2027 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 135.63, as needed, to complete the application.4. Upload additional documentation, as needed.

Primary Contact
Strategy Director Bennett Masden

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Great River Health System, Inc.

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Facility Name
Henry County Health Center

Facility Type
County Government

Facility Address
407 S. White St., Mount Pleasant, Iowa 52641

Project Title
HCHC - da Vinci 5 Robotic Surgical System Acquisition

Proposed Project
Acquisition of a da Vinci 5 robotic surgical system.

Total Project Cost
4,112,348

Equipment Cost
3,052,348

Project Type
New Equipment

Is this project application for a Nursing Facility?
No

Project Start Date
8/15/2026

Project End Date
9/30/2027

Would you like to request a summary review?
Yes

1. Applicant and Facility Overview

a. Project Purpose and Objectives:

The objective of this project is to acquire a da Vinci robotic surgical system to expand access to minimally invasive surgical services throughout southeast Iowa and to accommodate growth in robotic assisted surgical volumes. The funding for this project has been awarded through a Best and Brightest Medical Equipment grant made available through Iowa's Healthy Hometowns, Rural Health Transformation Plan.

Henry County Health Center serves a predominantly rural service area consisting of a growing proportion of older adults, many of whom experience higher rates of chronic disease and conditions requiring surgical intervention (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024). Rural residents often face transportation barriers and increased travel times when specialty services are unavailable locally. The project will benefit patients throughout the region facing these challenges.

The addition of a robotic surgical platform will increase procedural capacity, improve scheduling flexibility, reduce delays in access to care, and allow multiple specialties to expand minimally invasive surgical options within the local community. By increasing local access to advanced surgical technologies, Henry County Health Center can reduce the need for patients to travel to tertiary medical centers in Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, the Quad Cities, or other regional markets for surgical care that can be appropriately delivered closer to home.
The project is further supported through funding received from Iowa's Rural Healthcare Transformation Program, demonstrating alignment with statewide efforts to strengthen rural healthcare infrastructure, modernize clinical capabilities, and improve access to care for underserved populations. Acquisition of an additional robotic surgical system will ensure that Henry County Health Center remains capable of meeting current and future surgical demands.

b. Relationship to Long-Range Development Plan:
A central component of the organization's strategy is ensuring that residents of southeast Iowa can access high-quality specialty care close to home. By expanding robotic surgical capacity, Henry County Health Center will increase local availability of minimally invasive surgical services. This reduces the need for patients to travel to distant tertiary medical centers and supports the organization's commitment to rural healthcare access.

The project also aligns with Henry County Health Center's goal of enhancing clinical quality and patient outcomes through investment in advanced technologies. Expanded robotic capability will allow the organization to continue growing minimally invasive surgical programs across multiple specialties while improving operational efficiency and patient experience.

In addition, the project supports strategic workforce objectives. Recruitment and retention of highly qualified surgeons increasingly depend on access to contemporary surgical technology. Additional robotic capacity will enhance the organization's ability to attract and retain surgical specialists and support future service-line growth (American College of Surgeons, 2023).

The project further advances Henry County Health Center's commitment to financial sustainability by retaining surgical volumes within the local market, reducing outmigration of patients, and strengthening the long-term viability of specialty services in southeast Iowa.

c. Description of Proposed Service/Program:
Henry County Health Center is pursuing the acquisition of a da Vinci robotic surgical system to expand access to minimally invasive surgical care for residents of the surrounding rural service area. The technology will support procedures across multiple surgical specialties. The primary objectives of the project are to improve local access to advanced surgical services, reduce the need for patients to travel outside the region for robotic assisted procedures, and enhance the hospital's ability to recruit and retain highly qualified surgeons.
Expected outcomes include increased access to minimally invasive surgery, improved patient experience and recovery, reduced outmigration for surgical care, and strengthened long-term access to specialty

surgical services within the community.

d. Target Population: Specify geographic and demographic areas.
The primary target population consists of residents of Henry County, Iowa, including rural and medically underserved individuals who require surgical services. The project will also be available to patients from surrounding counties who utilize Henry County Health Center for their surgical care. Particular benefit is expected for older adults and patients who face transportation challenges associated with traveling to larger regional medical centers for advanced surgical procedures.

e. Relation to Existing Provider Network: Summarize relationship with other health care providers/services in the region.
Henry County Health Center maintains collaborative relationships with healthcare providers throughout southeast Iowa, including Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center and regional specialty referral providers. The proposed robotic surgical system will complement existing surgical services by expanding access to advanced minimally invasive procedures within Henry County.

The project is intended to improve local access to care and reduce travel burdens for patients who would otherwise need to receive robotic assisted surgical services outside of Henry County. The addition of robotic surgical capability at Henry County Health Center will enhance the regional continuum of care, support timely access to surgical services, and strengthen healthcare resources available to the rural populations served by the hospital.

The project is not expected to adversely affect other providers in the region but rather will increase local availability of surgical services and improve patient access within the existing healthcare network.

f. Funding Sources and Financial Resources: Identify and document sources of funding and financial viability.
The proposed project will be funded through the Rural Healthcare Transformation Program.

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:
Henry County Health Center serves a predominantly rural population in Henry County and surrounding communities. According to U.S. Census data, Henry County has a population of approximately 20,000 residents, with a higher proportion of adults age 65 and older than many urban areas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024). As the population ages, we expect demand for surgical services to increase due to higher rates of chronic disease and conditions requiring operative intervention.

Residents of rural communities frequently face barriers to accessing specialty healthcare services, including transportation challenges, longer travel distances, and limited availability of advanced surgical technologies. Patients requiring robotic assisted surgical procedures often must travel outside the county to receive care, creating additional burdens for patients and their families.

b. Assessment of Existing Services and Gaps:
Current surgical services within the community provide a broad range of procedures; however, access to robotic assisted minimally invasive surgery remains limited. As a result, many patients who could benefit

from advanced robotic techniques may need to seek care outside the local service area, creating barriers related to travel, scheduling, cost, and continuity of care. These challenges can disproportionately affect rural residents, elderly patients, and individuals with transportation or caregiver limitations.

c. Alternatives Analysis:
Referrals to tertiary facilities for robot assisted surgical interventions will continue to prove challenging for residents of southeast Iowa. This model places significant burden on elderly, underinsured, and transportation limited patients. Referral-based care contributes to delayed access, fragmented care, and higher financial strain on patients and families. It also results in lost volumes for the health system, which weakens the long-term sustainability of the local health care infrastructure.

Another alternative would be to continue with only conventional laparoscopic and open surgery. These methods remain viable in many cases, but robotic surgery has demonstrated lower complication rates and readmission rates, along with faster recovery times and shorter hospital stays (National Library of Medicine, 2022).

d. Accessibility Considerations:
The addition of this program will prevent the outmigration of patients to tertiary facilities that offer surgical robotics services. Providing these services locally ensures that revenue is retained in the region. Local access will help reduce costs for patients by reducing travel. The addition of robotic capability will also allow for the recruitment of high-performing surgeons (American College of Surgeons, 2023).

By adding this program, Henry County Health Center will significantly improve accessibility to state-of-the-art surgical interventions for underserved populations, including older adults and low-income residents who face disproportionate challenges in accessing care (National Library of Medicine, 2020).

e. Community Input/Support:
At the time of submission, Henry County Health Center has not received formal letters of support or opposition regarding the proposed project. The project was developed through the organization's strategic planning processes, which consider identified community healthcare needs, patient access considerations, and service demand.

Henry County Health Center anticipates that the project will benefit residents of Henry County and surrounding rural communities by increasing local access to advanced surgical services. Additional public input may be received through the Certificate of Need review process and will be considered as part of the state's evaluation.

Document Upload (if needed)

f. Non-discriminatory Access:
Henry County Health Center will provide robotic-assisted surgical services without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, religion, or any other protected status. Access to services will be based solely on clinical appropriateness, physician recommendation, and patient need.

3. Impact on Existing Providers

a. Impact Assessment:
The project is not expected to have a significant adverse impact on other healthcare providers in the region. Rather, it will complement existing surgical services by expanding local access and creating additional capacity within the regional healthcare network. The service will support continuity of care by allowing patients to receive surgical treatment within their local community whenever clinically appropriate.

While robotic surgical services are available at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in West Burlington, the proposed project will improve geographic access for patients in and around Henry County

and reduce travel burdens for rural residents. The project represents an expansion of local access rather than an unnecessary duplication of services.

b. Community and Economic Impact: Broader system effect and value-added to the community.
The addition of this program will prevent the outmigration of patients to tertiary facilities that offer surgical robotics services. Providing these services locally ensures that revenue is retained in the region. Local access will help reduce costs for patients by reducing travel. The addition of robotic capability will also allow for the recruitment of high-performing surgeons (American College of Surgeons, 2023).

By adding this program, Henry County Health Center will significantly improve accessibility to state-of-the-art surgical interventions for underserved populations, including older adults and low-income residents who face disproportionate challenges in accessing care (National Library of Medicine, 2020).

c. Efficiency in Use of Resources: Shared/cooperative arrangements to maximize efficiency.
Henry County Health Center will utilize existing organizational resources, clinical expertise, and operational infrastructure to support implementation of the robotic surgery program. The project will benefit from collaboration with Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center, which has established experience with robotic assisted surgery, including clinical protocols, staff training, credentialing processes, and quality monitoring programs.

Shared organizational resources will help maximize efficiency, reduce implementation costs, and promote consistent quality standards across both facilities. The project will also leverage existing relationships with referring providers and surgical specialists to support appropriate utilization of the technology.

4. Financial and Operational Feasibility

a. Financial Projections and Feasibility:
Attached is the da Vinci Pro Forma, which clearly outlines project costs, revenue/expense projections, and a projected break-even estimate. The funding for this project has been awarded through a Best and Brightest Medical Equipment grant made available through Iowa's Healthy Hometowns, Rural Health Transformation Plan.

Document Upload (3-year budget projections)
da Vinci Pro Forma.pptx

b. Staffing and Operations:
This program will be supported by existing staff, and the supplementation of additional labor and resources will not be required. We will leverage existing general surgery quality assurance measures to monitor the effectiveness and safety of the program. Surgical case quality outcomes will be compared to quality outcomes from laparoscopic and conventional open surgery to determine performance. 30-day complication and readmission rates, surgical site infection rates, and accidental puncture rates will all be tracked.

c. Short and Long-term Viability:
The proposed service is designed to be both sustainable and scalable beyond the initial funding period. Performance metrics will be tracked regularly to ensure effective use of resources, demonstrate outcomes, and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. Through strategic planning, efficient resource management, and ongoing evaluation, the service will remain viable and responsive to community needs for years to come.

5. Community and Economic Impact

a. Community Engagement:

At the time of submission, Henry County Health Center has not received formal letters of support or opposition regarding the proposed project. The project was developed through the organization's strategic planning processes, which consider identified community healthcare needs, patient access considerations, and service demand.

Henry County Health Center anticipates that the project will benefit residents of Henry County and surrounding rural communities by increasing local access to advanced surgical services. Additional public input may be received through the Certificate of Need review process and will be considered as part of the state's evaluation.

b. Resource Availability:
This program will be supported by existing staff, and the supplementation of additional labor and resources will not be required. We will leverage existing infrastructure and management to support the addition of this program.

c. Organizational Relationships:
The organization maintains collaborative relationships with a network of ancillary and support service providers to ensure that individuals receive comprehensive, coordinated care. These relationships include referrals with tertiary healthcare providers. Through regular communication and established referral processes, clients are connected to services that address needs beyond the scope of the program, promoting continuity of care and improved outcomes.

6. Project Planning

a. Project Timeline:
Implementation of the proposed project is contingent upon approval of the Certificate of Need application. Following approval, Henry County Health Center will proceed with equipment acquisition, installation, staff training, and program implementation activities.

The organization intends to begin performing robotic-assisted surgical procedures as soon as practical following project completion. The first robotic-assisted surgical case will be performed no later than September 30, 2027, in accordance with grant requirements.

8/15/26: Grant award signature
6/30/27: IT readiness
7/15/27: Steam line install
7/30/27: Case observations
8/30/27: Equipment delivery and staff training
9/30/27: Perform first case

b. Innovative Components:
This service incorporates several innovative and value-added components designed to improve accessibility, efficiency, and outcomes for individuals served. A key innovative component of this service is the use of robotic assisted minimally invasive surgery, which provides significant benefits compared to traditional open surgical procedures. Robotic technology allows surgeons to perform complex procedures through smaller incisions with enhanced precision, visualization, and control. This approach can reduce surgical trauma, minimize blood loss, decrease postoperative pain, and lower the risk of complications.

The minimally invasive nature of robotic surgery often results in shorter hospital stays, faster recovery times, and an earlier return to normal activities for patients. These improvements enhance the overall patient experience while supporting more efficient use of healthcare resources. Patients benefit from reduced disruption to their daily lives and may require fewer postoperative interventions and less intensive recovery support (National Library of Medicine, 2022).

c. Regulatory Compliance:
We have a compliance resource involved in the implementation who will be focused on ensuring all regulatory requirements are met and that all is in line with CMS guidelines. All providers will go through credentialing prior to implementation.

7. Special Criteria for Specific Services:

a. Alternative Consideration (135.63(2)"a"):
Referrals to tertiary facilities for robot-assisted surgical interventions will continue to prove challenging for residents of southeast Iowa. This model places significant burden on elderly, underinsured, and transportation limited patients. Referral-based care contributes to delayed access, fragmented care, and higher financial strain on patients and families. It also results in lost volumes for the health system, which weakens the long-term sustainability of the local health care infrastructure.

Another alternative would be to continue with only conventional laparoscopic and open surgery. These methods remain viable in many cases, but robotic surgery has demonstrated lower complication rates and readmission rates, along with faster recovery times and shorter hospital stays (National Library of Medicine, 2022).

b. Utilization of Similar Facilities (135.63(2)"b"):
The proposed service promotes the appropriate and efficient utilization of existing local healthcare facilities by expanding access to advanced robotic assisted minimally invasive surgical procedures within the service area. Rather than duplicating services, the project enhances the capabilities of the existing hospital and surgical infrastructure, allowing patients to receive specialized surgical care locally whenever clinically appropriate.

c. Construction/Modernization (135.63(2)"c"):
The proposed project reflects a commitment to modernization by enhancing existing surgical facilities and infrastructure to support robotic assisted minimally invasive surgery. Rather than constructing duplicative facilities, the project utilizes and upgrades existing operating room space, equipment, and clinical resources to provide advanced surgical capabilities within the current healthcare environment. This approach maximizes the value of existing investments while minimizing unnecessary capital expenditure.

d. Access Concerns (135.63(2)"d"):
Without this project, patients in the service area may experience significant barriers to accessing advanced robotic assisted minimally invasive surgical care. Many patients would be required to travel outside the local region to obtain these procedures, creating challenges related to transportation, time away from work or family responsibilities, and additional healthcare costs. These barriers can delay treatment, reduce patient compliance with recommended care, and negatively impact overall health outcomes.

e. UIHC Special Role (135.63(3)):
This is not applicable.

Signature

Additional Supporting Documents Upload
da Vinci References.docx