

Sept. 17, 2018

Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield: How we're moving forward

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:

After nearly three months of research, analysis, and conversations with community stakeholders, local and regional board members, employees, Mayo Clinic leaders and government officials, we have reached a decision about the future care model for Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield.

Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield community board of directors and Mayo Clinic leadership unanimously approved the following plan:

- **Outpatient clinic:** Continue outpatient clinic services staffed exclusively by advanced practice providers (APPs), which are physician assistants and nurse practitioners. These medical professionals are highly trained, quality health care providers who can meet all of your essential medical needs locally. This includes conducting annual exams, prescribing medications, managing and treating acute and chronic diseases, and addressing urgent and emergent care needs — while accessing the expansive resources and expertise of physicians throughout Mayo Clinic.
- **Emergency Department:** Maintain 24/7 Emergency Department coverage with APP staffing and telemedicine support from Mayo Clinic Emergency Medicine physicians in both Rochester and Mankato.
- **Hospital:** Maintain the critical access hospital but reduce services to two hospital beds.
- **Physician medical director:** An off-site physician will be identified as the medical director for the Springfield campus. This physician will be responsible for administrative functions and serve as a resource for on-site APP staff. A medical director will also be named for the St. John Lutheran (Springfield) and Valley View Manor (Lamberton) Nursing Homes.
- **Recruitment:** Recruitment efforts will continue for both Family Medicine clinic and Emergency Department positions. A limited number of candidate interviews have already taken place, and offers have been extended.

We will gradually transition to this new model over the next two months, with initial steps toward implementation already underway.

The future care model requires reduced staffing because of the overall reduction in hospital beds. Adjusting staffing levels was a difficult decision that was not taken lightly. Mayo Clinic Health System is working to support impacted staff members, including exploring other potential employment opportunities within Mayo Clinic as appropriate.

Finally, we will continue conversations with an outside health care organization that is interested in acquiring more information about the practice. We will share news regarding these discussions should they lead to anything significant.

With two physicians and a surgeon resigning, five years of unsuccessful physician recruitment and a national shortage of physicians that is expected to surpass 120,000 by 2025, we truly believe this approach is the best way to maintain high-quality health care in Springfield.

Fortunately, this model will allow outstanding clinic, emergency room care and, albeit slightly different, hospital services to remain in Springfield. This is also a great opportunity for Springfield to serve as a leader in what may be a rural health care model that's emulated throughout the country. Change is necessary to sustain medical services in cities with smaller populations, and Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield could be a case study that helps ensure rural health care viability.

Mayo Clinic is deeply committed to Springfield, Lambertton and the surrounding communities we serve. Our mission is to bring unparalleled health care to all patients while putting their needs first and foremost. Thank you for your input, understanding and support as we work to navigate the increasingly complex rural health care landscape and identify the best ways to care for you and your families long term.

Sincerely,

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