

Hospital profiles upset local hospital officials

By Sandra Armbruster
staff writer

The numbers may have changed, but the target remains the same: Reduce the number of excess beds in southeastern Michigan hospitals.

That goal could force some hospitals to close or merge. Others may have to drop some services under the debedding plan mandated by state and federal laws.

One aim of health planning is to control the rising cost of health care in southeastern Michigan. Theoretically, fewer beds would reduce costs by forcing a change in the way consumers receive health care.

The task of bed reduction is charged to the Comprehensive Health Planning Council of Southeastern Michigan (CHPC-SEMI). Now in the second round of its bed-reduction plan, the federally-funded agency has assigned scores to area hospitals based on their responses to a recent CHPC survey. Representatives of these hospitals will appear before a review panel of the council on Monday and Tuesday to comment on the survey or to appeal their scores.

ROBERT LAIBLE, administrator for Redford Community Hospital, and Peg Reihmer, director of planning for Botsford General Hospital, plan to make those appeals for their respective hospitals.

Laible said Redford's profile is filled with errors, while Ms. Reihmer said Botsford officials have only a few problems with their profile.

Mistakes in code compliance, financial data and ratio of out-patient to in-patient surgery are some of the Redford profile's errors, according to Laible.

"We're right back to where we were with the referral hospitals getting points and primary facilities not any better off than they were," said Laible. Primary care refers to "nuts and bolts" care, such as hernias, Laible said.

"We are cost effective because we treat 80 percent of the illnesses common in the population," he added. Redford's status as a small hospital, 72 beds, makes it particularly vulnerable to closure.

Botsford's major complaint with the profile is the number of pediatric beds required under the plan (20), while Botsford has 17; but the hospital does not plan to appeal that issue because it's already been determined.

Under the aborted plan last year, Botsford was scheduled to lose 14 beds. It has 308 beds.

"Obviously we're not thrilled about the prospect of losing beds," she said, adding that Botsford's occupancy rate is very high, between 92-94 percent. She will ask that the occupancy in obstetrics be reconsidered because of Botsford's policy of releasing healthy new

mothers after an average stay of 3.8 days, shorter than most hospitals, reduces the occupancy.

"Most of the items we are appealing are matters where the documentation is not sufficient."

However she did stress that this year's plan is an improvement over last year's. "It helped a lot that hospital people have been involved right from the beginning."

EACH SCORE has been released only to the respective hospital since those scores may be modified as a result of this week's hearings, according to Ralph Kingzett, CHPC spokesman.

Those scores will be used in deciding how many beds to eliminate from hos-

pitals involved in the debedding plan. The final plan is expected to be completed next week.

A public hearing on the plan is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on the 13th Floor of the Book Building in Detroit. After that hearing, the plan goes to the CHPC board of trustees on July 22. CHPC is required to submit the plan to the State Health Coordinating Council and to the Michigan Department of Public Health on July 27.

CHPC is charged by the state with targeting 2,137 excess or unneeded beds in 61 southeastern Michigan hospitals.

That represents a reduction from the original figure of 2,487 beds used in an earlier plan, according to Kingzett, and primarily reflects bed reductions

already made by area hospitals.

Kingzett said that the southeastern Michigan was divided into sub-areas, some of which were identified as having too many beds.

LOCAL AREAS identified as having too many beds include the following:

- NORTHWEST DETROIT — There are 12 hospitals in this area with 253 beds too many, according to CHPC studies. The hospitals include Beaumont facilities in Troy and Royal Oak, Strath Memorial and Providence hospitals in Southfield, Botsford Osteopathic in Farmington, Redford Community and Sinai in Detroit.
- WAYNE CHPC decided this area had 155 beds more than needed in

its five hospitals. The hospitals are Ann Arbor, which is one of the People's Community Hospital Authority operations in Wayne; Garden City Osteopathic in that city; Metropolitan West and Wayne County General in Westland; and St. Mary in Livonia.

- DEARBORN-WYANDOTTE — There are 411 excess beds spread among nine hospitals including Heritage in Taylor, another PCHA hospital; Oakwood in Dearborn and Outer Drive in Lincoln Park.

BUT CHANGES HAVE been made since CHPC originally began targeting

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