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Updated: 6:32 PM Sep 16, 2010

Breaking News: CCMH, SJH to Join WV United Health System

WTAP News

WTAP has learned that Camden-Clark Memorial Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital have announced their intentions to join the statewide WV United Health System.

Posted: 1:29 PM Sep 16, 2010

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Updated 9/16/2010 @ 6:04 p.m.

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Camden-Clark Memorial Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital are planning to join the statewide West Virginia United Health System.

The West Virginia United Health System (WVUHS) has started the process of buying St. Joseph's from the company that owns it- Signature Hospital Corporation- and paperwork is being filed for the not-for-profit hospital CCMH to become a member hospital of WVUHS.

If approved this would form one not-for-profit regional medical center.

Tom Jones, CEO of West Virginia United Health System, said that paperwork has been filed with the Federal Trade Commission for the proposed affiliation and purchase. He also said that a letter of intent for a certificate of need is expected to be filed with the State's Health Care Authority within days.

"It will take four to six months to hopefully get the approvals and close on the transaction," Jones said.

If approved, officials said all current employees at both hospitals will have positions at comparable wages and benefits under the new system.

If anything, executives said positions may change and more may be created but nothing has been decided yet.

Jones said "One of the goals of this is to grow the business so we may eliminate some duplicative services but we may add some new services that the community doesn't have so there will still be jobs for everyone and you'll see growth here instead of cutbacks."

"I think it really does assure all of our hospitals' future with health reform coming and the environment changing an awful lot. I think it really is the power of being combined is better than the power of being separate," said Mike King, CEO of Camden-Clark Memorial Hospital.

Jack Julius, CEO of St. Joseph's Hospital, said "I really feel this is going to make Parkersburg a destination for healthcare and for healthcare services for the entire region."

Jones said the plans are to improve the quality of healthcare and help lower the costs.

Officials expect by the first quarter of 2011 they should know if the consolidation and acquisition of the hospitals is approved.

Whether or not the names of the hospitals will change has not yet been decided. Both hospitals and WVUHS will be working on that down the road if the move is approved.

Updated 9/16/2010 @ 1:57 pm

The WV United Health System was created by the WV legislature in 1996. It includes hospitals in Morgantown, Clarksburg, Martinsburg and Ranson.

Updated 9/16/2010 @ 1:37 pm

WTAP has learned that Camden-Clark Memorial Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital have announced their intentions to join the statewide WV United Health System. Tom Jones, CEO of the WVUHC system, says the system envisions purchasing St. Joseph's Hospital as CCMH simultaneously affiliates itself with WVUHS.

More updates are on the way.

A major announcement is minutes away that that involves, among other entities, a Mid-Ohio Valley hospital.

The announcement is scheduled to take place Thursday afternoon at 1:30 pm in the office of the Parkersburg Mayor Bob Newell . WTAP-TV understands that Camden-Clark Memorial Hospital is "taking part" in the major announcement.

WTAP has a crew at the announcement and will pass along details of the announcement as soon as we receive them.

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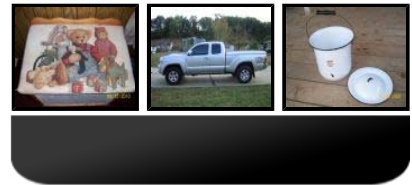
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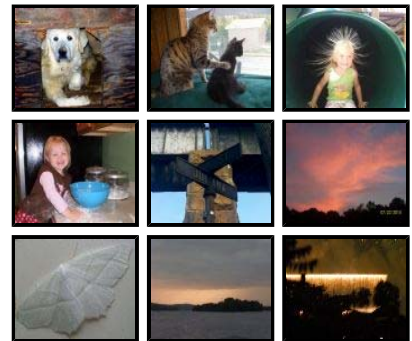
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