Tell me your why

In this month of heart health, I encourage you to look at what is in your heart, or more simply, what is your why?

On the surface, our brand slogan – Your best life. Our one purpose. – seems to be straight forward. We are here to help an individual have their best life. Our slogan is our MercyOne Brand Promise, it is what each of us is supposed to do in our roles – to help a person have their best life.

This means you, our colleagues and providers, too – MercyOne wants to do everything possible for you to have your best life. After all, you have committed much of your life (some of you over 50 years) to serve our special Mission.

By now, you are probably thinking “OK Bob, what is this about?” It is simple; I would like to hear your stories directly, so we are starting “Tell Me.” Tell me how you – as a colleague, physician or provider – have helped someone have their best life and link it to one of our Cultural Beliefs: Own It!, Be ONE, Personalized Care, Improve Daily and Innovate. It is that simple – share a story you have observed and let me know how it aligns with our Culture Beliefs.

I remain in “awe” by the stories I hear each day about how our incredible 20,000 MercyOne colleagues have helped someone have their best life possible. However, we know there are many more stories than we hear. This is where you come in – email your story to me at britz@mercydesmoines.org.

I can’t wait to hear from you.
Our Key Results focus our work as well as measure performance and progress toward our Vision to set the standard as a personalized and radically convenient system of health services. System-wide progress on the Key Results is featured here each month.

To view your region’s progress, see your local communications.

**Consumer Experience**
Percent of consumers who would recommend MercyOne to their friends or family.
- MercyOne’s composite score remained consistent for the second month in a row at the 42nd percentile, but is below our target of the 55th percentile.

**Team Engagement**
Commitment each colleague gives each day to help our patients live their best life.
- A pulse engagement survey for all colleagues was held Feb. 10 through Feb. 19 to gain feedback on progress and actions needed since our annual engagement survey. Results will be shared in March.

**Quality**
The percent of patients who come back to any hospital within 30 days after being treated for a heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, lung disease, or hip and knee replacement.
- Our readmission rate increased to 13.2%, which is higher than last month’s readmission rate but remains better than our goal of 13.8%.

**Financial Performance**
Think of financial performance like a check book. At the end of the month we must have more than what we spend to fund benefit programs, raises, invest in facilities and clinical and non-clinical equipment.
- The December year-to-date operating margin was over budget by $4.1 million. This is better than last year, but remains below our goal. Plans continue to ensure we achieve our 2020 goal.

**Ambulatory Growth**
Non-hospital visits, including: outpatient surgery, physical therapy, physician offices, clinics and home care.
- MercyOne visits have totaled 2,094,923 through January, tracking 3.6% above our goal.
Here is what Personalize Care and Own It! looks like to me

A spouse of a patient from MercyOne Des Moines Emergency Care recognized Trisha VandeLune, RN, for the kind and compassionate care she provided to the patient and her spouse.

“We have had multiple emergency department visits over the course of the past two years in Oklahoma, and I can confidently say none have compared with the exemplary nursing care Trisha provided to us. She truly treated us with patient-centered care. I am currently a nurse educator in Tulsa...and instruct nurses during our onboarding process about mission, value and person-centered care. I am aware of what the nurse standard of care should be and I am confident Trisha is exceeding this standard of care.”

Trisha's work impacts our Key Result of Consumer Experience.

This is what Personalize Care and Own It! Look like to me.

Babies born in February at MercyOne Dubuque, MercyOne North Iowa and Mercy Iowa City are going home with handmade knit hats to help raise awareness of heart health.

Maternity and NICU services coming to MercyOne West Des Moines

On Feb. 5, MercyOne Central Iowa announced plans to open a new maternity center at MercyOne West Des Moines Medical Center. This new obstetrics (OB) program will provide inpatient birth and surgical services, which will include the first Level II Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) offered in the metro’s western suburbs. Construction has begun, and the center is expected to open in October 2020.

The 30,000-square-foot maternity center will be located on the top floor of MercyOne West Des Moines. It will include two, state-of-the-art obstetrical surgical suites dedicated for cesarean-section procedures; five private, spacious labor and delivery suites with advanced safety features – including fetal monitoring and infant security systems; and fifteen postpartum recovery suites. The design includes comfortable furnishings for overnight guests, a hospitality area, large flat-screen TVs, Bluetooth capability, walk-in showers, whirlpool tubs and other amenities.

“We know how important a NICU and on-site specialty care are to families making choices about maternity care, as well as to our physician partners who want to refer patients to our West Des Moines campus,” said Dr. Jona Conklin, maternal-fetal medicine specialist at MercyOne Perinatal Center. “Opening the first NICU in the western suburbs is further demonstration of our commitment as a comprehensive community hospital.”
Donation brings big fun for smallest patients at MercyOne Newton

A time typically associated with anxiety is now a fun journey for the youngest patients at MercyOne Newton Medical Center. In early January, the Iowa Speedway donated a child-size remote control vehicle to be used to transport pediatric patients back to the operating room. The Chevrolet-style vehicle can be driven by the child, although it will typically be operated by OR staff via remote.

Kids aged 2-7 will be the primary users of the car, and those who’ve experienced it so far have loved it – and they’re not the only ones, according to Surgery Manager Hillary Engbers.

“The parents love it and our colleagues loves it,” she said. “Even the other adult patients in the OR really enjoy seeing the kids ‘driving’ around. We had cataract patients tell us, ‘That’s so cool!’”

Hillary said it is so meaningful to be able to make the most out of a challenging situation.

“We always want to provide the best possible patient experience,” she said. “Going into an OR can be a scary situation, especially for a child, and this transforms it into something fun and exciting instead.”

Here is what Personalize Care and Own It! looks like to me

The daughter of a patient recognized Emily Taylor, RN, for the outstanding care she provided to the patient.

“As my mom remained hospitalized, she became critical and was moved to the ICU. Emily made a point to come over to the ICU to visit with mom and us – she was so kind and compassionate and genuinely caring as demonstrated in her words, her touch and her prayers. Mom was eventually moved to hospice care and Emily made a visit there, too. We were so lucky to have her as mom’s nurse in the last days of her life on Earth. MercyOne is so blessed to have Emily.”

Emily’s work impacts our Key Result of Consumer Experience.

This is what Personalize Care and Own It! look like to me.

MercyOne Elkader celebrating positive Consumer Experience trend

Congratulations to MercyOne Elkader Medical Center colleagues on their positive trend in the Key Result area of Consumer Experience over the past six months! Consumer Experience scores across the composite, acute and emergency department are all in the 90th percentile, with acute topping the chart in the 99th percentile.

By Personalizing Care, Owning It! and Improving Daily, MercyOne Elkader colleagues are making the shift to improve the Consumer Experience!
MercyOne strengthens critical access hospital partnerships

In the spirit of Be ONE, MercyOne continues to strengthen partnerships between the critical access hospitals. As an example, MercyOne Elkader Medical Center and Guttenberg Municipal Hospital (GMH), an affiliate of MercyOne, are now sharing valued surgery colleagues across locations.

Dr. Mansfield, general surgeon for GMH, joined the MercyOne Elkader surgery team in December 2019. Dr. Mansfield now offers scheduled, outpatient surgeries at MercyOne Elkader. In February, MercyOne Elkader also welcomed three GMH surgical technicians to their team to assist in their surgery department. Tara Aulwes, Sydney Thein, and Brandie Tompkins will rotate being on-site in Elkader weekly, working in the surgery and sterile processing departments.

Sharing these resources impacts MercyOne’s Key Results of Team Engagement, Consumer Experience and Financial Performance.

National Day of Service benefits those in need

Marla Judge-Rohret, director of Risk Management, and Jacquie Easley McGhee, director of Community and Diversity Services, helped collect breakfast casseroles and breakfast food donations for the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service.

This annual Mission on the Move project helps the Salvation Army provide warm breakfasts for people in need. The casseroles were made by our MercyOne Des Moines and West Des Moines colleagues. It’s estimated more than 3,000 people will benefit from our efforts.

Here is what Be ONE and Improve Daily look like to me

MercyOne colleagues from Adair County, Madison County and Ringgold County recently attended the Service Excellence in Healthcare Conference in New Orleans. Team members experienced great educational and inspirational workshops to bring back to Iowa to improve our Key Results of Consumer Experience and Team Engagement.

This is what Be One and Improve Daily looks like to me.

| Front row: Kim Hulbert, CNO for Madison County; Amy Anstey, Quality for Adair County; Jean Walker, Trustee for Madison County. Back row: Terri Ruby, Business Office at Ringgold County; Amy Mobley, Quality at Ringgold County; Stacey Mitchell, Quality for Madison County; Tiffany Johnson, Marketing with Adair County; Amy O’Rourke, CNO for Adair County; Marcia Hendricks, CEO Adair and Madison Counties. | Left to right, Guttenberg Municipal Hospital surgical technicians, Tara Aulwes, Sydney Thein, and Brandie Tompkins with MercyOne Elkader OR Manager Lael Aspenson. |
MercyOne Birthday Week: Thank you for celebrating the Power of MercyOne!

Feb. 1 through Feb. 8, MercyOne celebrated our Mission, our progress and our colleagues during our first birthday as ONE connected system of health services.

Since Feb. 1, 2019, together, MercyOne has:
- Improved the lives of more than 3.3 million patients.
- Welcomed more than 10,000 babies into the world.
- Contributed more than $95 million across our circle of care to benefit the most vulnerable.
- Implemented a new system-wide brand across 420 care locations, which includes updating our signs to make our locations easier to find for consumers.
- Made significant investments in colleague and leader development.

Our incredible team of more than 20,000 colleagues is what has made all of our accomplishments possible. Thank you for being the Power of MercyOne!

MercyOne Week Celebration Award Recipients

**“Happy Birthday” Song Showdown Winner**
From more than 35 videos, **MercyOne North Iowa Regency Family Medicine** was voted our champion. [Watch all videos here](#).

**MercyOne Trivia Contest Winners**
From more than 600 participants, our regional contest winners are:
- Affiliate: (Franklin General Hospital) Candice Woltjer
- Central Iowa: Jessica Lyon
- Clinton: Bobbie Redick
- Dubuque: Abbigail Schlarmann
- Iowa City: Brenda Beckley
- North Iowa: Emily Garner
- Northeast Iowa: Brenda Kriz
- Western Iowa: Renea Panzer

**#PowerofMercyOne Photo Contest Winners!**
- Central Iowa: [MercyOne Central Iowa Medical Group Clinic Managers](#)
- Clinton: [MercyOne Clinton Emergency Department](#)
- Dubuque: Ryan Bartels
- Iowa City: [Mercy Iowa City Sleep Lab](#)
- North Iowa: Whitney Carey
- Northeast Iowa: [MercyOne Northeast Iowa Clinical Development](#)
- Western Iowa: [MercyOne Siouxland 6SW Nursing Floor](#)
**Team Engagement**

**OVERALL ENGAGEMENT AT THE 75TH PERCENTILE BY 2021**

**COLLEAGUE ENGAGEMENT AT THE 39TH PERCENTILE BY 2020; PROVIDER ENGAGEMENT AT THE 30TH PERCENTILE BY 2020**

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**Be ONE**

To make our locations easier for consumers to find and understand our capabilities, we are updating our signs. Share your team’s photo with your new MercyOne sign on Facebook using the #SignsOfMercyOne hashtag.

If featured in the System Newsletter, your team will receive treats.

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**Improve Daily: new meeting agenda and minutes templates**

Having a consistent agenda and minutes template enhances our ability to collaborate as ONE. We’ve recently improved upon both templates from feedback received. The first change was on the agenda in the Reflection section. The update provides more guidance in preparing a meaningful Reflection encouraging you to open your meeting centered on our MercyOne Mission. Additionally, for each meeting topic lines to note the decision made and who needs to know the decision were added to help ensure awareness of those impacted.

At the end of the agenda and the meeting minutes, you’ll find a change in our Key Results acronym: **Coming Together Quickly – our Future Awaits**. Because we made Sustainable Growth & Efficiency to Financial Performance, the update was needed to help colleagues remember the 5 Key Results a bit easier.

Please be sure to use the new templates found at [www.MercyOne.org/culture](http://www.MercyOne.org/culture) or your region’s intranet!

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**MercyOne Key Results**

**Coming Together Quickly – our Future Awaits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer Experience</th>
<th>Team Engagement</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Financial Performance</th>
<th>Ambulatory Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Would Recommend&quot; at the 75th Percentile by 2021</td>
<td>Overall Engagement at the 75th Percentile by 2021</td>
<td>All cause unplanned 30-day readmission rate 13.8%</td>
<td>Operating Margin 3.5%</td>
<td>3.4 million non inpatient encounters generating revenue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here is what Own It! looks like to me

When MercyOne Clinton Supply Chain Courier Teresa Wittbecker found out someone was needed to collect and count donations to the MercyOne Birthday Week food drive each day, she quickly stepped up to volunteer. Teresa cheerfully collected daily food donations from all MercyOne Clinton locations—including clinics in DeWitt, Iowa, and Morrison and Fulton, Ill.

“When I learned of the need I stepped up and made it work with my schedule,” Teresa says. “There’s a desperate need in our community for basic needs like food and shelter, and I’m proud that MercyOne colleagues made a difference with this food drive.”

Teresa’s actions improve our Team Engagement.

This is what Own It looks like to me.

“Your Best Life” podcast: Heart Month

All month long, “Your Best Life” has featured cardio health topics from heart attacks to women’s heart health tips – listen in to hear from physicians across MercyOne.

Listen now at https://www.mercyone.org/podcast/

Have a topic idea? Email podcast@mercyhealth.com.

Here is what Innovation and Team Engagement look like to me

Scott Stoeger, MD, PhD, worked with a team of colleagues from surgical care and endoscopy to turn single-use sterilization wraps from the operating room into mats for the homeless.

In addition to sewing on his own, Dr. Stoeger held team gatherings at his home on weekends to assemble more than 60 mats and sleeping bags. The group also purchased inexpensive pillows to complete the sleeping bundles. Instead of these materials ending up in a landfill, we know these items will be greatly appreciated by those who use them! This project certainly upholds our value of commitment to the poor!

This is what Innovation and Team Engagement look like to me.

Presenting the bears were John Deere Dubuque plant manager Mark Dickson and executive assistant Arleen Wentworth. Kay Takes, president of MercyOne’s Eastern Iowa Region, accepted the gift, along with Amy Wright, director of maternal child services, and Sue Hafkemeyer, executive director of MercyOne Dubuque Foundation.

John Deere Dubuque Works donated 150 teddy bears to MercyOne Dubuque to comfort children in the pediatric unit or emergency department.
MercyOne Siouxland Child Advocacy Center receives national FBI award

MercyOne Siouxland Child Advocacy Center has been selected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Omaha field office for the Director’s Community Leadership Award, a prestigious national award on behalf of their efforts to combat violence in the tri-state area. The award is in recognition of outstanding service to the local community and to the enduring contributions to the advancement of justice to the Siouxland area.

“Our office relies on the work MercyOne Siouxland Child Advocacy Center does to impact people’s lives so significantly,” said Christie Johnson, Special Agent in Charge, FBI-Omaha.

The MercyOne Siouxland Child Advocacy Center is a comprehensive program dedicated to serving child victims of abuse. Since opening in 1989, the center has served more than 18,000 children in the Siouxland area.

A local award ceremony took place Feb. 4 at the MercyOne Siouxland Child Advocacy Center. In May, FBI Director Christopher Wray will recognize the CAC at a special award ceremony at FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Manning Wound Care Clinic receives Center of Excellence Award at one year anniversary

The Wound Care Clinic at Manning Regional Healthcare Center (MRHC) was named a recipient of RestorixHealth’s Center of Excellence award. Recipients of this award meet or exceed national wound care quality benchmarks over a six-month period. Manning Regional Healthcare Center, an affiliate of MercyOne, was one of just ten clinics selected for the award.

“This achievement reaffirms the quality of care Manning Regional’s Wound Care Clinic provides its patients every day,” said Linn Block, RN, BSN, MHA. “We are proud to be a recipient of an award which recognizes the hard work and dedication of our colleagues.”

The Wound Care Clinic at MRHC celebrated its one-year anniversary of providing services to the Manning-area. “In this fiscal year alone we have serviced 69 patients with varying degrees of wounds,” said Kendra Tiefenthaler, RN. “It is rewarding to see so many patients being treated for wounds they may have had for days, months or even years.”

Four MercyOne medical centers receive 5-star ratings from CMS

Of just 407 hospitals nationwide, MercyOne’s Circle of Care included four medical centers in Iowa receiving a five-star designation from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), more than any other health system in Iowa.

The CMS analyzes more than 4,500 Medicare-certified hospitals nationwide using data on patient outcomes, experiences and other factors to create the annual star ratings. Five stars is the highest designation, with three stars being the national average score.

Congratulations to these MercyOne hospitals on their five star designation:
- MercyOne Clinton
- MercyOne Dubuque
- MercyOne Newton
- Mercy Iowa City

“Thank you to our incredible caregiving teams, physicians and colleagues for their commitment to provide personalized and excellent care for our patients and communities across Iowa,” said Bob Ritz, MercyOne chief executive officer. “Receiving five-star ratings from the CMS confirms the quality of care and patient experiences we are honored to provide.”
COVID-19 (2019 Novel Coronavirus) – What you need to know

COVID-19, originally referred to as 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), was recently discovered in Wuhan, China. Cases of COVID-19 are appearing across the globe, and MercyOne teams are monitoring the virus to help keep our communities healthy.

At MercyOne, we are following guidance provided by the CDC and Iowa Public Health Department to screen patients for symptoms including fever and respiratory signs as well as the patient’s travel history and exposure to those who have traveled. If a person is found to have symptoms and relevant travel or exposure history, MercyOne colleagues will isolate the patient and alert the Iowa Department of Public Health to coordinate testing. If you begin to feel symptoms, please call ahead to your MercyOne care location.

Manning Regional Healthcare Center’s Senior Life Solutions Team receives 2019 Iowa Program of the Year Award

Manning Regional Healthcare Center Senior Life Solutions program has been named Iowa Program of the Year and is a national award finalist. Award recipients demonstrated outstanding patient care, excellent comprehension and execution of compliance regulations and strong community engagement.

Manning Regional Healthcare Center’s Senior Life Solutions is an intensive outpatient group therapy program designed to meet the unique needs of senior adults struggling with symptoms of depression and anxiety which can sometimes be age-related.

Population Health snowball rolls out of Des Moines

As Iowa dealt with one of its few snow systems this winter, a different type of Snowball rolled out of the server center at MercyOne. As a next step in innovation, MercyOne Population Health Services Organization (PHSO) is migrating their large data warehouse to the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Cloud platform, and that starts with a Snowball.

Over the last several years, MercyOne PHSO has built a large data warehouse containing EMR and billing data from MercyOne hospitals, medical groups, affiliates and other partners, as well as patient claims for value based contracts. This data is vital to the coordination of care for thousands of patients, as well as other population health strategies impacting Consumer Experience and Financial Performance. During this time, MercyOne PHSO has worked closely with CommonSpirit IT to maintain this warehouse on local servers. However, as the organization has grown, this data has also grown to a size which is now most appropriate for a cloud platform.

On Feb. 6, the first step of this migration commenced as MercyOne PHSO sent a Snowball to the (Amazon) Cloud. Unlike the white fluffy kind in Iowa, the Amazon Snowball is a 50 lb. hard drive containing 4 terabytes of MercyOne data. Moving to the AWS Cloud platform will allow MercyOne PHSO to more nimbly increase their data storage and will also support more innovative data outputs such as machine learning, data mining and other techniques which will bring value to our patients.
Alliant Energy grant benefits MercyOne Newton Obstetrics Care

MercyOne Newton Medical Center recently received a grant from Alliant Energy to purchase Halo SleepSacks (wearable blankets) to provide to families who deliver at the hospital. The grant also provided funding to supply car seats to families who do not have a suitable car seat and do not have the financial means to purchase one.

“MercyOne Obstetrics Care is grateful for Alliant Energy’s donation to provide these items for new families,” said Keri Schippers, MercyOne Newton Manager of Inpatient Care. “SleepSacks are the standard for safe sleep practices and being able to provide a Halo SleepSack to every family is wonderful and greatly appreciated by families.”

MercyOne Waterloo offering SPRAVATO™ for patients fighting depression

MercyOne Waterloo Medical Center is now one of only a few hospitals in the state of Iowa qualified to supply SPRAVATO™, a prescription nasal spray used along with an antidepressant taken by mouth for treatment-resistant depression in adults. The nasal spray is only available at certified SPRAVATO™ treatment centers under the supervision of a health care professional, and MercyOne Waterloo is the only credentialed hospital in northeast Iowa for this medication. “With limited certified hospital sites in Iowa, we’re proud to provide patients in our region this option.” said Ryanne North, nurse manager of Waterloo’s Outpatient Clinic and Wound Clinic.

“We’re committed to providing innovative solutions for our patients,” said John Hamiel, PharmD, director of pharmacy in MercyOne Northeast Iowa. “This is another treatment option for providers to try when they feel it will positively impact the patient’s well-being.

Five Critical Access Hospitals in MercyOne’s Circle of Care recognized among top 100 nationwide

Five critical access hospitals within MercyOne’s Circle of Care have been named a 2020 Top 100 Critical Access Hospital by The Chartis Center for Rural Health. This annual award honors rural hospitals for performance analysis by iVantage Health Analytics Hospital Strength INDEX®.

Utilizing 50 independent indicators, the INDEX assesses performance across eight pillars which span market-, value- and finance-based categories. Hospitals recognized as a Top 100 facility had one of the 100 highest overall scores among all Critical Access Hospitals nationally.

Congratulations to these MercyOne critical access hospitals on their recognition:
- Decatur County Hospital
- Knoxville Hospital & Clinics
- Kossuth Regional Health Center
- MercyOne Centerville
- Pender Community Hospital

Accessorize at MercyOneStore.com

Order these and many other items at MercyOneStore.com.

Email Lea Greathouse at greathlj@mercyhealth.com with ideas for the store.
Van Buren County Hospital joins MercyOne as an affiliate

On Jan. 28, the Van Buren County Hospital Board of Trustees announced the approval of a new management relationship with MercyOne.

“MercyOne is excited to extend our circle of care to Keosauqua and the surrounding communities,” said Bob Ritz, MercyOne chief executive officer.

“The addition of Van Buren County Hospital builds on our vision to set the standard for a personalized and radically convenient system of health services for our patients and the communities we serve.”

“We are looking forward to the positive impact this affiliation will have for our patients and community,” said Lee McIntosh, Van Buren County Hospital board chair.

MercyOne Siouxland opens new Interventional Radiology Suite

A ribbon-cutting and reveal ceremony for MercyOne Siouxland’s new Interventional Radiology Suite was held Feb. 14. The new Siemens IR equipment was installed in January and the first procedures were performed in the new suite in February. This new technology allows physicians to offer the latest minimally invasive vascular and nonvascular procedures to MercyOne Siouxland patients.

Mercy Iowa City Infusion Center Expands Hours

Since opening in May 2019, the Mercy Iowa City Infusion Center has cared for many patients who need infusion therapies in addition to chemotherapy in its beautiful new space located in the Mercy Iowa City hospital, an affiliate of MercyOne.

To further Personalize Care and Improve Daily, the center now offers expanded hours to serve patients from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and has added weekend hours from 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.
MercyOne North Iowa best practice improves Financial Performance of regional CAH affiliates across MercyOne

Demonstrating Improve Daily and Be ONE, the MercyOne North Iowa Cost Allocation Team created a process to provide complete and accurate allocations of related party costs to Critical Access Hospital (CAH) affiliates across MercyOne. This process allows MercyOne owned and managed CAHs to receive additional reimbursement from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) programs which help improve the Financial Performance of these care locations.

CAH designation is available to eligible rural hospitals from the CMS. This classification is designed to reduce the financial vulnerability of rural hospitals through a cost reimbursement methodology and ensure access to health care by keeping essential services in rural communities. The CMS regulations allow CAHs which have an owned or managed relationship with a larger network, like MercyOne, to claim on their cost report the “actual cost” of the services received.

A system-wide steering committee was developed to create a standard process to allocate related party costs for 30 MercyOne CAHs across our Circle of Care. This team includes leaders from MercyOne medical centers and system office as well as cost report experts from Trinity Health and CommonSpirit Health. To help ensure the greatest financial benefit, the Cost Allocation Team’s approach needed to calculate, document and defend all costs.

With a short window to implement the related party allocation process for their region for FY19, the MercyOne North Iowa Cost Allocation Team created an accounting and record-keeping system which can be replicated on an annual basis. Their work has been identified as a best practice and embraced as a model for use across MercyOne.

With this improvement, our affiliates will be in a better position to assure necessary health care services are available in the communities they serve. The result of this work is anticipated to benefit the Financial Performance of MercyOne affiliates by $10 million dollars annually, and specifically MercyOne CAHs in North Iowa by $3 million annually.

Thank you to Cost Allocation Teams in all regions for their diligence and commitment to this new process!

Members of the MercyOne North Iowa Cost Allocation Team: Sandra Christiansen, MercyOne System Office; Danette Zook, MercyOne North Iowa Vice President of Finance; Michele Sawyer, Analytics; Peggy Boehmer, Director, Analytics; Dan Larson, Clifton Larsen Allen; and Jennifer Rapenske, MercyOne North Iowa chief financial officer.

Our Vision

MercyOne will set the standard for a personalized and radically convenient system of health services.
Network Integrity: MercyOne Transfer Model

In our December 2019 newsletter we introduced MercyOne’s network integrity strategic initiative to improve care coordination by making it as easy as possible for colleagues to refer patients within the MercyOne network for their health and wellness services. Part of our network integrity initiative included moving to one call number for hospital-to-hospital patient transfers.

To quickly advance the work and ensure we crafted a successful model, an objective partner with experience related to patient logistics was brought in to assist.

ECG was selected as our strategic partner to help MercyOne develop a transfer model for our system. Once developed, the transfer model will allow MercyOne to:

• Improve our referral experience for providers and care team members;
• Support clinical care coordination to benefit patients as they move through one seamless system of continuous care; and
• Enhance network integrity.

Over the past five weeks, a system-wide assessment of current transfer processes was conducted. This included interviews with physicians across our state as well as market and system leaders. Physician input is at the center of building the model to ensure it provides a seamless care journey for our patients.

Next, recommendations from the assessment and an evaluation of transfer models will be shared for feedback to the:

• MercyOne Transfer Model Steering Committee (which includes physicians as well as system and market leaders)
• MercyOne’s Executive Leadership Team, and
• Hospital-to-Hospital Transfer Workgroup.

Following discussions, a business plan will be created to implement the recommended model.

As a network of 2,000 physicians and 420 care locations including 43 hospitals, we have incredible potential to improve by moving patients through their health journey in a friction-free manner ensuring each individual receives the right level of care in the right location within MercyOne.

In addition to hospital-to-hospital transfers, ambulatory-based processes are also being evaluated as well as air transport, ground transport and virtual care access.

Look for strategic plan updates here monthly. If you have questions, please contact Mary Cownie at mcownie@mercydesmoines.org
After about six weeks of legislative session, MercyOne is pleased to see movement around our top five health policy priorities. The week of Feb. 17 was a crucial week to ensure bills which were introduced this session were voted on by subcommittees to move forward – this process is called the funnel. The next funnel deadline is set for March 20, when bills must gain committee passage in the opposite chamber.

1. **Telehealth Payment Parity:** The telehealth payment parity bill cleared the funnel deadline in the Iowa House, and MercyOne will continue to engage our colleagues to communicate with policymakers around this effort to ensure payment for a virtual visit is the same as an in-person visit.

2. **Medical Malpractice Reform:** The medical malpractice bill cleared the funnel deadline as well. The hard cap for non-economic damages was amended to $750,000.

3. **Emergency Medical Services (EMS):** MercyOne is pleased to see so much conversation around EMS on how to ensure appropriate coverage across Iowa by making EMS an essential service through a tax levy or sports wagering taxes. Additionally, there was a bill which passed the funnel to increase EMS training.

4. **Tobacco 21:** Tobacco 21, which addresses the smoking age legislation which passed federally, has advanced in both the House and the Senate chambers.

5. **Medicaid:** Finally, there were two bills aimed at improving the Medicaid program to address prior authorization along with day awaiting placement that unfortunately didn’t pass.

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**On Jan. 27 Dr. Bill Vandivier and Fred Eastman spoke at the telehealth payment parity subcommittee sharing valuable first-person experiences with the current regulations which limit his ability to provide telehealth services.**

**Brooke Kensinger, CEO of MercyOne Elkader Medical Center, Bob Weissinger, family practice physician at Clarke County Hospital, James Roetman, CEO of Pocahontas Community Hospital, and Ken Sharp, with the Iowa Department of Public Health, discuss EMS funding concerns during a Feb. 17 Iowa Hospital Association and Greater Des Moines Partnership forum.**
**Dr. Deming receives Endowed Chair honor**

Congratulations to Richard Deming, MD, radiation oncologist and medical director of the MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center and Cancer Committee Chair! Dr. Deming was recently honored as Endowed Chair in Medical Humanities at the Creighton School of Medicine. Renowned for his compassionate care, Dr. Deming said the mission of the endowed chair aligns with his own life’s work and his belief the humanities are essential to his formation as a physician.

“As I’ve had the opportunity to interact with thousands of cancer patients, I’ve learned the therapeutic value of just being present with them,” Deming said. “Genuine caring and authentic compassion have a tremendous healing power. What I gained through my classes on spirituality, theology, philosophy, psychology and literature has had a huge influence on my success as a doctor.”

Read the full story.

**Jason Monarch graduates from Strategic Leadership Program**

Jason Monarch, vice president of operations with MercyOne North Iowa, recently graduated from the Trinity Health Strategic Leadership Program.

The program is designed for experienced directors and executives, both clinical and non-clinical, who aspire for additional executive-level leadership roles and development. The Strategic Leadership Program is delivered in partnership with The Advisory Board, provides a customized, interactive and high-impact learning experience which develops the skills, knowledge and strategic perspectives required to address the challenges facing today’s health care leaders.

Congratulations, Jason!

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**New Leaders and Providers**

**Dar Elbert named CEO for Kossuth Regional Health Center**

Dar Elbert has accepted the position of CEO/Administrator at Kossuth Regional Health Center (KRHC), a MercyOne affiliate. Dar has served as the Chief Nursing Officer and Assistant Administrator at KRHC for 33 years and has served as KRHC’s interim CEO/Administrator since May 1.

Congratulations, Dar!

**North Iowa**
- Rebekah Blumenthal, ARPN MercyOne Forest City Family Medicine

**Mercy Iowa City**
- Amber Cress, PA-C, emergency medicine
- Marco Del Castillo, MD, anesthesia
- Matthew Kemp, MD, emergency medicine
- Jessica Hamill Schindler, DO, emergency medicine
- Robert Thomas, MD, otolaryngology, ENT Medical Services
- Bradford Wisnousky, DO, emergency medicine

**Siouxland**
- Matthew Humpal, MD MercyOne South Sioux City Family Medicine
MercyOne Opportunities

MercyOne is growing, and we want your help in finding perfect fits to join our family. Please see a highlight of MercyOne opportunities below:

Clinton
- Chief Nursing Office
- Director CIN

Dubuque
- Director, Imaging Services
- Director, Child Development Center
- Director, Patient Access and RHM Financial Services

North Iowa
- Director, Revenue Integrity and Optimization

Northeast Iowa
- Director, Clinic Operations
- Vice President, Finance

Siouxland
- Director - Case Management
- Director - Critical Access Hospital (MercyOne Siouxland in Oakland, Nebraska)
- Director - Integrity, Compliance, Privacy and Risk Management
- Executive Director - Network Operations
- Executive Director - Clinically Integrated Network

See all MercyOne career opportunities at MercyOne.org/careers/

What should you do?
FIND NEW COMPLIANCE AND PRIVACY SCENARIOS HERE EACH MONTH

A 63-year-old male is admitted to the ED with a severed lower leg due to a farming accident. His leg had been caught in a grain auger, but he was able to free his leg by cutting through his own tissue.

The news of the accident quickly spread via social media. A local TV station carried an interview with the farmer, and soon journalists from across the globe were calling for interviews.

A media company called the local hospital marketing team asking to videotape the ED where the patient had been treated and to interview the physician and patient. To ensure the privacy of other patients was protected, legal counsel was contacted. An Authorization to Disclose Information was created for the media company, the patient and patient’s spouse to sign prior to videotaping. The media company was not allowed in the ED area. The hospital videotaped a view of the ED when no patients were being treated, and this footage was given to the media company. The interview occurred in a private room in the hospital where no patients or colleagues were accessible.

Including legal counsel was critical in this situation to ensure our patient’s privacy was protected.

This demonstrates Be ONE to positively impact our Key Results of Consumer Experience and Team Engagement.