



# PERKINS COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES

900 Lincoln Ave. • Grant, Nebraska 69140

Dedicated to Quality Health Care

May 7, 2007

Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 02-60 (Rural Health Care Mechanism Pilot Program)

Dear Ms. Dortch:

As the Chief Executive Office of Perkins County Health Services ("PCHS"), I am writing you in support of the Rural Nebraska Healthcare Network's ("RNHN") application under the Rural Health Care Mechanism Pilot Program. The Perkins County Health Services is a 20-bed Critical Access Hospital in Grant, NE. The hospital offers many services including child day care, CT scans, mammography, outpatient-inpatient surgery, prenatal care, nursing home facilities and emergency services. In addition to these services, many of our patients take advantage of our outpatient care which includes cardiac monitoring and echocardiogram testing.

Telehealth and telemedicine applications are vital to the success of Critical Access Hospitals like PCHS. In order to provide quality services to our patients, it is often necessary to transmit patient records, communicate with specialists outside of the hospital, and to continually offer training and education for our clinicians. For a small hospital like PCHS, the range and quality of services that we can provide is directly enhanced by telehealth. As specialists visit our facility in person or consult via telecommunications, our patients directly benefit by their ability to access information and offer treatment via electronic means.

The RNHN grant would directly impact our ability to work toward our mission -- to provide excellence in caring through a diversity of technological services, creative resources and qualified personnel to meet the health care needs of the region, regardless of sex, religion, race, age, disability, national origin or source of payment. Currently, though our clinicians and staff excel in offering treatment to our patients, they are frustrated by the technological limitations imposed by our current network infrastructure. The RNHN grant would rebuild that infrastructure and allow us to improve our quality of care.

Particularly for our outpatient services, the ability to communicate with specialists outside of Grant, NE is vital. The ability to exchange information via video-conferencing or through the transmission of records allows our hospital to otherwise provide services that patients would have to drive many miles to receive and to efficiently diagnose. The network that we currently have in place both limits and frustrates our ability to provide this care.

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| <i>Perkins County<br/>Community Hospital<br/>(308) 352-7200<br/>FAX: (308) 352-7291</i> | <i>Golden Ours<br/>Convalescent Home<br/>(308) 352-7250<br/>FAX: (308) 352-7259</i> | <i>Park Ridge<br/>Assisted Living<br/>(308) 352-7246<br/>FAX: (308) 352-4398</i> | <i>Hugs-N-Teddybears<br/>Day Care Center<br/>(308) 352-7264</i> | <i>Hi-Line<br/>Home Health<br/>(308) 352-7260<br/>FAX: (308) 352-7213</i> | <i>Grant Medical<br/>Clinic<br/>(308) 352-4933<br/>FAX: (308) 352-4467</i> |
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Above all, I applaud the efforts of the FCC to enhance opportunities for quality care for rural Americans via telehealth and telemedicine applications. Further, I encourage you to grant the RNHN application, as it will help PCHS to provide such services to its patients.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Pamela J. Holm in cursive script, followed by the letters "CEO" in a smaller, simpler font.

Pam Holm  
CEO, Perkins County Health Services

Cc: Honorable Kevin J Martin  
Honorable Michael J. Copps  
Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein  
Honorable Deborah Taylor Tate  
Honorable Robert M. McDowell  
Jeremy Marcus  
Thomas Buckley