton Medical Center presently consist of two 1.5 Tesla magnets located at the Hamilton Diagnostic Center, a hospital owned outpatient facility located approximately two blocks from the hospital. One of these existing magnets was acquired in 2005 and the second magnet was acquired in 1989. Presently, there is no MRI equipment located at the hospital. This project proposes to replace the 1989 magnet at the outpatient center and acquire a new magnet for the hospital.

Since there is no MRI magnet located at the hospital, inpatients and Emergency Department (ED) patients must be transported by ambulance to the outpatient center for this service. Additionally, the hospital does not have an open MRI magnet for patients needing that service. Consequently, patients requiring an open MRI magnet must be transported to a privately owned center approximately six blocks from the hospital. The combined expense of transporting patients and purchasing open MRI services have continued to increase to approximately \$460,000 annually overall. This cost is expected to continue increasing and there are inherent risk factors in transporting sick, unstable patients to off-site locations.

As indicated on the table below, MRI procedures have averaged 6,820 over the last five fiscal years. Volume is projected to be 7,085 in 2008.

### MRI Procedures

Fiscal Year	Procedures
2003	6,614
2004	6,940
2005	7,195
2006	6,491
2007	6,860
2008 (projected)	7,085

Inpatient procedure volume (including ED) for Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007 was 1,075 and 1,946 respectively; and, this segment of the patient population is expected to continue to increase with the 2008 projected inpatient volume at 2,150. Outpatient volumes are also projected to continue to grow, even though the current MRI equipment offering excludes an open magnet.

Based on Rule 111-2-2-.03 Exemptions from Review, the replacement magnet complies with the items based on the following:

Item (16)(a). HMC has an existing CON for the 1989 magnet. The current unit will be a trade-in and will be completely removed from the facility. The new magnet will be placed in the same location as the 1989 magnet.

Item (16)(c). The new magnet has the same field strength of 1.5 Tesla as the existing magnet. It is of similar design and performs the same procedures as the existing magnet.

Renovations for the magnet at the outpatient center are relatively minor since this is a replacement of an existing magnet. The installation of the magnet at the hospital will require more extensive renovation since there is currently no magnet at that location. A twelve-year-old single slice CT unit is currently located in the space proposed for the hospital magnet. This project proposes to upgrade this CT to a dual slice unit with fluoroscopic capability for performance of biopsies. To accommodate the hospital magnet and to improve efficiency in the CT operations, the proposed dual slice CT will be relocated adjacent to the current 64 slice CT unit. A common control booth will be shared for the two CT units. To accommodate this CT move, the hospital's only radiographic/fluoroscopic unit must be moved. Since the current R/F unit is twelve-year-old technology, this project proposes to also replace this unit. The cost of this project is approximately \$3.8 million and is summarized in the table below.

Equipment	Equipment Cost	Renovation Cost
1.5 Tesla Open Magnet for Outpatient Center (Replacement)	\$1,279,338	\$158,790
1.5 Tesla Open Magnet for Hospital	\$1,279,338	\$416,580
Dual Slice CT with Fluoroscopy (Replacement)	\$233,226	\$43,825
Radiographic/Fluoroscopic Unit (Replacement)	\$309,419	\$73,300

In summary, this proposed project meets the following goals:

- Eliminating patient safety issues related to inpatient and ED patient transfers to HDC.
- Provides MRI services at the hospital.
- Provision of this new hospital service in an optimal location within the Radiology Department.
- Addition of open magnet to meet patient care requirements.
- Eliminating ambulance expense for patient transfers.
- Eliminating the expense for purchase of open MRI services.

Thank you again for your assistance with this CON process. I look forward to working with you on this project. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 706-272-6529 or [croy@hhcs.org](mailto:croy@hhcs.org). I await your direction.

Sincerely,

  
Corey Roy  
Planning Manager

cc: Gary L. Howard