



CITY OF PERTH AMBOY

Helmin J. Caba, Mayor

Office of the Mayor

December 2, 2022

RE: OPEN LETTER TO PERTH AMBOY RESIDENTS ON THE DISINFORMATION OF HACKENSACK MERIDIAN RARITAN BAY MEDICAL CENTER SERVICES

Dear residents and community partners

I write to you to stop the spread of disinformation about losing hospital services with its ongoing expansion at Raritan Bay Medical Center behavioral health services.

In October 2022, Raritan Bay Medical Center shared two publications that included the following:

1. The announcement of the opening of its first Long Term Acute Care Hospital (LTACH)
2. Interview with the new President and Chief Hospital Executive, Patricia Carroll

The Medical Center's executive leaders stated that the ongoing expansion would not result in losing hospital services.

On November 23, 2022, Hackensack Meridian Raritan Bay Medical Center once again reaffirmed its commitment to the City of Perth Amboy and investment in health services in a letter to my office and state legislative officials. This correspondence was also shared with our city council members.

The disinformation of losing hospital services due to behavioral health expansion is false, deceptive, and obscures the truth. Therefore, decisive action is needed when this falsehood spreads because it undermines our ability to engage in fact-based public discourse.

I ask residents to challenge these falsehoods when heard, as they only serve those individuals who wish to take advantage of our community. We all must ensure that our residents are properly informed.

As always, my Administration will continue to provide good governance, maintain the highest standards of quality of life, and ensure the public safety of all our residents.

Respectfully,

Helmin J. Caba, Mayor

Enclosures (3)



CITY OF PERTH AMBOY

Helmin J. Caba, Alcalde

Oficina del Alcalde

2 de Diciembre de 2022

RE: CARTA ABIERTA A LOS RESIDENTES DE PERTH AMBOY SOBRE LA DESINFORMACIÓN DE LOS SERVICIOS DEL CENTRO MÉDICO RARITAN BAY DE HACKENSACK MERIDIAN MERIDIAN

Queridos residentes y socios comunitarios

Le escribo para detener la propagación de desinformación sobre la pérdida de servicios hospitalarios con su expansión continua en los servicios de salud conductual del Centro Médico Raritan Bay.

En octubre de 2022, Raritan Bay Medical Center compartió dos publicaciones que incluían lo siguiente:

1. El anuncio de la apertura de su primer Hospital de Cuidados Agudos a Largo Plazo (LTACH)
2. Entrevista con la nueva Presidenta y Directora Ejecutiva del Hospital, Patricia Carroll

Sus líderes ejecutivos han declarado que la expansión en curso no resultará en la pérdida de los servicios hospitalarios necesarios.

El 23 de noviembre de 2022, el Centro Médico Hackensack Meridian Raritan Bay reafirmó una vez más su compromiso con la ciudad de Perth Amboy y su inversión en servicios de salud en una carta a mi oficina y a funcionarios estatales legislativos. Esta correspondencia también fue compartida con los miembros de nuestro consejo municipal.

La desinformación de la pérdida de servicios hospitalarios debido a la expansión de la salud conductual es falsa, engañosa y oculta la verdad. Por lo tanto, se necesita una acción decisiva cuando esta falsedad se extiende porque socava nuestra capacidad de participar en un discurso público basado en hechos.

Pido a los residentes que desafíen estas falsedades cuando se escuchan, ya que solo sirven a aquellas personas que desean aprovecharse de nuestra comunidad. Todos debemos asegurarnos de que nuestros residentes estén debidamente informados.

Como siempre, mi Administración continuará proporcionando buen gobierno, manteniendo los más altos estándares de calidad de vida, y asegurando la seguridad pública de todos nuestros residents.

Respetuosamente,

Helmin J. Caba, Alcalde

Documentos adjuntos (3)



Hackensack Meridian
Old Bridge Medical Center



Hackensack Meridian
Raritan Bay Medical Center

November 23, 2022

Honorable Helman J. Caba, Mayor
Perth Amboy City Hall
260 High Street
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861

Dear Mayor Caba,

It has come to my attention that rumors and misinformation continue to circulate in Perth Amboy about Hackensack Meridian Health's investment in Raritan Bay Medical Center (RBMC) and the operational status of the hospital. I have addressed these concerns directly in several issues of the Amboy Guardian, and I wanted to assure you in writing about HMH's strong commitment to Perth Amboy and our investment in Raritan Bay Medical Center.

Almost a year ago, Hackensack Meridian Health announced its intent to invest \$35 million in Raritan Bay Medical Center to improve patient care and expand behavioral health services. We decided to expand behavioral health services based on a recent community health needs assessment conducted with the greater Perth Amboy residents. I am proud to inform you that, less than one year from the announcement date, we have already opened a long-term acute care hospital on the campus and completed the first phase of the behavioral health expansion. The entire behavioral health project will be completed by summer, 2023. This expansion will increase the level of healthcare services available to the community.

RBMC has operated behavioral health services in Perth Amboy for a generation. Behavioral healthcare is a critical component of comprehensive healthcare delivery and affects many in our communities and families. We understand that there still is a stigma associated with this care, but the fact is that providing access to these services is critical to reducing the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on communities and families.

The ongoing expansion of the hospital will not result in the loss of any needed hospital services. Mothers will continue to give birth at the medical center, children will continue to receive care in our emergency department, HMH ambulances and paramedics will continue to serve the City's residents, and the emergency department will continue to care for the community. Raritan Bay Medical Center is an excellent community hospital, and I am proud to share that we have earned the Leapfrog 'A' patient safety score, a testament to the overall service and quality of the hospital.

In fact, due in part to the outstanding support that we have received from you and the elected officials that represent Perth Amboy in the City, County, State Legislature, and the United States Congress, we expect Raritan Bay Medical Center to grow to become a more vibrant healthcare hub for the City of Perth Amboy and its residents, providing jobs and economic opportunity as well as needed healthcare services. While hundreds of hospitals have closed in the United States over the past decade, Raritan Bay Medical Center is healthy and growing.

In my first six months as President and Chief Hospital Executive at Raritan Bay Medical Center, I have made it a priority to listen and learn about our community needs. In the past, the hospital sponsored a community advisory board and my plan is to reconvene a newly formed community advisory board in early 2023. I ask for your advice and recommendations for community leaders to serve on this advisory board.

Please join me at your convenience to tour our campus with me and see first-hand the positive impact that HMH's investment is having on all areas of the hospital. In addition, I would like you to meet some of our new team members from Perth Amboy who have joined the HMH team since your last visit, while learning more about our efforts to recruit and retain physicians, nurses, and other positions.

I am always available and my door is open to answer any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Patricia Carroll, FACHE
President and Chief Hospital Executive

CC: Senator Joseph F. Vitale
Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin
Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez



Hackensack Meridian Long Term Acute Care Hospital Officially Opens To The Public

This hospital becomes the 18th hospital in the Hackensack Meridian Health network



(Perth Amboy, NJ - October 5, 2022) - Hackensack Meridian *Health* (HMH), New Jersey's largest and most comprehensive health network, has officially opened its first Long Term Acute Care Hospital (LTACH). A brand-new, state-of-the-art hospital offering 30 private rooms.

"We are excited to open our 18th hospital in the Hackensack Meridian *Health* network. This new LTACH will provide numerous benefits to our patients, their families and our community, which will lead to optimizing patient outcomes," said Robert Garrett, chief executive officer, Hackensack Meridian *Health*.

The Hackensack Meridian LTACH will offer a variety of programs to accommodate patients that need a longer stay in an acute care hospital.

Highlights of the Hackensack Meridian LTACH will include:



- State of the art pulmonary program with ventilator weaning
- Advanced cardiac program which will include congestive heart failure management and education
- Dialysis management
- Sepsis treatment including long term antibiotic therapy
- Extensive wound care program, with treatment of non-healing surgical wounds and pressure ulcers

“The Hackensack Meridian LTACH is dedicated to supporting patients who need specialized services and care,” said Michael Burns, president, chief hospital executive, LTACH. “We look forward to providing exceptional care to each patient who comes to our hospital.”

Hackensack Meridian LTACH is located in Raritan Bay Medical Center, which includes a specialized dedicated floor, daily physician visits, 24/7 emergency physician coverage, an interdisciplinary care team that includes physician specialists, certified registered nurses and technicians, certified respiratory therapists, dietitians, rehabilitation therapists, including PT/OT/speech. In addition to all other hospital services.

“The Hackensack Meridian LTACH is part of HMM’s \$35 million investment into Raritan Bay Medical Center that will help meet the future needs of our community,” said Todd Way, president, central region, Hackensack Meridian *Health*.

Hackensack Meridian Long Term Acute Care Hospital, is located at Raritan Bay Medical Center, 530 New Brunswick Ave, 4 Green - LTACH, Perth Amboy, NJ. For more information, please call: 848-309-1436

Photo Caption: Perth Amboy Mayor Helmin Caba, Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez and Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin joined Robert Garrett, CEO, Hackensack Meridian Health Rosemarie J. Sorce, chair, Hackensack Meridian Health Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees; Mike D’Agnes, chair, LTACH board; Michael Burns; president, chief hospital executive; Patricia Carroll, president, chief hospital executive, Raritan Bay Medical Center/Old Bridge Medical Center, among others.

ABOUT HACKENSACK MERIDIAN HEALTH

Hackensack Meridian Health is a leading not-for-profit health care organization that is the largest, most comprehensive and truly integrated health care network in New Jersey, offering a complete range of medical services, innovative research and life-enhancing care. The network has 18 hospitals and more than 500 patient care locations, which include ambulatory care centers, surgery centers, home health services, long-term care and assisted living communities,



Hackensack
Meridian *Health*

NEWS

ambulance services, lifesaving air medical transportation, rehabilitation centers, urgent care centers, physician practice locations, and a fitness and wellness center. With more than 35,000 team members and 7,000 physicians, Hackensack Meridian Health is a distinguished leader in health care philanthropy and committed to the health and well-being of communities throughout New Jersey.

The network's notable distinctions include having more U.S. News-ranked hospitals than any other health system in New Jersey, as ranked by U.S. News & World Report, 2022-23. Hackensack University Medical Center is nationally-ranked by U.S. News & World Report in four specialties, more than any other hospital in New Jersey. Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital at Hackensack University Medical Center, and K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital at Jersey Shore University Medical Center, are ranked #1 in the state and top 20 in the Mid-Atlantic Region by U.S. News & World Report's 2022-23 Best Children's Hospital Report. Additionally, their combined nephrology program ranks in the top 50 in the United States. To learn more, visit www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org.

Amboy Guardian & City of Perth Amboy article

In an interview with Hackensack Meridian Raritan Bay/Old Bridge Medical Center's new President, Chief Hospital Executive Patricia Carroll, she discussed the need for Behavioral Health services in our community and the new achievements taking place at the hospital.

Tell us a little about yourself and joining Raritan Bay?

I've been at Raritan Bay for a little over three months now. I came here from Palisades Medical Center, where I served as chief operating officer and most recently interim president, chief hospital executive since 2017. Prior to that, I had numerous executive healthcare roles at Saint Barnabas Medical Center in West Orange and Saint Peter's Healthcare System in New Brunswick. Early in my career, I was a neonatal outreach educator from Newark Beth Israel Medical Center and came to Raritan Bay to help teach in the obstetrics area. I am proud and humbled to be back at Raritan Bay to help serve the community.



Why is there a need for Behavioral Health services in our community?

Behavioral Health services and support in our country are needed more than ever. The COVID-19 pandemic, societal unrest, and economic uncertainty has moved Behavioral Health to the forefront of the national healthcare conversation.

In New Jersey, 1,112,000 adults have a mental health condition, that's more than 3 times the population of Newark. In February 2021, 42.2% of adults in New Jersey reported symptoms of anxiety or depression and almost 20% were unable to get counseling or therapy, according to the New Jersey State Fact Sheet.

It is more important than ever to build a stronger mental health system that provides the care, support and services needed to help people build better lives. Nearly 40,000 people in New Jersey live in a community that does not have enough mental health professionals. Our latest community needs assessment mirrors this trend, which is why I'm so pleased that we are addressing this important need.

How is Raritan Bay Medical Center addressing this need?

Hackensack Meridian Health has invested \$35 million into creating a brand-new, state-of-the-art Behavioral Health unit on the campus at Raritan Bay Medical Center. Construction is currently underway which will feature a new, modern design that adds warmth and more natural light.

The expanded Raritan Bay Medical Center Behavioral Health unit will continue to serve adults and collaborate and incorporate standards of excellence with the HMH Carrier Clinic. Two new dimensions of care will be added, including Geriatric Psychiatric care and Dual

Diagnosis (psychiatry/addiction) services. The new Behavioral Health unit is scheduled to open in Summer 2023.

In addition, outpatient specialty care programs will be added that will allow for patients and the community to receive comprehensive behavioral health services within a seamless continuum of care.

I am committed to listening and working with the Perth Amboy community to ensure that these services meet the needs and concerns of residents. I have met with elected officials and community leaders in Perth Amboy, and will be launching a new community advisory board in 2023 to ensure that the community's voice continues to be heard.

Will there be new jobs created for this?

Yes! We have created numerous new jobs. The majority of the recruitment will begin in early 2023. If you are interested, please visit our careers page on the website, <https://jobs.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/>

What else is new at Raritan Bay?

Hackensack Meridian Health's first Long Term Acute Care Hospital (LTACH) opened this month (September). Our LTACH offers a variety of programs to accommodate those patients that need a longer stay in the hospital in an acute care setting.

Anything else you would like to tell us?

With more than 700 physicians and 1800 dedicated healthcare professionals, our team truly provides the highest-quality, patient-centered care. This team has served our patients during the pandemic and as I round and meet them, they impress me with their compassion and caring. Raritan Bay and Old Bridge recently achieved a Leap Frog "A", a national recognition for patient safety. This is a testament to the entire team and their commitment to excellence. I am honored to join and be a part of this journey.

Any special awards or distinctions?

In addition to Leap Frog "A", Raritan Bay and Old Bridge Medical Centers hold many national awards and distinctions.

- Magnet® designation for nursing excellence
- Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence
 - American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get with the Guidelines Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award
- Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval
- AHA's Heart Check Mark for Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers
- AHA's Mission: Lifeline EMS Gold Plus Performance Achievement Award
- Healthgrades Patient Safety Excellence Awards in gastrointestinal surgery, coronary intervention, critical care, gastrointestinal care and gynecologic surgery
- Healthgrades Women's Excellence Award
- Recipient of HEI LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Leader

- Platinum recognition by Health Resources and Services Administration for their National Hospital Organ Donation Campaign