



## **Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield and Lambertton FAQ**

### **What's happening at Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield and Lambertton?**

Kelsey Nylander, D.O., medical director at Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield and Lambertton, has submitted her resignation effective October 2018. This was a difficult, emotional decision for Dr. Nylander, but her choice was made for family reasons.

Dr. Nylander's departure leaves a single physician provider in Springfield. One physician cannot maintain the rigorous 24/7 on-call schedule required at a rural hospital in addition to a busy clinic practice.

In addition to Dr. Nylander's departure, LeRoy Hodges, M.D., Springfield's outreach general surgeon from Mayo Clinic Health System in Fairmont, recently submitted his resignation to accept a position closer to family in Georgia. Dr. Hodges' departure in August 2018 will eliminate Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield's General Surgery and GI Endoscopy practice.

### **Can Mayo Clinic Health System recruit new physicians to cover these gaps?**

We have been aggressively recruiting physicians to the Springfield practice for the past five years. During this time, we have engaged three separate external recruiting firms while offering an extremely competitive compensation package. Despite these efforts, a very small number of physicians have expressed interest in the position over the last five years.

One family medicine physician accepted an offer in March 2017. However, due to circumstances beyond our control, he was unable to meet the necessary credentialing and privileging requirements needed for the job. We expect that recruitment challenges will continue into the future given the growing physician shortage nationwide. Similar recruitment challenges are being experienced at rural health care practices across the country.

### **Are there other major challenges with the Springfield practice?**

Many patients in the Springfield market utilize health care facilities in neighboring communities instead of Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield. The reason for this is multifactorial — including patient choice, insurance contracting and the abundance of health care providers within the area (e.g. three health care facilities within a 35-mile radius of Springfield). We have a wonderful facility, compassionate staff, expert providers, positive patient satisfaction scores and high-quality outcomes. Despite this, we cannot sustain a hospital and clinic when so many patients seek care outside of Springfield.

## **Why are health insurance plans in the Springfield area unfavorable to Mayo Clinic?**

Mayo Clinic accepts most insurance plans and has contracts with most major insurers. However, having an agreement with an insurance provider does not always mean Mayo Clinic is the lowest cost option for patients. A patient's cost of care is determined through a complex process after insurance companies evaluate each health care organization within a geographic area.

For example, the state and participating insurance companies divide the State Employee Group Insurance Plan into four tiers of coverage. Health care facilities included in tier one of the plan require the least out-of-pocket expense for the patient. Conversely, health care facilities in tier four of the insurance plan require the most out-of-pocket expense by the patient. Essentially, the insurance plan covers a portion of the cost of care, and the patient pays the remaining balance. Patients can choose to receive care at *any* facility, but their costs may vary based on the tier level of that facility.

Insurance providers have determined that Mayo Clinic Health System is a tier four health care provider within the Springfield market area. In other markets, Mayo Clinic Health System is a tier two provider. Although Mayo Clinic is continually negotiating with insurance plans to elevate above a tier-four designation, the state and individual insurance companies make the final decision when determining tier classification.

## **What health care services are available at Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield?**

- Audiology
- Behavioral Health
- Cardiology
- Diabetes Education
- Ear, Nose and Throat
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Medicine
- Laboratory
- Nutrition
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Occupational Therapy
- Orthopedics
- Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Podiatry
- Radiology and Imaging
- Social Services
- Urgent Care

## **How do we move forward, and what are next steps?**

Given the departure of Dr. Nylander and Dr. Hodges, as well as our ongoing challenges with physician recruitment, the current model of providing comprehensive care within both the hospital and clinic setting in Springfield will be difficult, if not impossible, to sustain.

We have reached a critical point for the challenges facing this practice. Leadership, with the input from the Springfield community board, local leaders, staff members and community stakeholders, is engaged in a thoughtful process that will consider several options for viable ways to best serve our patients in Springfield and the surrounding communities. Our efforts to connect with staff, community members and other invested parties are ongoing.

Regardless of 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.

**Has Mayo Clinic discussed the situation in Springfield with other health care organizations?**

Mayo Clinic Health System leadership has met with one area health care organization thus far and is planning discussions with other organizations over the next few weeks. At this time, no formal interest in acquiring the hospital or clinic has been expressed.