



HCHC and Great River Health expand partnership

On March 2, Henry County residents voted 59%-41% to authorize the HCHC Board of Trustees to pursue an operational lease agreement between HCHC and Great River Health. Starting July 1, 2021, Great River Health will lease HCHC's facilities and assets, and will operate the health center. The expanded partnership will provide financial stability to HCHC and will ensure health care continues to be managed locally.

"With the voters' support to secure the future of local health care, we look forward to taking the next steps in continuing HCHC's rich history," said HCHC Board of Trustees Chairman Kent Severson. "This year, HCHC is celebrating its 100th year serving the county, and we will be able to welcome that milestone by ensuring quality health care stays close to home for years to come."

Under the agreement, the HCHC Board of Trustees will continue to be responsible for maintenance, improvement and any necessary replacement of leased hospital assets. The trustees will continue to govern and provide oversight on execution of the agreement. The operational lease also ensures management of the health center remains within Southeast Iowa, with critical decisions made at a local level.

"It became apparent to the board that remaining an independent hospital in this difficult healthcare environment would likely be impossible over the long term. It was a goal of the board to find a trusted partner that would allow us to keep healthcare local," explained Trustee Jan Towne. "Due to our long standing relationship for more than 10 years with Great River Health Systems, it became apparent early in our process that they were a wonderful option. They have a vested interest in Southeast Iowa and I am excited to see where this partnership will take us."

HCHC associates will remain employed by the HCHC Board of Trustees and retain their current benefits, including Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS) benefits. In addition, Henry County Health Center will continue to be the name of the hospital, taxes will remain in Henry County, and HCHC Foundation funds will stay within the community.

"I am so pleased with the passage of the lease agreement. The HCHC Board of Trustees worked diligently for months to structure an agreement that was beneficial for HCHC patients, associates and Henry County residents. Retaining our status as a county hospital made it possible for the dedicated employees of HCHC to retain IPERS benefits. This was of utmost importance to the Board of Trustees," stated HCHC Trustee Sally Olson.

This expanded public-private partnership is among the first of its kind in Iowa and may be a possible solution for rural hospitals that face financial and industry-related challenges in coming years.

"Great River Health looks forward to expanding and enhancing our trusted partnership with HCHC," said Great River Health President and CEO Matt Wenzel. "We are committed to providing local, quality health care options for residents in our region and ensuring the long-term stability of these services in the future."

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HEALTH UPDATE

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HCHC offers communication tool to manage appointments

Henry County Health Center now offers patients a two-way communication platform for time based appointment reminders. Relatient, one of the top patient engagement platforms for health systems and provider groups, allows patients to receive time-based reminders for appointment confirmation, rescheduling, and instructions.

Patients can receive appointment reminders by email, phone call or text message, or all three with a one click option to confirm, reschedule or cancel. Patients aren't required to opt in, but this is an option for managing appointments. The new platform has received positive feedback as patients appreciate being in control of how and when they receive and review appointment information.

In addition, staff are able to see confirmed appointments and proactively contact patients for rescheduling. If patients miss an appointment, a reminder can be sent for the opportunity to reschedule. This allows HCHC to standardize the appointment reminder call process across the organization.

The communication platform integrates with HCHC's scheduling and registration systems and looks to email, home and cell phone data provided by the patient to send messages. Scheduled messages include an email five days prior to the appointment, a voice message three days prior and a text message two days in advance. Messages include appointment time and general instructions. Once a patient confirms their appointment, additional automated messages will stop. All patients will receive a courtesy text message the day prior or day of the appointment.

This additional service complements the already existing Patient Portal. An email is required to receive an invitation to the Patient Portal. In addition to email, patients are encouraged to provide their preferred communication method so they can take advantage of the appointment reminders and any features that will come in the future. Patients can call the hospital and give their information, or provide it at the time of registration. Messages are currently being translated to Spanish, and additional features may be added in the future.

It is anticipated that this new communication tool will result in increased patient satisfaction, improved patient communication, and a reduction in missed appointments. It also helps alleviate some of the challenges associated with COVID-19 by increasing patient and staff safety.

Visitor Reminder

HCHC still has visitor restrictions in place due to COVID-19. The HCHC Inpatient Services Department would like to remind visitors of the department's visitation rules. Visiting hours for inpatients is 10 am-4 pm. Each patient may have one visitor at a time during visiting hours only. Visitors must stay in the patient's room during their visit. Patients with COVID-19 are not typically allowed visitors; however, visitors are determined on a case by case basis only if patients are confused or end of life. Support may be provided via telephone or video visits if visitation is not allowed.

For information regarding visitation for all health center departments, go to www.hchc.org/covid-19-local-information. We thank you in advance for your understanding of these visitation requirements!

This publication does not constitute professional medical advice. Although it is intended to be accurate, neither the publisher nor any other party assumes liability for loss or damage due to reliance on this material. If you have a medical question, consult your medical professional.

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HCHC creates \$22.4 million impact on local economy

HCHC generates 555 jobs that add \$22,439,542 to Henry County's economy, according to the latest study by the Iowa Hospital Association. In addition, HCHC associates by themselves spend \$4,615,085 on retail sales and contribute \$276,905 in state sales tax revenue.

"Henry County Health Center contributes to the strength of our county's economy in several ways. One way HCHC makes a direct positive impact is with the number of area residents we employ and their salaries and benefits. In addition, the health center and our workforce purchase goods and services from local businesses which directly supports the local economy. It is also beneficial when individuals from other communities travel to HCHC to receive health services as those individuals often purchase from local businesses while in town," explained HCHC CEO Robb Gardner.

"Having a strong health center plays an instrumental role in attracting new business,

industry and residents to our area. Providing high quality health services throughout Henry County serves the health needs of our communities and keeps our economy moving forward."

The IHA study examined the jobs, income, retail sales and sales tax produced by hospitals and the rest of the state's health care sector. The study was compiled from hospital-submitted data on the American Hospital Association's Annual Survey of Hospitals and with software that other industries have used to determine their economic impact.

The report found that Iowa hospitals directly employed 76,169 people and created another 67,647 jobs outside the hospital sector in 2020. As an income source, hospitals provided more than \$5 billion in salaries and benefits and generated another \$3 billion through other jobs that depend on hospitals.

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PHYSICIANS & CLINICS *of HCHC*

Mt. Pleasant Clinic

407 S. White Street, Suite 103
Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641
319.385-6770

Clinic Hours:
Mondays-Fridays:
9 a.m. – Noon; 1-5 p.m.

New London Clinic

111 W. Washington St.
New London, IA 52645
319.367.2241

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Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays:
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Wednesdays: 8 a.m.-Noon

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227 W. Main, Suite 1
Wayland, IA 52654
319.256.7100

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110 W. Pine, Winfield, IA 52659
319.257.6211

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