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March 16, 2009

The Honorable Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin
1022 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Baldwin:

On behalf of St. Clare Hospital and Health Services, please accept our request for FY10 federal appropriations to enhance our radiation oncology program.

St. Clare Hospital & Health Services established its Radiation Oncology services in 2005, providing local care in a rural for patients from over 50 zip codes. Our unique status as a larger rural hospital - and not a critical access facility – allows us to offer such vital services. In 2008, Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) was implemented. IMRT enables higher doses of radiation to be delivered directly to tumors and cancer cells, while protecting surrounding organs and tissues. In some cases, IMRT can be a non-invasive alternative to surgery. However, such treatments can have lengthy durations due to the complexity of the treatment plans.

On-Board-Imaging (OBI) is the next modality and thus is the subject of our request. OBI compliments IMRT greatly, as it provides improved image quality and increased accuracy with set-up time, while and reducing treatment time by a minimum of 5 minutes. In turn, this reduces patient exposure to radiation. OBI also improves patient safety as it allows for a “stop” during treatment if the patient or the patient’s internal biology should move. This is a major advancement in cancer care and we are proud to bring this to our patients.

St. Clare is already a rural leader in cancer care, allowing patients and their families to stay close to home during difficult treatment. This contributes to positive patient state-of-mind and family support, thus enhancing the prospects for successful treatment. At St. Clare, we believe this fits well with your commitment to improving healthcare for all Wisconsinites, including those in a rural setting.

This project, and your assistance, is essential to our mission of delivering the best care. As always, we invite you to visit with us and to meet with our caregivers. We look forward to our continuing partnership.

Thank you for your consideration. You or your staff can reach me directly at (608) 356-1402.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy".

Sandy Anderson
President



A Member of SSM Health Care