

THE CARO CENTER

By: Representative Edward J. Canfield, D.O.





Murray
Hall

Fast Facts:

- 1914: Originally established in Wahjamega, southwest of Caro, as a Farm Colony for Epileptics
- Over the years, new treatments for epilepsy reduced the need for an epileptic facility and the institution was reassigned as a psychiatric hospital.
- **Number of Employees:** 349 full-time
- **Number of Residents:** 150 patient capacity
- **How long has it been in operation?** 103 years
- **How many buildings are currently in use?** 8-10 buildings out of 47
- The Caro Center is the second largest employer in rural Tuscola County



What We Know:

- This year, Governor Snyder has recommended a capital outlay of \$115 million for the replacement of the Caro Center.
- It is vital that as the state contemplates the building of a 200 bed psychiatric hospital, a once-in-a-generation opportunity, we must evaluate all factors related to the structure, it's location, and how it may impact the citizens of the state of Michigan.

Why Consider Moving the Caro Center?

- Transportation of patients to the Caro Center is a long process and the center is not centrally located or specifically on the I-75 corridor.
- Families of patients have to travel a great distance to see their family members at the Caro Center.
- The staff of the Caro Center do not live near Caro.
- When patients require medical treatment, they must be transported 30 miles to the nearest accredited facility for treatment.
- The Caro Center is completely used up and has no further value. It would be less costly to just start over on a new site.

I contend that all of these assumptions are actually misguided.

Considerations #1 & 2: Transportation issues.

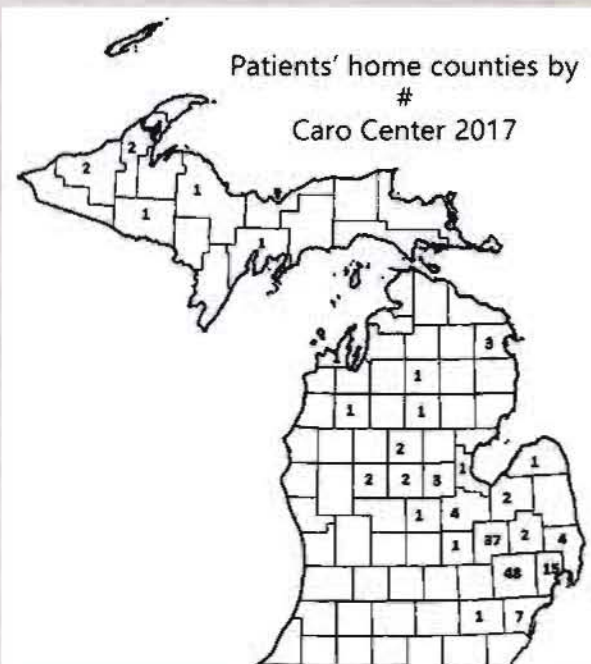
- The Caro Center's district is exceedingly large, including 44 counties, the entire Upper Peninsula, and as far south as Macomb County.
- Transportation is going to be a factor for both law enforcement and families no matter where the new psychiatric hospital is built.



Considerations #1 & 2: Transportation issues

Where are the patients actually coming from?

- 123/149 patients, or 82%, are from a county that touches Tuscola County or south and east of the Caro Center.
- Moving the psychiatric hospital to a more central location would actually increase travel for the vast majority of families and law enforcement as well.



Considerations #1 &2: Transportation issues.

Where are the patients actually coming from?

- Last month, 177 patients were awaiting admission to a psychiatric hospital. In the state of Michigan, when a bed opens up, that's the facility the patient is sent to regardless of that facility's service region.
- At present, while the Caro Center serves the highest number of UP patients by facility (8), 53% of UP patients are being served at facilities other than the Caro Center (9).

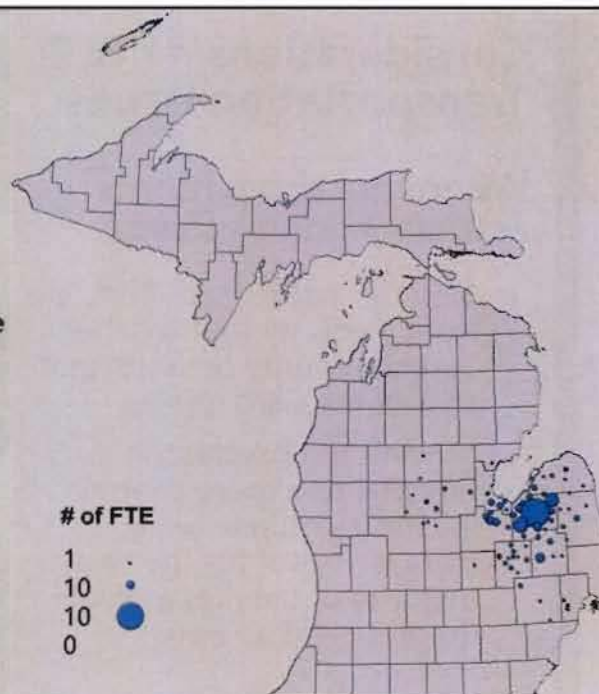
State Facility	Caro	CFP	Kalamazoo	WRPH
Patients from Other Regions	10	68	11	14
# of Patients Per Facility	149	259	142	171
Percent of Patients from Other Regions	6.7%	26.2%	7.7%	8.1%

State Facilities	Caro	CFP	Kalamazoo	WRPH
Total UP Patients	8	6	3	0
Percent of all UP Patients	47.06%	35.29%	17.65%	0.00%

Consideration #3 – The staff does not live near the Caro Center.

According to the department, of the 349 people working at the Caro Center, 111 or 32% actually live within the Caro zip code.

- A review of the graph would indicate that up to 70% of people working at the Caro Center actually live within 30 miles of the center.
- Moving the hospital to a more central location would not only displace the vast majority of the skilled employees who work at the Caro Center, but would actually significantly increase their drive time.
- The map also give a clue to the economic devastation that would occur with moving the facility away from the Thumb.



Consideration #4 – When patients require medical treatment, they must be transported 30 miles to the nearest accredited facility

- The Caro Center has not used Caro Community Hospital because of what we believe is the mistaken understanding that the hospital must be accredited by the Joint Commission. We have challenged this assumption and have not received any confirmation that it is true.
- Interestingly, the hospital that the Caro Center does use, Covenant Healthcare, is not accredited by the Joint Commission.
- Caro Community Hospital IS licensed and accredited by the State of Michigan and CMS, which should be sufficient to see any patient from the Caro Center.
- Caro Community Hospital is less than 4 miles from the Caro Center and can manage the vast majority of health issues related to their patients.
- A letter written to me (dated March 8, 2017), Mr. Mark Augsburg, President and CEO of Caro Community Hospital, explained that the hospital is greatly interested and prepared to provide service to the patients of the Caro Center.

Consideration #5 – The Caro Center is completely used up and it would be less costly to start from scratch.



- The footprint of the Caro Center offers the state numerous benefits to utilize the existing land and infrastructure
- Existing infrastructure:
 - ✓ 650 acres of land
 - ✓ Water tower
 - ✓ 5 water wells
 - ✓ Power house
 - ✓ New on-site generator
 - ✓ Lift station- Managed by Caro
 - ✓ Administration building

Other Considerations:

- When Camp Tuscola closed in 2013, 60 state of Michigan jobs vanished from the area. We are left with a vacant unusable outdated facility
- If the Caro Center moves and we lose all 349 full-time positions, it would further devastate our community, schools, and economy.
- If the state takes this facility out of our district, we are left with the wreckage of a 100 year old facility and a devastated economy.
- When will the Thumb of Michigan ever be able to receive a jewel from the state?
- Politicians may want the state to build a psychiatric hospital in their community, but you may find that convincing the residents to have a psychiatric hospital in their backyard to be harder sale. Caro and the Thumb wants the hospital.

Final Thoughts:

- When we truly evaluate the people served at the Caro Center, where their families come from, where the skilled employees and their families live, the infrastructure available and cost that we can save the state by building the new psychiatric hospital at the current site, all indicate that the best choice for the state and taxpayers, is to leave the Caro Center in Caro.
- Caro and the Caro Center has been committed to the treatment and service of the patients of the state of Michigan for more than 100 years and they are prepared to continue that service for the next 100 years as well.