

Letter to the Editor, April 8, 2007

Moving hospital would hurt Talbot's seniors

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As an elder law attorney and advocate for senior services for the past 22 years, I am deeply troubled by the possibility of Memorial Hospital moving out of Talbot County.

As Carl Burke from Upper Shore Aging has stated, Talbot County's over-60 population is increasing every year. This growth has already put a heavy burden on the medical services currently available. Memorial Hospital and the medical facilities on Dutchman's Lane and Idlewild Avenue are an integral part of these services. If access to these medical clinics, diagnostic centers and physicians are removed from Talbot or even from Easton, this will create a critical problem for seniors who depend on these services.

Our public transportation system is still in its infancy. If seniors don't have access to their own transportation or cannot use transportation provided at their senior housing communities, it is difficult to access the necessary facilities. If the hospital and its related physicians move, that burden will be even more onerous.

I hope Memorial Hospital will take into consideration the demographics of Talbot's population and also make the University of Maryland Health System aware of this situation. Consider the time it takes for seniors to get to the doctor or diagnostic center, their sometimes limited mobility, and their need for specialized services that are currently provided. If these services are moved to an outlying area, many seniors would be unable to receive the care that they need.

LIN LAYTON, Easton