

**Aug. 1, 2018**

**A letter from Dr. Jennifer White**

To the Springfield community and surrounding areas:

It is with mixed emotions that I am announcing my departure from Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield as of Nov. 30, 2018. I understand that my timing could not have been worse. I would like for you to know that my decision is not being made solely based on the transitions that we are currently facing. I am making a decision based on my personal needs and the needs of my family. I am making this decision to be a healthier version of me.

When I became a member of the Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield staff a little over five years ago, I came in bright-eyed and bushy-tailed thinking that I wanted to do full-fledged family medicine, which consisted of clinic and hospital responsibilities. I even had aspirations to deliver babies. What I did not realize was the cost — the physical and mental cost of working so hard, so much, so frequently. I did not realize the sacrifice that came along with this job. I did not realize that at times I would work so frequently that it could be a detriment to my own health. The difficulty of recruiting physicians to rural communities has put significant strain on small-town, do-it-all physicians throughout the country such as me. This is a major rural health care issue that is affecting our nation as a whole.

I ultimately had to work to find balance, and in that search I came to the realization that a change would be in the best interest of my family and me. This change comes in the form of relocation. The right opportunity simply happened at the most inopportune time.

It has been an honor to serve the Springfield community and surrounding areas over the past five years. You have become a part of my extended family. I love the fact that I care for up to four or five generations in some families. It has been awesome that by just knowing who one individual is related to that I can assess his/her risks for certain disease processes. I love how candid I have been able to be with my patients. We have walked through new diagnoses together. We have talked hopes and fears. I will never forget the beauty of seeing a newborn whose mom I have taken care of for the first time. It tickles me as I see the personalities of my toddlers coming out. My teen and adolescent talks have brought me joy. Doing health maintenance in order to keep people healthy is a point of pride, as I think we do it well. It has been an honor to stand by the bedside of those who were aging and dying and helping them transition out of this world with peace and dignity. I have laughed with you, cried with you, shared griefs and frustrations with you. I have fond memories that still make me giggle. I have grown as both a physician and as a human being over these years that I have served you.

I hope you all know how much I love the people and the communities we serve. This has been a hard decision for me. I have struggled with it for some time, as I have known for a while that I could not keep up the pace under which we were going. Instead of covering hospital, clinic, nursing home and ambulance with an intense call schedule, I will be moving to a strictly outpatient clinic practice.

It is not that I love you any less than I have, but the time for change has come. I hope you know that wherever I go, I carry you in my heart. You have left imprints on my soul. And I am grateful that you have given me the honor of being a part of your care team over the past few years. Thank you for entrusting your lives to us. I pray that you continue to use the Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield facility as a part of your care team. I am leaving behind partners whom I trust with my life, so I trust them with yours also. We cannot survive without your support. And while I'm leaving in the near future, I do consider myself as a part of the "we."

With love and respect always,

Dr. Jennifer White