



2026 Iowa Certificate of Need (CON) Application

Instructions: 1. Complete all the sections below. 2. Provide concise, evidence-based responses, with supporting documentation or data as needed. 3. Reference Iowa Code 10A.714, as needed, to complete the application. 4. Upload additional documentation, as needed.

Primary Contact

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Facility Name

Crawford County Memorial Hospital

Facility Address

100 Medical Parkway, Denison, Iowa 51442

Project Title

Crawford County Memorial Hospital - MRI Replacement

Project Type

New Equipment

Would you like to request a summary review?

Yes

1. Applicant and Facility Overview

a. Project Purpose and Objectives:

The purpose of the project is to acquire and install a permanent, fixed MRI unit at Crawford County Memorial Hospital. We plan to replace our current MRI with a new MRI machine to add service gaps, improve diagnostic precision, and reduce the physical and financial burdens placed on patients who must currently travel out of the region for care.

Project Objectives:

Improve Patient Continuity of Care: Enable local physicians to coordinate imaging and results in-house, significantly reducing the "rural bypass" where patients seek care at urban centers due to local equipment limitations.

Expand Services: This MRI will allow us to offer services in the areas of cancer, cardiovascular health, and chronic disease prevention.

- Cancer: Equipped with specialized coils for breast and prostate imaging, this MRI allows us to see tumors that are often invisible on standard X-rays or ultrasounds. It acts like a high-definition magnifying glass, helping doctors find cancer in its earliest, most treatable stages and perform precise, life-saving biopsies

right here in our community, rather than sending patients an hour away. This service will keep patients in their own support networks during their most difficult moments.

- Cardiovascular Health: The Cardiac and Angio features allow us to take what is similar to a live movie of the heart and blood vessels. Staff can see how well the heart is pumping and check for blockages in the veins and arteries without needing to use invasive tubes or catheters. This helps prevent heart attacks and strokes by identifying blood flow issues before they become emergencies.

- Chronic Disease Prevention & Management: For patients living with arthritis or back injuries, our orthopedic scans with this MRI will provide clear images of joints, ligaments, and nerves. By catching these issues early, we can help patients manage their pain and stay active. Additionally, scans can help monitor long-term conditions like multiple sclerosis or the effects of diabetes, ensuring patients get the right treatment to stay healthy for years to come.

b. Relationship to Long-Range Development Plan:

This upgrade is necessary to replace equipment that is nearing end of life and will increase the types of tests we can offer our community, which will improve local access and increase the quality of tests performed to assist providers in providing high quality local care.

c. Description of Proposed Service/Program:

This project is included in Healty Hometowns.

With a new MRI, we will be able to serve a more diverse patient base due to the services we can offer. Along with our current MRI test offerings, we will be able to offer high-intensity breast cancer screenings and specialized prostate MRIs, services that are currently unavailable within a 60-mile radius, we anticipate drawing more patients from rural populations in Ida, Monona, Harrison, and Shelby counties.

This technology is life-saving for women in our area. At CCMH we performed 1,410 mammograms in fiscal year 2025, but a mammogram is not always enough. According to the Iowa Cancer Registry, Iowa has the 9th highest rate of breast cancer in the country. However, about 40% of women have dense breast tissue, which can hide tumors on a standard mammogram. By using this new MRI as a follow-up screening tool, we can find these hidden cancers early and at their most treatable stages. This result can directly save the lives of women in our local neighborhoods.

With this faster, more efficient equipment, CCMH expects to serve over 1,000 patients with the MRI annually. The health benefits are clear: faster imaging leads to earlier diagnosis and better recovery.

By upgrading to the Siemens Magnetom Altea MRI, we ensure that our patients have permanent, daily access to the best technology available without having to leave their community.

d. Target Population: Specify geographic and demographic areas.

The primary service area is Crawford County, Iowa. We anticipate seeing patients from neighboring counties of Ida, Monona, Harrison, and Shelby counties with the new technology of the MRI.

The demographics of our target population include:

- The Elderly are identified as being in high need of these exams and the least able to travel long distances for care, particularly for cardiac and chronic condition monitoring

- Approximately 40% of women have dense breast tissue and require a screening with the MRI. Women with a genetic risk may also require high-intensity breast cancer screenings that are currently unavailable within a 60-mile radius.

- Cardiac patients with pacemakers who were previously turned away due to outdated technology but can now be served safely with the new MRI-safe monitoring equipment.

- Individuals with MR-conditional implants (such as artificial hips, knees, or spinal screws) who require specialized "WARP" imaging suites.

- Residents experiencing "travel burdens" for oncology and cardiac diagnostics who currently have to drive 60–90 miles to urban centers for specialized scans.

- Chronic disease patients needing neurology, orthopedics, and long-term management for conditions like multiple sclerosis or diabetes.
- Most ages with Orthopedic injuries or conditions.

e. Relation to Existing Provider Network: Summarize relationship with other health care providers/services in the region.

We are an independent critical access hospital and rural health clinic with a network agreement with CHI in Omaha.

f. Funding Sources and Financial Resources: Identify and document sources of funding and financial viability.

Healthy Hometowns Iowa Grant / Operating Cash Reserves \$1,253,950.00
 Operating Cash Reserves \$478,517.00
 Total Funding \$1,732,467.00

Current # of Beds (if changing)

Current bed type (if changing)

Requested # of Beds (if changing)

Requested bed type (if changing)

Document Upload

2. Community Need and Service Gaps

a. Description of Need:

The hospital serves Crawford County and surrounding rural areas as one of the few facilities with a permanent, in-house MRI. Annual scan volume has increased by over 16% in two years, growing from 813 to nearly 950 exams.

Service gaps include:

- The current MRI technology is outdated and lacks the necessary hardware and software to perform essential diagnostics like high-resolution prostate scans and breast MRIs.
- Current equipment cannot clearly image patients with metal implants.
- Residents in neighboring counties (Iowa, Monona, Harrison, and Shelby) often rely on mobile MRI units that only visit on specific days and lack the technical capacity for specialized scans, leading to delayed diagnoses.

b. Assessment of Existing Services and Gaps:

Crawford County Memorial Hospital currently operates a permanent, in-house MRI, providing an advantage over many neighboring rural clinics/hospitals that rely on mobile MRI trailers. While mobile units often only visit facilities once or twice a week, CCMH's fixed unit allows for immediate turnaround on emergency and outpatient scans.

Residents in Crawford County and the surrounding areas face a gap in specialized imaging. Currently, the nearest comparable MRI services are located in Carroll (St. Anthony's), Omaha, or Sioux City. This requires many patients to travel 60 to 90 miles for advanced diagnostics, creating a significant barrier for the elderly and low-income populations, with long wait times to get an appointment.

The primary gap in our current service is not just availability but capabilities in technology. Historically, a high volume of patients has bypassed local care in favor of urban centers like Omaha. This migration is driven by increased wait times as demand has stretched the current unit's capacity, as well as a preference for newer technology not currently available in our aging unit. Furthermore, our current equipment lacks the specialized software for advanced cardiac, breast, and orthopedic imaging, specifically for patients with metal implants.

The need for this upgrade is further underscored by our growth; CCMH has seen a nearly 300% increase in total patient visits over the last decade. With the 2026 opening of our new medical clinic, we anticipate a significant spike in diagnostic imaging referrals. The 2026 MRI upgrade is a direct strategic response to these gaps.

c. Alternatives Analysis:

Other alternatives were not considered, as this is a replacement of our current MRI. If we do not replace the equipment nearing end of life, we would decrease access to MRI appointments.

d. Accessibility Considerations:

For residents of Crawford County, getting a high-level MRI usually means leaving the county. While CCMH offers basic MRI scans, our current equipment cannot handle specialized needs.

Patients requiring high-intensity breast cancer screenings, cardiac scans for those with pacemakers, or advanced orthopedic imaging are currently forced to travel long distances to urban centers like Omaha or Sioux City.

A significant portion of our senior population no longer drives long distances, or feel comfortable in heavy urban traffic like Omaha. For these patients, a 70-mile trip is not just an inconvenience; it is a barrier to care.

With 12.1% of Crawford County residents living below the poverty level, the cost of fuel, vehicle maintenance, and lost wages from a half-day of travel are also a barrier to care.

e. Community Input/Support:

Documents of support are attached.

Document Upload (if needed)

Dr Luft Support Letter.pdf

Jon Schuttinga Support Letter.pdf

f. Non-discriminatory Access:

Crawford County Memorial Hospital does not exclude, deny benefits to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the ground of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or creed in admission to, participation in, or receipt of the services and benefits under any of its programs and activities, and in staff and employee assignments to patients, whether carried out by CCMH directly or through a contractor or any other entity with which CCMH arranges to carry out its programs and activities.

3. Impact on Existing Providers

a. Impact Assessment:

The proposed MRI upgrade will not have a negative impact on existing fixed MRI providers in the region. The nearest fixed MRI units are located in Carroll, Sioux City, and Omaha. These facilities primarily serve their own immediate populations. Due to the high demand for diagnostic imaging in those urban centers, they often face capacity challenges. By upgrading our in-house unit, we are not competing for their patient base but rather ensuring that Crawford County residents are able to get care close to their home and work.

Rather than duplicating services with other facilities, this project fills a critical gap with technology. Many neighboring rural facilities rely on mobile MRI trailers that visit only once or twice per week. These mobile services create a gap in timing where emergency and inpatient cases cannot be scanned immediately. Furthermore, mobile units often lack the advanced software (such as breast coils or MRI-safe cardiac

monitoring) provided by the new Siemens Magnetom Altea. This project ensures that specialized diagnostics are available locally 24/7, effectively closing the gap between rural and urban standards of care.

b. Community and Economic Impact: Broader system effect and value-added to the community.

CCMH is a primary economic driver for the region, recently contributing over \$70 million in total economic impact to the county. This project directly supports that momentum by:

CCMH employs nearly 300 individuals. Upgrading the MRI ensures that our radiology department and specialized clinical staff have the tools needed to remain competitive, preventing the loss of skilled medical professionals to urban markets.

By capturing MRI utilization locally, we keep healthcare dollars within Crawford County. When patients travel to Omaha or Sioux City for scans, they also spend on fuel, food, and retail in those cities. This project keeps that secondary economic activity in our county.

The current geographic gap in the MRI technology forces local employees to take a full day of leave for a 20-minute scan in a metro area. Having the new MRI technology in-house allows workers to complete diagnostics during a lunch break or shift change, significantly reducing lost productivity for Crawford County businesses.

For the 12.1% of our population living below the poverty line, the hidden cost of travel, such as gas, wear on vehicles, and childcare, is a major barrier. Local access transforms healthcare from a financial burden into a community resource.

A strong health system is essential for attracting new residents and industries to rural Iowa. Providing technology that is usually only found in the city, such as specialized breast cancer coils and MRI-safe cardiac monitoring, proves that CCMH is committed to quality care. It ensures that a resident's zip code does not determine their access to life-saving early detection.

c. Efficiency in Use of Resources: Shared/cooperative arrangements to maximize efficiency.

At this time we do not have a shared agreement. This upgrade will allow us to further maximize our MRI schedule and use.

4. Financial and Operational Feasibility

a. Financial Projections and Feasibility:

Total estimated project costs are \$1,732,467. The break-even point for total project costs is 1004 MRI scans or less than 1 year of operations. This is highly feasible given historical statistics and our employment of an Orthopedic Surgeon and 2 General Surgeons.

Document Upload (3-year budget projections)

3 Year Projection & Break Even.pdf

MRI Budget - Project Costs - Funding Sources.pdf

MRI stats.pdf

b. Staffing and Operations:

CCMH currently employs certified Radiologic Technologists who are cross-trained in MRI. Upon installation, all staff will undergo 40+ hours of vendor-specific application training provided by Siemens to master the new technology and specialized protocols (Breast, Cardiac, and Metal-Artifact reduction).

CCMH commits to the following personnel and safety requirements:

All staff operating the MRI are required to hold a current State of Iowa X-ray license.

While not a state mandate, CCMH highly encourages and supports all technologists in obtaining board

certification in MRI to ensure the highest level of patient safety and image quality. We follow the Four Zone safety model to prevent metallic objects from entering the magnet room. Hospital staff receive formal MRI safety training upon hire and through mandatory yearly refreshers to ensure facility-wide awareness of the magnetic environment. Personnel whose roles require them to be near the MRI suite must complete additional specialized safety training and competency. We maintain a contract with the manufacturer for preventative maintenance. Additionally, annual audits are performed to ensure the unit meets all safety and performance benchmarks required by the State of Iowa.

For daily operations, we will maintain a staff of three MRI-trained and certified technologists to manage our anticipated patient volume and maintain safety standards.

The unit will be housed within the existing, shielded MRI suite at CCMH. Minimal renovations are required

c. Short and Long-term Viability:

CCMH has had an in-house MRI since May 2012. Average number of MRI scans per month have increased from 54 per month in FY2013 to 79 per month in FY 2025, or about a 4% increase per year, and 46% increase since adding the MRI in 2012. CCMH is committed to providing orthopedic services in Crawford County and has offered in-house orthopedic services since 2013. We employ one Orthopedic Surgeon and two General Surgeons and have a robust Rural Health Clinic averaging 3,000 visits per month and an Emergency Room averaging over 400 visits per month.

To keep the community, local providers, and our partners informed of CCMH bringing this life-saving tool to Denison, we have developed a strategic marketing and outreach plan:

Provider Education: During the installation phase, we will plan outreach to regional primary care providers and specialists. We will provide them with information on our new capabilities to strengthen our role as their primary referral destination.

Community Awareness Campaign: We will utilize a multi-channel approach (social media, local news, our email newsletters, and more) to build excitement about the new MRI. Once operational, we will produce educational videos and social posts with photos of the new suite to raise awareness and highlight the increased comfort for anxious patients, as well as the benefits of having the MRI with the new capabilities close to home.

Referral Network Strengthening: We will continue to leverage our relationships with workers' compensation companies, who already trust CCMH with their clients, by offering them the added benefit of better image quality and faster appointment turnaround.

5. Community and Economic Impact

a. Community Engagement:

CCMH engages our community in a variety of ways. Every three years we complete the Community Health Needs Assessment. Annually we host focus groups with community members and monthly we host our Patient Family Advisory Council. Our community members have provided valuable feedback that helps set our strategic plan and identify needs, issues, and improvement activities.

b. Resource Availability:

The project will be supported by a radiology team already experienced in MRI operations. CCMH will maintain three MRI-trained and certified technologists on staff. This staffing level ensures we can maximize the speed of the new technology and effectively manage the anticipated increase in daily patient demand while maintaining the highest standards of safety and image quality.

Our staff will complete training on the new MRI from Siemens Medical Solutions, including a safety course that will cover the basic principles and areas of safety concern involved in the MR imaging process and magnetic resonance environment. Staff will train on the thought process for assessing whether a patient, device, and implant can safely undergo MR imaging.

c. Organizational Relationships:

We receive radiologist coverage from Radiology Consultants, P.C. to read all radiology exams completed at CCMH.

We also work with area school, such as Iowa Central and DMACC, to place students and recruit new hires.

6. Project Planning

a. Project Timeline:

We currently have a quote for the MRI. Our CEO, CFO, and Board of Trustees will finalize the purchase agreement and place the order. We anticipate a 3- to 6-month lead time for equipment delivery. We will utilize this period to complete all necessary room renovations, ensuring the facility is ready for equipment to arrive.

To ensure our community has local access to an MRI during this transition, we will explore the use of a mobile MRI unit to serve our patients during the construction.

Prior to delivery of the MRI, we will conduct the removal and rigging of the existing MRI unit. This phase requires specialized contractors to safely ramp down the magnet and remove it from the facility. Simultaneously, the suite will undergo extensive construction.

The existing MRI suite will go through a 12- to 16-week renovation. During this phase, we will ensure the room meets requirements for copper shielding and structural support for the new piece of equipment.

Once delivered, the technical installation and calibration process takes approximately 17 days. This is followed by a week of intensive applications training, where our staff will learn to navigate the new software and faster scanning protocols.

During the procurement and installation phases, we would complete all required reports to the Agency.

b. Innovative Components:

The Siemens Magnetom Altea system includes a NeoCoil 16-Channel Breast Coil, which provides high-resolution imaging of the breast, axilla (underarm/lymph nodes), and chest wall. This specialized hardware allows for both unilateral and bilateral diagnostic imaging and is fully equipped for medial, bilateral, or unilateral biopsy procedures. This technology is a critical innovation for the region, as it acts as a high-definition magnifying glass to find tumors that are often invisible on standard X-rays or ultrasounds, particularly for the approximately 40% of women with dense breast tissue.

The new MRI system provides specialized, high-resolution prostate scanning capabilities that are currently unavailable within a 60-mile radius. This innovative component allows for the detection of tumors at their earliest, most treatable stages.

c. Regulatory Compliance:

Our staff will complete training on the new MRI from Siemens Medical Solutions, including a safety course that will cover the basic principles and areas of safety concern involved in the MR imaging process and magnetic resonance environment. Staff will train on the thought process for assessing whether a patient, device, and implant can safely undergo MR imaging. The training will also cover requirements for how to ensure site compliance.

Access into the Radiology Department will be restricted, except for the front door (located off the lab/x-ray waiting).

Level II employees (physicians, ED Nurses, EMS, Surgery staff, EVS and Maintenance staff, and

Anesthesia staff) will be required to complete annually safety training to maintain badge access into the department. Annual education will be administered and tracked by the MRI technologists or Magnetic Resonance Safety Officer. Non-patient screening sheets will be filled out annually and kept on file.

7. Special Criteria for Specific Services:

a. Alternative Consideration (10A.714(2)(a)):

Not replacing current equipment will cause our patients to travel extensive miles for MRI testing. Not having equipment we would be unable to meet community needs with a visiting MRI truck on a weekly basis. Since FY2025, we currently have an average of 79 MRI scans per month.

Expecting Crawford County patients to travel for advanced MRI services, creates a barrier to care that often leads to delayed diagnoses. A significant portion of the senior population in our service area no longer drives long distances or feels comfortable navigating the heavy urban traffic found in larger cities like Omaha.

b. Utilization of Similar Facilities (10A.714(2)(b)):

None available in our service area.

Other rural hospitals are in the vicinity, rely on mobile MRI units/Trailers that only visit on specific days of the week. Advanced services like high-intensity breast cancer screenings and specialized prostate MRIs are currently unavailable within a 60-mile radius.

c. Construction/Modernization (10A.714(2)(c)):

There is no new construction for this project as it is a replacement of current equipment.

d. Access Concerns (10A.714(2)(d)):

Without an upgrade to our MRI, we will not be able to offer MRI tests at CCMH. Patients will be required to travel distances for testing.

Approximately 12.1% of Crawford County residents live below the poverty level. For these individuals, the "hidden costs" of traveling 60–90 miles for a scan, such as fuel and lost wages from taking a half-day or full day of leave from work, act as a major barrier to care.

The elderly population are identified as a group who have a high need for MRI exams, and travel becomes a barrier to care when they need advanced MRI services.

e. UIHC Special Role (10A.714(3)):

N/A

Signature

Erin Muck

Additional Supporting Documents Upload