

Transparency needed

Memorial Hospital's and Shore Health System's lack of transparency concerning their plans and finances is appalling.

Their June 30, 2005 annual report — the latest available — is short on basic information on the six entities covered. Missing were balance sheets measuring physical assets and financial reserves. Revenue and expense reports provided "Total Net Income" for 2005 as follows: Shore Health System Inc: \$3.8 million, Care Health Services Inc: \$0.5 million, Shore Health Enterprises Inc and Shore Clinical Services Inc. showed a loss between them of \$0.6 million.

Thus total net income for these four was \$3.7 million. Memorial Hospital Foundation Inc's profit was \$2.8 million. A grand total of about \$6.5 million. Not bad for a group of companies and a Foundation with assets (noted in the text) of \$50 million. There was no financial information for Shore Health Care System of Maryland, the name on the cover of the Annual Report.

Unclear also is what the control and ownership relationships are between them and where the profits for these "not for profit's" go. Presumably the separate boards of directors of each of them decide. But how are the directors elected? Do they share in the profits beyond normal remuneration? (salaries and benefits for all staff were some \$85.2 million).

Donors to the Foundation are entitled to know more, as do the communities they serve and all of the Shore Health's employees who provided us with such good care.

DAVID GILL, Easton

Easton, Talbot, don't meddle in ER issue

It is galling that Easton and Talbot County's councils are worrying about us "stealing" their hospital. I see no reason to equate creation of a Queen Anne's ER with the demise of Memorial Hospital. The two are entirely unrelated. Sen. EJ Pipkin's SB 750 asks for a freestanding emergency room, not a hospital!

If Easton/Talbot County citizens want to waste their time and money on a lobbyist, then so-be-it. But rest assured our county's citizens want an emergency room. Truly, we don't care who builds it (within reason). The petition is clear. If any of your readers have not read it or signed it, go to www.QaErNow.com and see for themselves how simple and straightforward this bill is.

We simply want to be allowed to have this much-needed facility. No matter how much our neighbors to the east point fingers; this remains a

simple, honest request as it always has been, from a county who has nothing in the way of emergency care.

Any decisions about Memorial Hospital's future will be made not by Pipkin or Queen Anne's County citizens but by Shore Health System and University of Maryland Medical Services. Our problem here in Queen Anne's remains that the distance to the Chester River facility isn't ideal for many and backups at the Bay Bridge make it tough to reach Anne Arundel Medical Center, especially when you are in pain.

Stop trying to deprive us of having the emergency care we need.

ANDI MORONY, Centreville