
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tri-County Health Care faces exciting crossroads TCHC pursuing options for expansion, new facility

WADENA, Minn. – March 20, 2019 – Tri-County Health Care has been a long-standing healthcare leader in Wadena, Todd, and Otter Tail counties, serving patients starting in 1925 with the Wesley Hospital and later adding a new facility and clinics in Wadena and five additional towns. Tri-County Health Care belongs to its three-county region. It believes its patients deserve a facility that is as strong as the community in which it is located and reflects the quality of care they receive. However, the current facility in Wadena does not meet these expectations.

Tri-County has reached a crossroads. The current facility is outdated, cramped, inefficient and cannot accommodate growing services or keep up with changing healthcare needs. The options? Either cut back on services or make an investment in a new or remodeled facility and be a strong entity in Wadena and surrounding communities for years to come.

Tri-County has decided to be that strong entity.

Last year, Tri-County leaders began evaluating the needs of patients and how a facility can best meet them now and in the future. In the fall, the Board of Directors approved an investment in a new or remodeled clinic and hospital.

Upgrade now or cut back

Tri-County Health Care's top priority is giving its patients high-quality and efficient care. This becomes difficult when the building itself no longer reflects the excellent care that patients receive.

At nearly 50 years old, the main campus no longer fulfills the growing healthcare needs of modern patients. It faces obstacles such as an inefficient layout, operating rooms that are costly to update, hidden location, poor energy efficiency, lack of parking and limited room for expansion in its current location. These make it difficult to offer the most advanced procedures and services while upholding safe, high-quality care.

Health care itself is rapidly changing. For instance, when the current building was built 45 years ago in Wadena, patients who stayed in the hospital (inpatients) made up 90 percent of the care provided, and it was designed with that need in mind. Now, however, inpatients only make up 13 percent of its business, and outpatients represent its greatest growth opportunity.

-more-



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In addition, the growing trend of patient-centered, multi-disciplinary continuity of care requires more departments to be available for outpatients. The current building does not provide enough space for outpatient needs or for the growth of care coordination services.

Both the hospital and Wesley building have been remodeled throughout the years, but they have limited options for expansion and updates. It is also expensive to update old facilities and difficult to remodel without causing major interruptions to patient services. Tri-County's early research has found that it will cost almost as much to update the current facility as it would to build a new clinic and hospital.

The vision

Tri-County Health Care is proud that it has remained independent in a world where healthcare mergers and acquisitions are happening across the industry. Almost 70 percent of hospitals in America are part of a large health system, according to The Business of Healthcare. And at a time when competing facilities are attracting patients to their newly constructed facilities, Tri-County needs to remain competitive.

“Our strength as a healthcare institution, charged with delivering care that is critical to the wellbeing of our cities, is driven by our communities. It is our reason to exist,” said Joel Beiswenger, Tri-County president and CEO. “Health care has evolved and continues to change at a fast-paced rate. Our plan for the future must not only reflect this change but anticipate tomorrow.”

Tri-County is evaluating all options and has begun looking at potential local sites for development.

Above all, the goal with this project is to build the rural health care center of the future to adapt and meet patient needs for another 100 years. The new space will be designed as a healing environment that promotes a healthy lifestyle for everyone. It will include modern strategies for delivering the best patient experience possible while being efficient and flexible, evolving as health care evolves. Finally, it will serve as a beacon of wellness for generations to come.

More details will be announced as they become available.

ABOUT TRI-COUNTY HEALTH CARE

Tri-County Health Care is a private, not-for-profit health care system located in Wadena, Minnesota. It offers care services such as primary health, surgery, cancer care, diagnostic imaging, obstetrics, orthopedics and rehabilitation. Tri-County operates a hospital and medical clinic in Wadena, as well as five satellite clinics and two physical therapy clinics across Wadena, Todd and Otter Tail counties. Satellite clinic locations include Bertha, Henning, Ottertail, Sebeka and Verndale. Visit TCHC.org.

###

