

Letter to the Community
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Identifying the best path forward for Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield and Lambertton

By James R. Hebl, M.D., regional vice president, Mayo Clinic Health System; Kelsey Nylander, D.O., Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield medical director; Terry L. Brandt, regional chair of administration, Mayo Clinic Health System; Scott Thoreson, Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield administrator

Dear Community Members:

Recent changes at Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield require an attentive evaluation of our approach to providing health care in both Springfield and Lambertton, and we need your input.

Dr. Nylander leaving in October

Kelsey Nylander, D.O., medical director at Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield and Lambertton, submitted her resignation effective October 2018. This was a difficult, emotional decision for Dr. Nylander, but her choice was made for family reasons. She and her family love Springfield and the surrounding communities. However, the decision to pursue an opportunity in South Dakota will allow her to spend more time with her family and three children.

Dr. Nylander's departure leaves one doctor within Springfield. One doctor cannot meet the needs of every patient in a 24-hour hospital and busy outpatient clinical practice.

Dr. Hodges moving closer to family in Georgia

In addition to Dr. Nylander's departure, LeRoy Hodges, M.D., Springfield's outreach general surgeon from Mayo Clinic Health System in Fairmont, recently resigned to accept a position closer to family in Georgia. Dr. Hodges' departure in August leaves Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield without a General Surgery and GI Endoscopy practice.

Physician recruitment challenges

We have been aggressively recruiting a physician to the Springfield practice for the past five years with the assistance of an external recruiting firm. Despite offering a generous compensation package and competitive salary, we have not been successful. Unfortunately, we expect that recruitment challenges will continue into the future given the growing rural physician shortage nationwide.

Underutilization of Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield

Another challenge is that many patients in the Springfield market utilize health care facilities in neighboring communities instead of Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield. We have a wonderful facility, compassionate staff, expert providers, very good patient satisfaction scores and high-quality outcomes. Despite this, we cannot sustain a hospital and clinic when so many patients in the market seek care outside of Springfield.

Options moving forward

Given the departure of Dr. Nylander and Dr. Hodges, as well as our challenges with physician recruitment, the current model of providing comprehensive inpatient and outpatient care in Springfield is unsustainable.

We feel the challenges facing this practice have brought us to a critical point. Leadership, with input from the Springfield community board, local staff and community stakeholders, has initiated a thoughtful process that will evaluate and consider various models moving forward.

We also want to hear from you and would welcome your thoughts on how to continue to best serve the Springfield community and the patients of this region. We will share updates as the situation evolves and sincerely appreciate your engagement and participation in the decision-making process. More information about ways to provide your feedback will be coming very soon.

Regardless of the how we choose to move forward, know that Mayo Clinic Health System is deeply committed to our patients in Springfield, Lambertton and the surrounding communities.

Please visit mayoclinichealthsystem.org/springfieldinfo for answers to frequently asked questions.

Best Regards,

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