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CON: A Hospital Perspective

Cody Hand

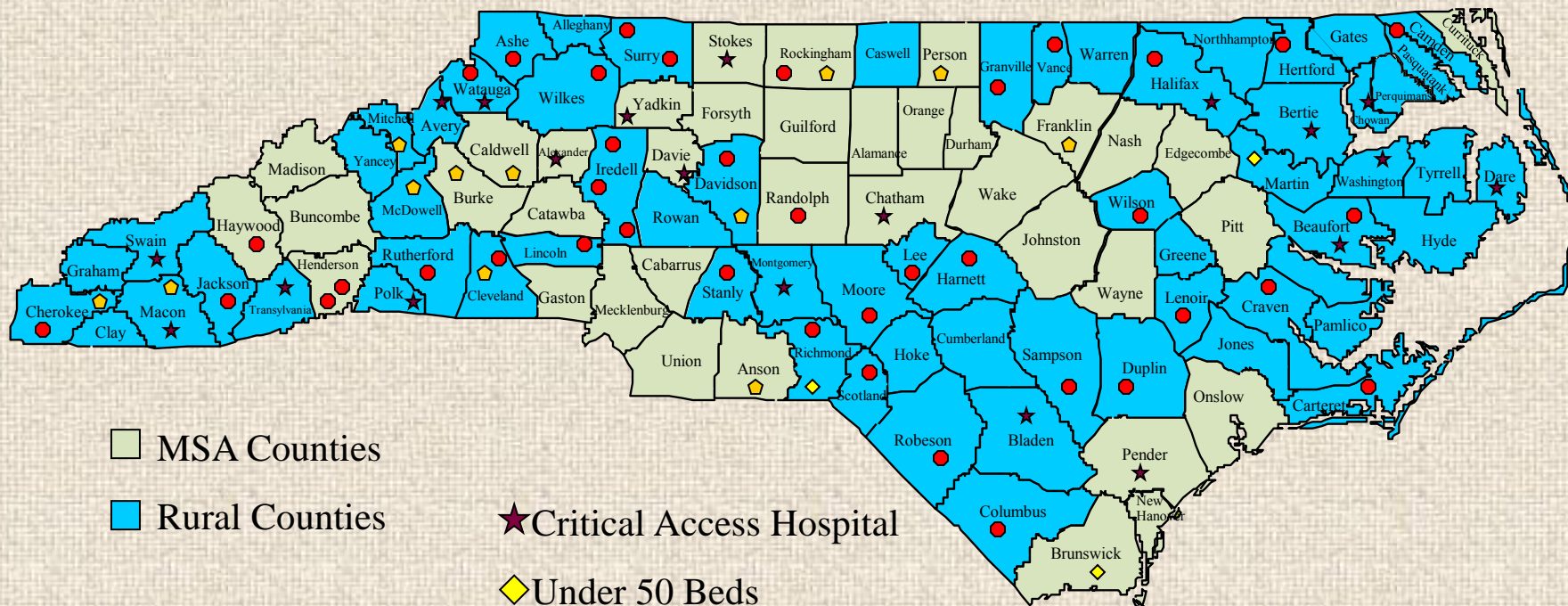
Vice President and Deputy General Counsel

North Carolina Hospital Association

North Carolina Hospitals

- 155 hospitals in North Carolina
 - Acute Care
 - Rehabilitation
 - Behavioral Health
- 22 Critical Access Hospitals
- 5 Teaching Hospitals

NC Small and Rural Hospitals



■ MSA Counties

■ Rural Counties

★ Critical Access Hospital

◆ Under 50 Beds

⬠ 51 -- 100 Beds

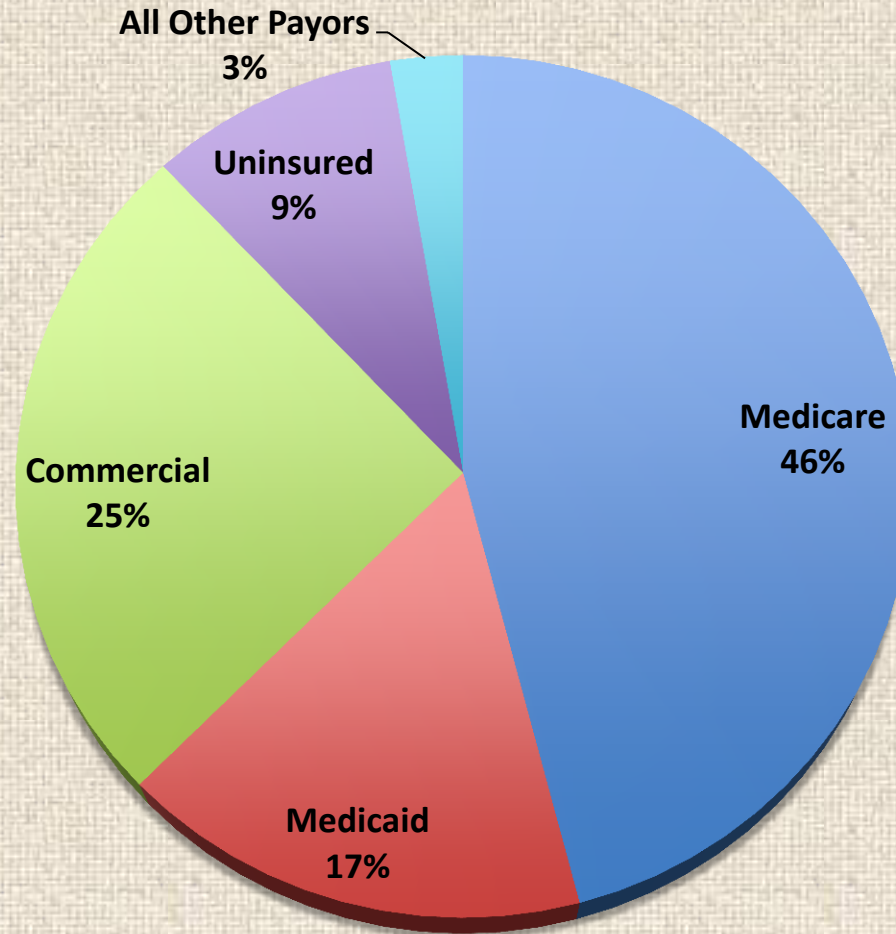
● Over 100 Beds

68 Rural Hospitals

22 Critical Access Hospitals

38 Rural Hospitals <100 beds

Hospital Patient Mix



Charges by Payer Type

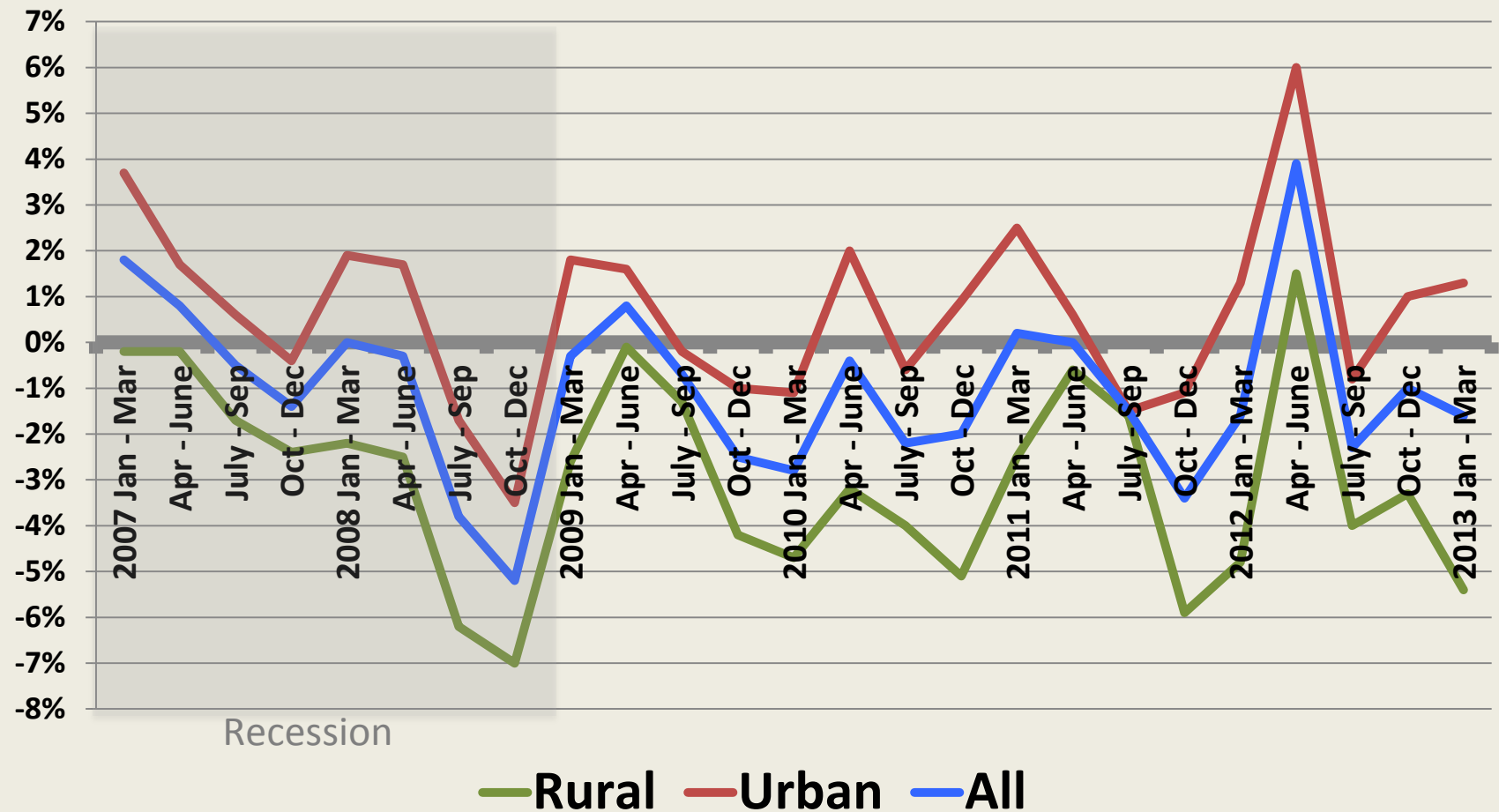
Source: Advocacy Needs Data Initiative (ANDI), Financial Report (FY 2012), Average of All NCHA member hospitals

Government Insurance

- Patient care for the government-insured makes up 66% of the average NC hospital charges.
- Medicare and Medicaid define what services their beneficiaries receive under their programs.
- The government programs set the reimbursement amounts for services to their beneficiaries, often below the cost hospitals incur to provide services.

Patient Margins

Average Patient Margin



Source: NCHA ANDI. October 2013.

How Are We Different

- Open all day, every day
- Serve the entire community
- Meet the needs of the entire community
 - Provide prenatal care
 - Many hospitals have forensics programs that care for patients after death
 - Hospitals are able to provide a broad range of money losing services because of those procedures that are profitable

Issues to Address When Contemplating CON Changes

- Cross Subsidization of Service Lines
- Self referral
- Incentives to perform unnecessary Procedures
- Quality of care
- ED call coverage

Service Line Cross Subsidization

- Many of the things needed in the community, like obstetrics, are subsidized by services such as orthopedics.

Self Referral

- NC Has a very weak self referral statute
 - GS 90-405 – 409
 - Exceptions are very broad and “underserved areas” can easily be any area in North Carolina.
- When a physician owns the practice and the operating room, he is able to collect both a facility fee and an operating fee. There is an incentive to refer as many patients as possible and perform as many procedures as possible.

Overutilization

- Risks of unregulated self-referrals include overutilization of the services in which physicians have investments, increased health care costs, and decreased quality of care.
 - Perry JE. Physician-owned specialty hospitals and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: health care reform at the intersection of law and ethics. *Am Business Law J.* 2012;49:369-416.
- In a recent study of screening colonoscopies published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 23% were “potentially inappropriate” because the patients were over age 75 or because they had a repeat screening too soon after the last one for no clear medical reason.
- Glowing Man – CT Scan overuse is a common problem at diagnostic centers

Emergency Call

- Emergency room doctors aren't typically specialists
- Need specialists to take call in emergency cases
- Concern is that specialists with their own ORs will drop privileges and stop taking call.

FAQ

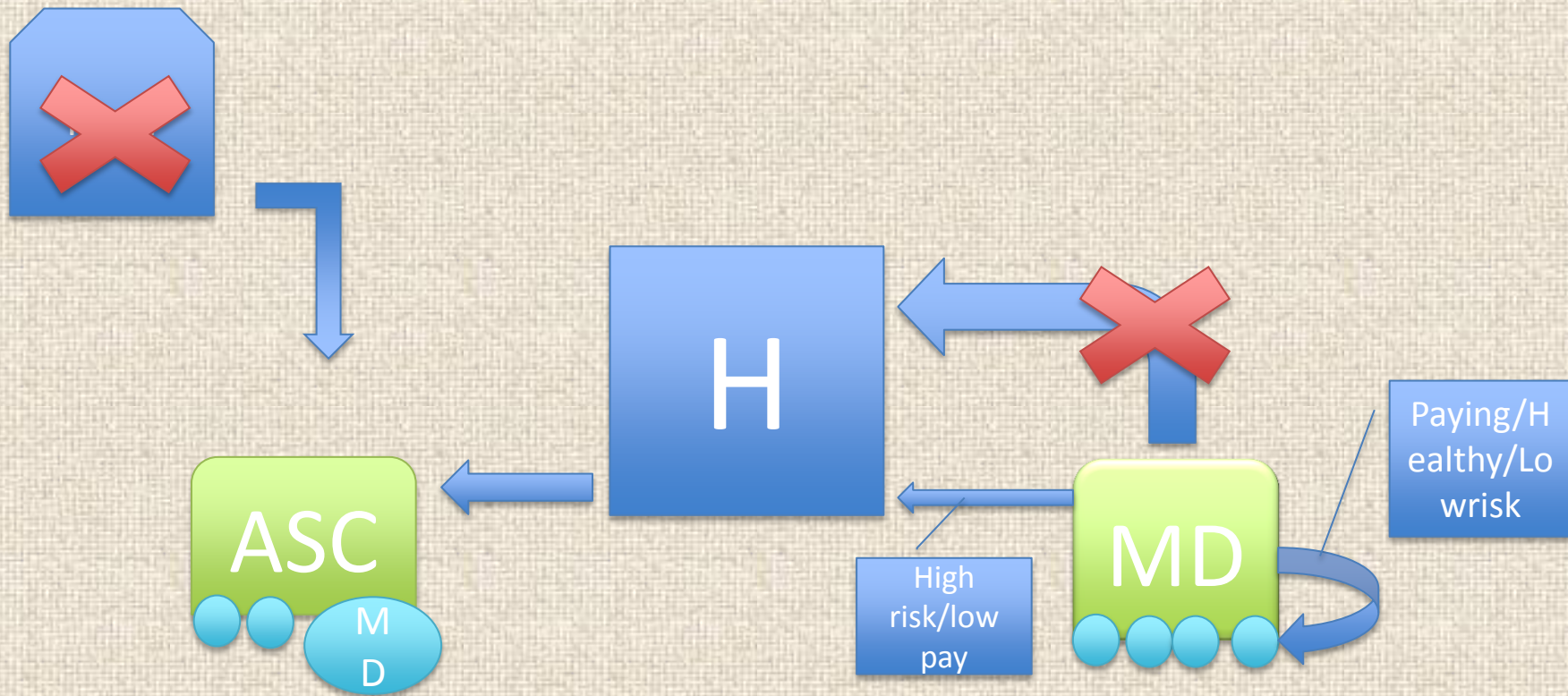
- How do states without CON still have hospitals?
 - Most states without CON were able to repeal before the enactment of EMTALA and ACA.
 - Able to adjust before Government mandates
 - Those states who repealed CON after EMTALA are on the list of most expensive and their hospitals are struggling.
 - OH and PA (both repealed in the 90s) are among the most expensive per capita healthcare states in the nation.
 - NC is among the top 15 lowest cost states in per capita healthcare expenses.

FAQ

- Can't we just let the market work?
 - Repeal of CON will not leave us with an open market.
 - EMTALA
 - CMS
 - Insurance contracts and regs.
 - There is no free market in healthcare.

FAQ

- Can't we provide competition in Urban areas and protect the rural hospitals by continuing to regulate operating rooms in those areas?



FAQ

- Is the quality better in the ASC because you aren't surrounded by sick people and you get in and out?
 - There is no evidence that the quality of care differs between hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers

There is more to competition than Certificate of Need.

- The Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice's report "Improving Health Care: A Dose of Competition" identifies imperfections in the health care market, beyond government regulations, that hinder open competition.
- These include mediating forces like health insurance, public health and payment programs, a lack of accurate and reliable cost and quality information, and the absence of a truly independent and sovereign consumer.

There is a role for Ambulatory Surgical Centers

Ambulatory Surgical Centers Today

- 47 licensed ambulatory surgical centers
 - 19 hospital joint ventures
- 3 single specialty surgical center demonstration projects
- 63 endoscopy centers
- The SMFP indicates that in 2016 there will be 258 more operating rooms in North Carolina than are needed.

The Perfect Storm

- No matter what you decide, now is not the time to remove CON determinations from healthcare services.
 - ACA implementation
 - Transparency
 - Medicaid reform
- Providers are moving as fast as they can, but need time.

There are changes needed

- Raise thresholds
- Require “loser-pay” on appeals
- Require bond posting to appeal