

## New York State Department of Health

### Health Equity Impact Assessment Template

Refer to the Instructions for Health Equity Impact Assessment Template for detailed instructions on each section.

#### **SECTION A. SUMMARY**

<b>1. Title of project</b>	<i>Saratoga Hospital Neurology Practice Relocation</i>
<b>2. Name of Applicant</b>	<i>Saratoga Hospital</i>
<b>3. Name of Independent Entity, including lead contact and full names of individual(s) conducting the HEIA</b>	<i>Crescendo Consulting Group Katelyn Michaud, MPH Managing Principal <a href="mailto:katelynm@crescendocg.com">katelynm@crescendocg.com</a></i>
<b>4. Description of the Independent Entity's qualifications</b>	<i>Crescendo Consulting Group is a boutique woman-owned consulting firm specializing in conducting community health needs assessments, community needs assessments, and strategic plans for hospitals and health systems, FQHCs, CCBHCs and behavioral health organizations, community action agencies, and other non-profits across the United States.</i>
<b>5. Date the Health Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) started</b>	<i>September 1, 2024</i>
<b>6. Date the HEIA concluded</b>	<i>November 14, 2024</i>

<b>7. Executive summary of project (250 words max)</b>
<i>Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology is relocating from its current location at 6 Care Lane, Saratoga Springs to 510 Geyser Road, Milton, which is approximately a 3.6 mile move. The new location will be collocated with a primary care practice, laboratory with blood draws, and a physical therapy practice. The new space is larger, which will allow the practice to hire new providers in the future and expand patient volume.</i>
<b>8. Executive summary of HEIA findings (500 words max)</b>

*Neurological conditions can affect any medically underserved groups or community residents and increasing age is a risk factor in developing neurological conditions. The service area has a higher percentage of older adults and is becoming a community of super seniors according to one of the neurology providers interviewed.*

*The Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology is one of the only neurology practices in the community and the average wait time to see a provider for non-emergent needs is about six to eight months.*

*By relocating the practice to a larger facility that is collocated with primary care, it will provide better access to health care services to medically underserved groups and the community. The new location also has a bus stop in front of it while the current location does not. The relocation should have a minimum impact on the medically underserved groups and the community at large.*

## **SECTION B: ASSESSMENT**

**For all questions in Section B, please include sources, data, and information referenced whenever possible. If the Independent Entity determines a question is not applicable to the project, write N/A and provide justification.**

### **STEP 1 – SCOPING**

- 1. Demographics of service area: Complete the “Scoping Table Sheets 1 and 2” in the document “HEIA Data Tables”. Refer to the Instructions for more guidance about what each Scoping Table Sheet requires.**

*Please reference the separate HEIA Data Tables document for the demographic data.*

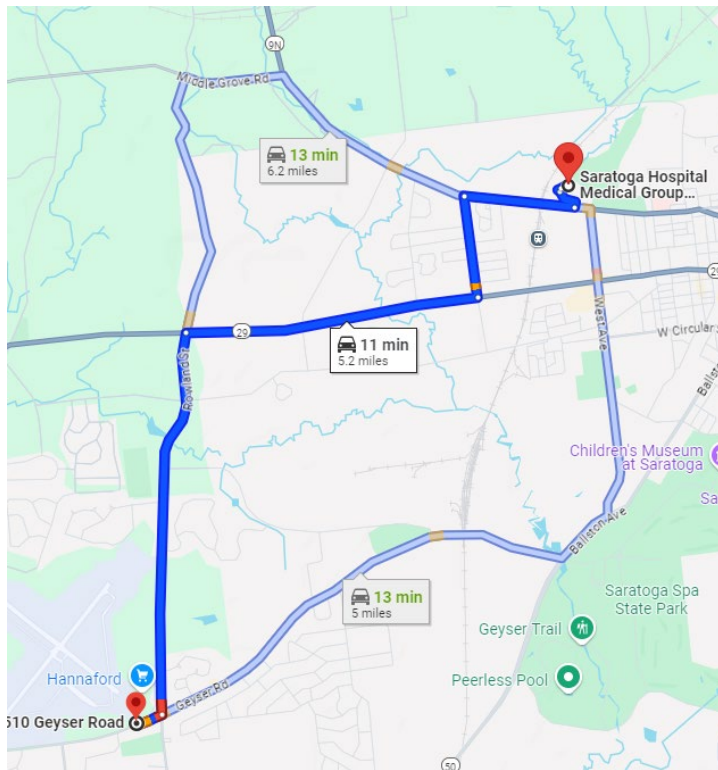
- 2. Medically underserved groups in the service area: Please select the medically underserved groups in the service area that will be impacted by the project:**

- Low-income people
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Immigrants
- Women
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or other-than-cisgender people
- People with disabilities
- Older adults
- Persons living with a prevalent infectious disease or condition
- Persons living in rural areas
- People who are eligible for or receive public health benefits
- People who do not have third-party health coverage or have inadequate third-party health coverage

- Other people who are unable to obtain health care
- Not listed (specify):

**3. For each medically underserved group (identified above), what source of information was used to determine the group would be impacted? What information or data was difficult to access or compile for the completion of the Health Equity Impact Assessment?**

*Publicly available demographic data was collected on each of the above medically underserved groups and augmented with qualitative and internal deidentified Saratoga Hospital Medical Group - Neurology patient data to determine which medically underserved groups will be impacted by the relocation of the clinic from its current location at 6 Care Lane, Saratoga Springs to 510 Geysers Road, Milton.*



**4. How does the project impact the unique health needs or quality of life of each medically underserved group (identified above)?**

Medically Underserved Groups	Impact on Unique Health Needs or Quality of Life
<p><b>Low-Income people</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice. In 2023, 26.84% of the patient volume was considered indigent, which is defined as Medicaid, Medicaid HMO, charity care, and self-pay per the</i></p>

	<p><i>facility, indicating that a percentage of the population in the service area may be considered low-income.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Low-income people may experience a greater impact on the relocation of practice if they do not have reliable transportation. While the new location is across from a bus stop, not everyone lives on a public transportation route and must rely on personal transportation or other transportation options.</i></p> <p><i>A 2015 NIH study found that children from low-income environments may have a higher risk of neurological impairment than those of higher income buckets<sup>1</sup>. This may indicate that low-income people may need more access to neurology in the community.</i></p>
<p><b>Racial and ethnic minorities</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor.</i></p> <p><i>Studies show that Black and African American<sup>2</sup> and Hispanic and Latino<sup>3</sup> populations have higher</i></p>

<sup>1</sup> NIH. Poverty may slightly increase childhood risk of neurological impairment, NIH study suggests. <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/poverty-may-slightly-increase-childhood-risk-neurological-impairment-nih-study-suggests>

<sup>2</sup> Neurology. Black Patients Matter in Neurology: Race, Racism, and Race-Based Neurodisparities. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35851551/#:~:text=Black%20people%20living%20in%20the,not%20biologic%20r ace%2C%20drives%20neurodisparities.>

<sup>3</sup> AHA Journals. Trends in Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Vascular Neurology Fellowships From 2006 to 2018: A Cross-Sectional Analysis.

	<p><i>incidences of stroke and other neurological conditions. This is due to a variety of reasons, including access to care.</i></p> <p><i>The relocation of the neurology practice should help increase access to care as the new facility will allow the practice to hire new providers to treat more patients.</i></p>
<p><b>Women</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor.</i></p> <p><i>Women are often responsible for caring for a spouse or family member with Alzheimer’s Disease or other neurological conditions<sup>4</sup> and thus may be person providing transportation or making appointments. Additionally, women typically have a longer life expectancy than men and may have an increased need for neurology services as they get older.</i></p> <p><i>The relocation of the practice should increase access to neurology in the community by allowing the practice more space to hire more providers and also be closer to public transportation.</i></p>
<p><b>Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or other-than-cisgender people</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location</i></p>

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/STROKEAHA.121.035481#:~:text=There%20is%20a%20disparity%20between,6>

<sup>4</sup> Duke. Neurology and Women’s Health. <https://neurology.duke.edu/education/neurology-and-womens-health#:~:text=Gender%20has%20profound%2C%20complex%20effects,Women's%20History%20Month%202021:>

	<p><i>is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor.</i></p> <p><i>A September 2024 study has found that LGBTQIA+ people may be more likely to develop negative brain health outcomes, including a higher risk of dementia and late-life depression<sup>5</sup>. This indicates that the LGBTQIA+ population might need increased access to neurology services.</i></p>
<p><b>People with disabilities</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is in a building collocated with primary care. The neurology practice will be on the first floor, which will limit the need for elevators for people with mobility challenges. Additionally, the new practice is larger and will allow the practice to hire more providers, which will help increase access to neurology in the community. However, transportation may continue to be a barrier for people with disabilities, especially those in more rural communities where public transportation and other medical transportation services may not be available or have accessible options.</i></p>
<p><b>Older adults</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice. Approximately 19.7% of the service area</i></p>

<sup>5</sup> Neurology. Brain Health Outcomes in Sexual and Gender Minority Groups.  
<https://www.neurology.org/doi/10.1212/WNL.000000000209863>

	<p><i>residents are aged 65 or older. The median age of patients over the past three years is 64 years old.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor. Older adults tend to have a greater need for neurology care. They may also be more likely to be homebound with limited transportation options, which can be a barrier of care for them. However, the new practice is across the street from a public bus stop.</i></p>
<p><b>Persons living in rural areas</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor.</i></p> <p><i>The biggest barrier for people living in rural areas is transportation. The public transportation system in the area does not extend into the rural communities. Some patients drive nearly an hour to the current practice. While most people in the survey indicated that the new location won't impact their drive much, few people commented that the extra five miles may make a difference for them.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, there may be people living in rural communities that don't have a personal vehicle or reliable transportation and will experience a much harder time accessing neurology services regardless of the location of the practice.</i></p>
<p><b>People who are eligible for or receive public health benefits</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved</i></p>

	<p><i>Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice. Approximately 3.0% of the service area has no health insurance coverage while 39.4% of community residents have public insurance coverage.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor.</i></p> <p><i>People who are eligible for or receive public health benefits likely also fall into at least one other medical underserved groups, like low-income or older adults. People who are eligible or receive Medicaid will likely have similar impacts of low-income people. However, people who are either on Medicaid or Medicare often have more options for transportation, which will help increase their access to care. By increasing access to neurology services, health outcomes for this population may improve.</i></p>
<p><b>People who do not have third-party health coverage or have inadequate third-party health coverage</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor.</i></p> <p><i>People who identify as this medically underserved group likely fall into other medically underserved groups. People who are uninsured experience more barriers to access to care, especially around ability to pay and may put off their care. Saratoga Hospital Medical Group does provide charity care to patients who are eligible. Awareness of this program may be a</i></p>



	<p><i>barrier. An uninsured person generally has poor health outcomes that negatively impacts their health.</i></p>
<p><b>Other people who are unable to obtain health care</b></p>	<p><i>While Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology may provide services to this Medically Underserved Group, it is hard to quantify how many people in the community this may impact with the relocation of the practice. Saratoga Hospital does provide indigent care to patients who do not have health insurance. This varies and is evaluated on a case-by-case basis with each individual person.</i></p> <p><i>The new location is a larger facility that may allow the practice to hire new providers and expand access to the specialty to community residents. The new location is also more easily accessible by public transportation for community residents with limited access or no access to transportation.</i></p> <p><i>Neurological conditions may occur in any person regardless of demographics; however, increasing age is a risk factor.</i></p> <p><i>People who are unable to obtain health care are likely to experience worse health outcomes than other medically underserved groups for a variety of reasons. The ability to pay is typically one of the top barriers for people when it comes to obtaining health care services. Transportation and available hours or wait times are other common barriers to accessing care.</i></p> <p><i>Saratoga Hospital Medical Group provides charity care for patients who are eligible as discussed above. Additionally, Saratoga Hospital Medical Group is part of the larger Saratoga Hospital / Albany Med system and can refer patients to other providers to increase health care. The new practice location is collocated with a primary care practice on the second floor.</i></p>

**5. To what extent do the medically underserved groups (identified above) currently use the service(s) or care impacted by or as a result of the project? To what extent are the medically underserved groups (identified above) expected to use the service(s) or care impacted by or as a result of the project?**

*All medically underserved groups may need neurology care currently or in the future. The majority of the current patient panel is older, white adults, which also aligns with the demographics of the population in the service area. The median age for patients over*

*the past three years (January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023) is 64 years old. Additionally, increasing age is a risk factor for developing neurological conditions.*

*It is expected that the patient volume will continue to grow with the new clinic location. One neurologist interviewed said, “We receive hundreds of referrals each month and we can’t keep up. Right now, we have three neurologists on staff, and we see patients every day, all day without much of a break. And we still have a six to eight month waiting list of patients.” The new larger location will allow the practice to hire more staff, which would reduce the wait time for patients. However, patients who have recently been discharged from the hospital or have higher clinical needs are seen much sooner by providers.*

*Additionally, the current location of the clinic (Saratoga Springs) is in a resource rich area in a higher income zip code. The new location is in an underserved zip code with a lower income. Thus, the new location is likely closer to where more medically underserved individuals live within the broader service area.*

*While the patient volume is projected to grow, it is expected that there will be no impact to the medically underserved groups discussed above, which include Low-income people, racial and ethnic minorities, women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or other-than-cisgender people, people with disabilities, older adults, persons living with a prevalent infectious disease or condition, persons living in rural areas, people who are eligible for or receive public health benefits, people who do not have third-party health coverage or have inadequate third-party health coverage, and other people who are unable to obtain health care. It is expected that these medically underserved groups will continue to use the neurology services at the same rates as they do today.*

**6. What is the availability of similar services or care at other facilities in or near the Applicant's service area?**

*Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology is the only neurology clinic in the service area. The next closest neurology practice and/or neurologists are located in Albany. Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology is part of the larger Albany Med Health System, which many of the providers in Albany are part of as well.*

**7. What are the historical and projected market shares of providers offering similar services or care in the Applicant's service area?**

*Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology is the only neurology practice in Saratoga Hospital and has the market share in the county. It is possible that patients that live within Saratoga County travel to Albany or further to care at other practices.*

**8. Summarize the performance of the Applicant in meeting its obligations, if any, under Public Health Law § 2807-k (General Hospital Indigent Care Pool) and federal regulations requiring the provision of uncompensated care, community services, and/or access by minorities and people with disabilities to programs receiving federal financial assistance. Will these**

**obligations be affected by implementation of the project? If yes, please describe.**

*In 2023, 26.84% of the patient volume was considered indigent, which is defined as Medicaid, Medicaid HMO, charity care, and self-pay per the facility. The Saratoga Hospital Medical Group – Neurology clinic will continue to provide indigent care to patients who are eligible.*

**9. Are there any physician and professional staffing issues related to the project or any anticipated staffing issues that might result from implementation of project? If yes, please describe.**

*In 2022, the American Academy of Neurology published an article stating a shortage of neurologists in the United States is a “grave threat”.<sup>6</sup> A 2020 study of Medicare enrollees found that only 24% of people with a neurologic condition were seen by a neurologist<sup>7</sup>. The study also found that neurologists are not equally distributed across the country as most tend to live and practice in more urban areas instead of rural communities. The population is getting older, which means that the demand for neurologists will likely increase since age is the most critical risk factor for most neurologic diseases. Both providers interviewed stated that another provider*

**10. Are there any civil rights access complaints against the Applicant? If yes, please describe.**

*No, there are no civil rights complaints against the Applicant.*

**11. Has the Applicant undertaken similar projects/work in the last five years? If yes, describe the outcomes and how medically underserved group(s) were impacted as a result of the project. Explain why the applicant requires another investment in a similar project after recent investments in the past.**

*Saratoga Hospital has submitted a recent CON plan for the relocation of its pulmonology clinic in Queensbury. All other CON projects have been to expand or improve the quality of services. Over the past five years, Saratoga Hospital has expanded several of its primary care practices in order to create additional capacity. The expansions have not just been in Saratoga Springs, but also in outlying communities, which traditionally have been a population that is underserved.*

*Saratoga Hospital has expanded its OBGYN practices in two locations to expand capacity. Additionally, they have expanded high-volume specialty clinics such as pulmonology, cardiology, and urology. This specialty care expansion is included in this HEIA. The closure of one service line that is overserved in Queensbury and Glens Falls*

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<sup>6</sup> Majersik JJ, Ahmed A, Chen IA, et al. A shortage of neurologists we must act now: a report from the AAN 2019 Transforming Leaders Program. *Neurology*. 2021;96(24):1122-1134. doi:10.1212/WNL.00000000000012111

<sup>7</sup> American Academy of Neurology. People in Rural Areas Less Likely to Receive Specialty Care for Neurologic Conditions. <https://www.aan.com/PressRoom/Home/PressRelease/3843>

*will allow the expansion of additional pulmonology capacity and new testing services, which weren't available in the community prior.*

## **STEP 2 – POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

- 1. For each medically underserved group identified in Step 1 Question 2, describe how the project will:**
  - a. Improve access to services and health care**
  - b. Improve health equity**
  - c. Reduce health disparities**

*The 2022 Saratoga County Community Health Access survey identified “access to health care” as the most important factor for healthy communities.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, 8.7% identified “heart disease and stroke” and 7.5% of survey respondents identified “Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, or memory loss” as the biggest health problems in Saratoga Hospital. Stroke and cognitive conditions would fall under the care of a neurologist. The survey also revealed that 61.6% of respondents experienced a long wait to get a medical appointment.*

*By relocating the neurology practice to a larger location, it will allow the practice to potentially hire new providers that will help reduce the wait time for patients and improve access to health care services in the community. One provider interviewed said that the new location is located in an underserved zip code with limited health care services.*

*By providing access to neurology in the community, it will increase the access to health care services in the community for all. A report in the AAN showed that people living in rural communities do not have equal access to neurologist as if they lived in a more urban community due to the geographic distribution of neurologists in the United States.*

*The new practice location will collocate with a primary care practice, laboratory for blood draws, and a physical therapy practice, which will provide patients of either practice access to other health care services within the same building.*

- 2. For each medically underserved group identified in Step 1 Question 2, describe any unintended positive and/or negative impacts to health equity that might occur as a result of the project.**

*Moving the neurology practice to a new location approximately 3.6 miles down the road for its current location should have no or minimum negative impact to health equity and for all medically underserved groups, which include low-income people, racial and ethnic minorities, women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or other-than-cisgender people, people with disabilities, older adults, persons living with a prevalent infectious disease or condition, persons living in rural areas, people who are eligible for or receive*

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<sup>8</sup> Saratoga County Community Health Hub. Community Health Assessment. <https://saratoga-county-community-health-hub-1-scpshs.hub.arcgis.com/pages/community-health-assessment>

*public health benefits, people who do not have third-party health coverage or have inadequate third-party health coverage, and other people who are unable to obtain health care.*

*The neurology practice is the only neurology practice in the region and members of the identified medically underserved groups are expected to continue seeking services at the new location. With a larger facility, the practice may expand and hire new providers in the future, which would increase access to care for all medically underserved groups and the general population, which would have a positive impact on health equity in the community.*

- 3. How will the amount of indigent care, both free and below cost, change (if at all) if the project is implemented? Include the current amount of indigent care, both free and below cost, provided by the Applicant.**

*The amount of indigent care is not expected to change with the relocation of the practice. In 2023, 26.84% of the patient volume was considered indigent. The amount of indigent care in 2025 is not expected to change from the previous year's volume.*

- 4. Describe the access by public or private transportation, including Applicant-sponsored transportation services, to the Applicant's service(s) or care if the project is implemented.**

*The new location at 510 Geysler Road is accessible via the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) 540 NX – Northway Express, which has a bus stop at Geysler Road & Milton Town Hall. The bus stop is located directly across the street from the building. The current location at 6 Care Lane does not have a bus station. For those who cannot use the public bus due to a disability or impairment, CDTA offers its Special Transit Available by Request (STAR) bus for those who meet eligibility requirements. Additionally, the Capital District offers ACCESS Transit Services (ACCESS) for eligible Medicaid clients in the region.*

*Both locations are easily accessible by private transportation, such as a car.*

- 5. Describe the extent to which implementation of the project will reduce architectural barriers for people with mobility impairments.**

*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all health care entities provide full and equal access for people with disabilities. The new neurology location meets all ADA requirements, and no major renovations are proposed for the project as the space was previously used as a primary care practice.*

- 6. Describe how implementation of the project will impact the facility's delivery of maternal health care services and comprehensive reproductive health care services, as that term is used in Public Health Law § 2599-aa, including contraception, sterility procedures, and abortion. How will the project impact the availability and provision of reproductive and maternal**

**health care services in the service area? How will the Applicant mitigate any potential disruptions in service availability?**

It is not anticipated that there will be any negative impact on medically underserved groups identified in the HEIA as a result of moving the Neurology clinic. The Neurology clinic will continue to provide services to the same medically underserved community, but in the new location. That new location has better access to public transportation and greater visibility from the road than the current location. Saratoga Hospital has a robust plan to communicate details of the move to current and perspective patients, the community at large, local government, public health department, and other community partners. There will be a focus on communicating the clinic move to those community partners that serve the underserved populations identified in the HEIA. That plan includes but is not limited to direct mail, email, signage within both locations, and announcements via the hospital website. Saratoga Hospital also has a large outpatient provider network in which we can also provide communication about the Neurology practice relocation.

## Meaningful Engagement

- 7. List the local health department(s) located within the service area that will be impacted by the project.**

*Saratoga County Department of Health, 6012 County Farm Road, Ballston Spa, NY 12020*

- 8. Did the local health department(s) provide information for, or partner with, the Independent Entity for the HEIA of this project?**

*The Health Department was contacted multiple times to provide a comment on the project. However, they did not respond.*

*Data from the Community Health Assessment for the county, which is located on the Department's website, was used in the report.*

- 9. Meaningful engagement of stakeholders: Complete the "Meaningful Engagement" table in the document titled "HEIA Data Table". Refer to the Instructions for more guidance.**

*Please see the table in the separate document for the required information*

- 10. Based on your findings and expertise, which stakeholders are most affected by the project? Has any group(s) representing these stakeholders expressed concern the project or offered relevant input?**

*All stakeholders and the organizations and/or populations they represent may be impacted by the project. No one has expressed major concern for the project.*

- 11. How has the Independent Entity's engagement of community members informed the Health Equity Impact Assessment about who will benefit as well as who will be burdened from the project?**

*A short online survey was emailed to past patients of the Neurology clinic. A total of 252 survey responses were received. Nearly all (99.22%) respondents were patients or caregivers of patients at the neurology clinic and residents of the Neurology clinic's service area. When asked how the relocation would impact their ability to access services and care at the clinic, most respondents said that it would not impact them much, it would be a further drive for them, or it would depend on the new location.*

*When asked if they support the relocation of the neurology clinic, 50% of respondents said yes while 14.34% said no. Another 35.7% selected "other," and provided comments such as "it would depend on where the new location is," "I don't know," or "unsure." Survey respondents were provided with the new location address in the introduction of the survey. For some survey respondents that live in the more rural areas of the service area, they may already drive a long distance to the practice. Others may utilize public transportation or medical transportation options in the community if they don't drive.*

**12. Did any relevant stakeholders, especially those considered medically underserved, not participate in the meaningful engagement portion of the Health Equity Impact Assessment? If so, list.**

*It is unknown if persons living with prevalent infectious disease or condition, LGBTQIA+, immigrants, or people eligible for or receive public health benefits participated in the survey. It is possible that individuals in these medically underserved groups received the survey but chose not to participate.*

**STEP 3 – MITIGATION**

- 1. If the project is implemented, how does the Applicant plan to foster effective communication about the resulting impact(s) to service or care availability to the following:**
  - a. People of limited English-speaking ability**
  - b. People with speech, hearing or visual impairments**
  - c. If the Applicant does not have plans to foster effective communication, what does the Independent Entity advise?**

*There is very limited diversity in the greater Saratoga Springs / Milton area with few people of limited English-speaking ability. However, as clinics affiliated with a public not-for-profit hospital, Saratoga Hospital must accommodate patients who may have limited English proficiency, or a language-based disability or impairment. Saratoga Hospital providers and staff have access to translation services and interpreters through its Language Line services available as needed to help assist people with limited or no English-speaking ability and people with speech, hearing or visual impairments.*

- 2. What specific changes are suggested so the project better meets the needs of each medically underserved group (identified above)?**

*No additional changes are suggested as current processes are adequate for the community.*

- 3. How can the Applicant engage and consult impacted stakeholders on forthcoming changes to the project?**

*As the project progresses, Saratoga Hospital can continue to communicate with stakeholders and community members on the relocation date and new address of the practice to mitigate any confusion.*

- 4. How does the project address systemic barriers to equitable access to services or care? If it does not, how can the project be modified?**

*The need for neurology is growing due to the aging population across the country and locally. Increasing age is the most critical risk factor for most neurological diseases. Additionally, improved patient outcomes in neurology have led to an increase in the number of neurologic patients, such as those living with multiple sclerosis, migraines,*



and epilepsy. One provider interviewed said that the region is “the fastest growing community for super seniors.”

The current location of the practice (6 Care Lane, Saratoga Springs) is located in a more affluent community and is not accessible via public transportation adequately. The new location (510 Geysers Road, Milton) is a more underserved community with a lower median household income and is accessible via public transportation.

The new location is also a larger space that will allow the practice to expand and potentially hire new providers, which will reduce wait times and expand patient volumes over time. One provider interviewed said, “the need for this service is skyrocketing, especially in outer zip codes.”

#### **STEP 4 – MONITORING**

- 1. What are existing mechanisms and measures the Applicant already has in place that can be leveraged to monitor the potential impacts of the project?**

Saratoga Hospital currently conducts patient satisfaction surveys on an annual basis and after each patient visit for all their clinics. Additionally, the Hospital also has a formal complaint process that requires review and follow-up for any patient complaint at any of its practices.

- 2. What new mechanisms or measures can be created or put in place by the Applicant to ensure that the Applicant addresses the findings of the HEIA?**

None are recommended at this time.

#### **STEP 5 – DISSEMINATION**

The Applicant is required to publicly post the CON application and the HEIA on its website within one week of acknowledgement by the Department. The Department will also publicly post the CON application and the HEIA through NYSE-CON within one week of the filing.

Saratoga Hospital intends to post the HEIA on the website as required.

**OPTIONAL:** Is there anything else you would like to add about the health equity impact of this project that is not found in the above answers? (250 words max)

----- SECTION BELOW TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT -----

**SECTION C. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND MITIGATION PLAN**

*Acknowledgment by the Applicant that the Health Equity Impact Assessment was reviewed by the facility leadership before submission to the Department. This section is to be completed by the Applicant, not the Independent Entity.*

**I. Acknowledgement**

I, (APPLICANT), attest that I have reviewed the Health Equity Impact Assessment for the (PROJECT TITLE) that has been prepared by the Independent Entity, (NAME OF INDEPENDENT ENTITY).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**II.  Mitigation Plan**

**If the project is approved, how has or will the Applicant mitigate any potential negative impacts to medically underserved groups identified in the Health Equity Impact Assessment? (1000 words max)**

*Please note: this narrative must be made available to the public and posted conspicuously on the Applicant's website until a decision on the application has been made.*