



City Council
Health & Human Services <http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>
Meeting Summary

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103

Councilor Brian Santaniello
(Chair)

October 29, 2025

1:30 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Roll Call

In Person: Kateri Walsh (member), Brian Santaniello (chair), Trinity Health Team/Dr. Phil Glenn, Kathy Sullivan, Lauren Smith, and Dan Keenan.

Zoom: Anthony Ravosa Jr.

Call To Order

1:30 PM Meeting called to order on October 29, 2025, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Public Portion

1. Discussion: The Andy Yee Palliative Care Unit at Mercy Medical Center, part of Trinity Health of New England

Meeting Minutes: Palliative Care Program Discussion

Overview

The meeting focused on palliative care services at Mercy Medical Center, Mercy Hospital, and Sister Caritas, as well as on planning for a new healthcare facility. Participants reviewed program operations, patient impact, funding sources, and opportunities for expansion and collaboration.

Summary of Discussions

Mercy Medical Center – Palliative Care Unit

Mercy Medical Center reported that its new eight-bed palliative care unit has been operational since June and has served approximately one hundred patients. The unit provides support for individuals with serious illnesses through symptom management and quality-of-life interventions. Program leaders noted significant reductions in hospitalizations and emergency department visits, resulting in estimated savings of up to \$4,500 per cancer patient. Insurance coverage for palliative services has

been broadly stable, with only limited issues concerning services such as home infusions.

Mercy Hospital – Program Expansion

Mercy Hospital reported continued growth in its palliative care program, with plans to expand from 8 to 12 beds over the next 2 years. Interest among nursing staff in palliative care assignments has increased, contributing positively to program development. Funding for the expansion has included approximately \$1.25 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds and private donations, and further fundraising will be required to achieve the planned increase in bed capacity.

Funding and Program Impact

The group discussed ongoing fundraising needs for palliative care services and potential support from the city, recognizing current budget limitations. Program leaders emphasized the demonstrated reductions in readmissions and overall healthcare costs associated with palliative care. Strengthening partnerships with extended care facilities was identified as an essential strategy to improve patient transfers and reduce unnecessary emergency department visits. Participants also discussed the future role of value-based care in supporting the program.

Sister Caritas – Palliative Care Unit

Sister Caritas provides palliative care through an eight-bed unit that serves patients admitted from the emergency department across several specialty areas. The unit includes patient- and family-oriented rooms, consultation areas, and private spaces for sensitive conversations. It was established with significant community and organizational support, including contributions from the City of Springfield, MassMutual, leasing companies, and smaller community donors. A dedication ceremony for the unit included participation from Governor Baker.

New Healthcare Facility Planning

The meeting included a review of plans for a new healthcare facility, with discussion focused on patient room configurations, the creation of a dedicated family waiting area, and the use of virtual communication technology to support remote family involvement and care coordination. Dr. Glenn and Dr. Lori Locciano will serve as co-directors of the planned facility. Participants agreed to finalize facility plans by early next year, and related materials will be shared electronically with council members.

Next Steps

Dr. Glenn and Kathy will prepare data demonstrating reductions in readmissions, cost savings, and quality outcomes to support future fundraising efforts. Dr. Glenn and his team will work to strengthen relationships with extended care facilities to improve transfer quality and reduce emergency department readmissions. The Mayor's Office and the committee will schedule a tour of the palliative care unit after the start of the new year. Committee staff will distribute electronic copies of meeting materials to committee members and councilors. The development team will continue fundraising to support the expansion of the palliative care unit from 8 to 12 beds.

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