New investments planned for Mercy Health Network

Last week we shared investments made in Mercy Health Network (MHN) markets during the last fiscal year. During the next year, several new, exciting projects are planned across Iowa to meet the unique and individual needs of the patients we serve. A list of projects is included below. You can also watch for progress updates in upcoming editions of the MHN newsletter.

**CLINTON**
- A vault will be constructed in the Radiation Oncology Center to house a new linear accelerator. This enhanced technology will provide greater precision and reduce treatment time for patients.
- Plans are underway for renovations in the emergency room, including the addition of behavioral health rooms, outpatient pharmacy and access to home medical equipment.

**DES MOINES**
- Construction to expand the central utility plant at Mercy’s central campus will begin in fall 2018. This expansion is necessary to accommodate additional HVAC, water and gas systems and upgrade electric generation for additional building capacity.
- Renovations are currently underway at Mercy West Lakes to accommodate increased volumes in endoscopy, imaging and surgical services, and to prepare for new services to be added in the coming years.
- Mercy Clinics Family Medicine Beaverdale will move to a new location in Nov. 2018.
- Mercy Clinics Occupational Health will open a second location in the fall of 2018.
- Mercy recently received Certificate of Need application approval to construct a 100-bed freestanding inpatient behavioral health hospital in Clive. Construction is expected to begin April 2019.

**DUBUQUE**
- A comprehensive cancer center received Certificate of Need approval in July. The two-story cancer center will provide a holistic and healing environment, with educational facilities, a medical clinic, chemotherapy, infusion bays and radiation therapy technology.

**NORTH IOWA**
- Construction has begun on a new Behavioral Health Center that will house separate inpatient units for adults and adolescents. The adult units will contain 24 private rooms, a group therapy room, dining room and a large space for socialization. The adolescent unit will have five semi-private rooms, group therapy room and a dining room. The center is anticipated to be finished in the summer of 2019.

**SIOUX CITY**
- The project scope for a new Hybrid Operating Room includes new technology and remodeling for the operating room, a CT suite and an interventional radiology room.

**WHEATON**
- Covenant Clinic Family Medicine will open in Allison this fall.
Mercy West Lakes welcomes **Phil Harrop as COO**

Two words describe Phil Harrop: all in. The new Chief Operating Officer for Mercy West Lakes started on July 30, bringing with him a life-long zest for learning, a seasoned leadership career and a deep-rooted passion for serving others.

“I am so excited to be part of Mercy, a place that feels like home,” said Phil. “Our mission and faith-based culture give me confidence in what we do, as we continue the work intended by the Sisters of Mercy.”

Phil’s primary focus is on the improvement and overall growth of inpatient and outpatient services offered at Mercy’s 17-acre community hospital and campus in West Des Moines. He is also charged with leading the development and delivery of short and long-term plans to address quality, colleague engagement and patient satisfaction.

As Phil continues to visit with colleagues and learn about the organization, he has noted an undercurrent of excitement.

“The sense of newness and opportunity is almost palpable,” Phil said. “The key is to keep our focus on doing the very best for our patients, and as a team, be proactive in taking advantage of opportunities that position Mercy as the leader in providing care.”

“Everyone has excellence within them. Ultimately, it comes down to a love of serving others and having passion for it,” Phil continued. “The best ideas often come from unexpected places. Together, we are smarter than any one of us alone.”

**Five Fast Facts about Phil:**

1. Phil is a father of six children, ranging in age from 16 to five years old (four girls, two boys).
2. He worked in the Des Moines area from 2006-2009. In coming back to the area, Phil’s family was able to move in to the very same house they lived in nine years ago.
3. He speaks fluent Russian, often exclusively using the language with his children.
4. Phil is the fourth of six children. His family originates from Moncks Corner, S.C. Phil’s parents instilled the importance of education, which led him to earn a Ph.D. and three master’s degrees from The Ohio State University.
5. His first experience in health care was when he volunteered for Utah Valley Hospital in Provo, Utah, as an undergrad studying business and finance. Before purchasing cards were commonplace, Phil audited petty cash box balances.

Protecting children from meningitis

In 2017, Iowa’s No Shot No School law went into effect, requiring all students entering seventh or 12th grades to be immunized against meningitis. Students in these age groups have a greater chance of exposure to meningitis because of close physical contact through sports or other school activities. Children who are not vaccinated are not able to attend the first day of classes.

Meningitis can be life-threatening; however, the meningococcal vaccine is 85 – 100 percent effective. Many Mercy clinics have schedules for patients needing immunizations only. Parents can contact their local clinic to schedule a physical exam and meningitis vaccination for their child. Students who are vaccinated will receive a special certificate verifying the child is compliant with the law. This certificate must be turned into school officials prior to the start of the school year.

Mercy makes list of **101 Most Social Media Friendly Hospitals**

Social media efforts at Mercy have been recognized on a new list highlighting the most social media friendly hospitals in the country. Ranked at #57, Mercy’s social media was scored based on its effectiveness in platforms including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Google+ and Pinterest.

To learn how hospitals were selected for this list, and to view the full list of social media hospitals, click [here](#).
By the time he was referred to Troy Munson, M.D., a board-certified neurosurgeon with Mercy Neurosurgery, for intense lower back pain, Michael Papian was at the end of his rope.

“I told Dr. Munson, I don’t care if I live or if I die, but I can’t live with this pain anymore,” Papian said.

The pain had started about two years earlier and kept getting worse. Worried about the risk of addiction, Papian refused to take opioids. Two epidurals didn’t help at all. For pain so severe that he rated it at 10 on a scale of 1 to 10, the Windsor Heights man took only over-the-counter anti-inflammatories.

“I couldn’t bend over at all, and I could barely get out of the house and go anywhere because it hurt so much to walk. I had to hire people to mow my lawn and take care of the snow. I slept in a recliner every night and spent most of my day sitting in it, too. I had to count on my wife, Janet, to put my socks on! God love her, I couldn’t have lived through this without her.”

Dr. Munson ordered an MRI, which showed one of Papian’s disks had collapsed on top of the rod from a previous spinal fusion surgery in 2000, and the vertebra just above the fusion was fractured.

“He told me surgery could help with the collapsed disk, but he didn’t know if it would totally relieve my pain,” Papian says.

Working with Natisha Jensen, M.D., Dr. Munson performed oblique lumbar interbody fusion surgery at Mercy to build up the collapsed disk (like the human equivalent of concrete-jacking a sunken sidewalk) and to implant an internal brace to keep the vertebrae from collapsing.

“He told me it might be six months to a year before I noticed a big difference in my pain level, but after 30 days, it was already down to an eight instead of a 10. Six months after the surgery, my pain level is a one or a two!” Papian said with delight.

“I’m back on my lawn tractor cutting my own grass, and at Easter brunch this year I could get up and get my own stuff. I can drive my car and go where I want. I got my life back!”

Papian has already referred one friend to Dr. Munson and describes himself as “very, very, very happy” with the care he received.

“I have high praise for Dr. Munson. He’s good at communicating, and I know he was happy to hear that my pain is almost 100 percent gone. I have zero pain except when I bend over, and I can put my own socks on again!”