CORAZON

The Service Line Experts

Heart & Lung Transplant Certificate of Need

Some hospital goals take years. This one took five. A regional health system with a strong open-heart program and established liver, kidney, and pancreas transplant programs had been working to bring heart and lung transplantation to its community. The need was obvious: about 70% of the state's adult heart transplant patients, and 84% of its adult lung transplant patients, were leaving the state to get care.

In spring of 2026, the door opened two years early. The state health department issued a competitive call for new heart and lung transplant programs, with no set number of awards, a full Certificate of Need (CON) review, and a filing date that would not move. Miss it, and the next chance was 2028.

This team knew the regulations. They live with them every day. But knowing the rules and having the people and hours to build a winning application in about ten weeks are two very different things. So they called Corazon.



Challenges & Hospital Needs

The Clock

About ten weeks to build and file a full-review application. No extensions, and no second chance in the cycle.

The Competition

Established in-state programs and nearby out-of-state centers meant the need case had to be rigorous and defensible.

The Bandwidth

The people leading the CON were also running a busy cardiovascular service line, and the project lead role was changing hands.

The Data

Volume projections and market data dated back to 2022 and needed a full rebuild, including the organ-availability analysis the state asked for.

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Corazon's Solution

Corazon joined forces with the hospital team and they worked alongside them from the first call to the day of filing. We split the work into three tracks:

- Rebuilding the Market Analysis and Volume Projections
- Writing the Narrative (Business Case, Clinical Program, and Community Involvement)
- Building the Pro Forma and Completing the CON Forms

Corazon's experts held ten focused virtual interviews with executives, surgeons, heart failure, critical care and pulmonary physicians, finance, quality and transplant leaders, and turned their five-year journey into a clear, compelling story. Then the team checked every page against the state's review criteria and completeness rules, because one missing document can end an application.

Results & Impact

The completed heart and lung transplant CON application, with every required document in place, was hand-delivered on August 27, 2026, four days ahead of the September 1 deadline. It is now moving through state review.

Hospital leaders didn't have to put patient care on hold to get there. Their physicians and executives gave their expertise and vision, and Corazon did the heavy lifting: **the analysis, the writing, the numbers and the paperwork**. The finished application shows the hospital as it really is: an organization that already runs a strong heart program and a successful transplant enterprise, ready to take the next step so patients can get care close to home instead of traveling out of state.

The hospital also came away with tools it will keep using: an updated market analysis, a multi-year pro forma and a documented program plan to guide federal transplant approvals and the program build once the CON is granted.

That is what Corazon does. Our experts spend their careers inside heart programs, and we know what it takes to plan them, build them, and get them approved. A CON on a hard deadline is not something you learn on the fly. When the stakes are this high, you want people who have done it before at your side, and a team that will treat your deadline as its own.

Facing a CON, a new service line or a program that needs a stronger case? Let's talk. For a more detailed explanation of this CON project that involved the expertise of Corazon, call 412.364.8200.

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