patients have at least one physical co-morbidity, including cardiovascular disease, asthma, diabetes, hypertension, cancer or HIV.

Of the two inpatient substance abuse providers in Erie County, Sheehan and Erie County Medical Center(ECMC), only Sheehan is operating at capacity. At ECMC, substance abuse services are a minor component of the hospital's overall mission. The transfer of Erie County Medical Center's 22 detoxification beds to Sheehan would give patients the benefit of a comprehensive, focused, high quality program in a facility where substance abuse treatment is the major service line.

Sheehan is a vital provider of services to a community with severe health care needs. Following years of mismanagement, the current board and executive leadership is capable and committed. With a consolidation of substance abuse services and expansion of outpatient care, Sheehan provides access to health care for disadvantaged patients and is a public health asset worth preserving.

Recommendation 5

Facility (ies)

Erie County Medical Center/Erie County Medical Center Corporation (Erie County)
Buffalo General Hospital/Kaleida Health (Erie County)

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the facilities controlled by the Erie County Medical Center Corporation and Kaleida Health be joined under a single unified governance structure under the control of an entity other than Erie County Medical Center Corporation, Kaleida Health, or any other public benefit corporation. It is further recommended that this entity consist of a reconstituted single

board including representation of Kaleida Health, the Erie County Medical Center Corporation, the University at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, and community leaders. If the Commissioner of Health determines that the single board proposed by the member entities does not meet these requirements, it is further recommended that the Commissioner of Health alter the composition of the board to satisfy these requirements. It is further recommended that this entity have unified management with powers sufficient to compel the service mix provided at any of the individual institutions under its control. It is further recommended that the joined entity utilize existing infrastructure to the extent possible to consolidate all necessary services into clinical centers of excellence, including tertiary, quaternary, psychiatric, and long term care services. It is further recommended that the joined entity develop new infrastructure in which to locate comprehensive heart and vascular services. It is further recommended that the Commissioner of Health:

(i) Refrain from either approving any applications that have been or will be filed by either entity or providing any other consent requested by either facility, prior to the execution by the facilities of a binding agreement to join under a single unified governance structure pursuant to the terms of this recommendation, except where such approval or consent is necessary to protect the life, health, safety and welfare of facility patients, residents or staff;

(ii) If Kaleida Health and Erie County Medical Center Corporation fail to execute such an agreement by December 31, 2007, close either Buffalo General Hospital or Erie County Medical Center and expand the other to accommodate the patient volume of the closed facility; and

(iii) Present to the State Legislature any necessary draft legislation in a time and manner sufficient to implement this recommendation by June 30, 2008.

Facility Description(s)

Erie County Medical Center (ECMC) is a 550-bed hospital sponsored by a public benefit corporation established in 2004. The hospital is situated on 67-acre, largely undeveloped campus. ECMC provides comprehensive acute care services, including level I trauma, burn care, kidney transplant, psychiatry, physical medicine/rehabilitation, and detoxification services.