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Hoopeston hospital, Carle integration approved by state

Editor's note: Changes are coming to health care in Hoopeston with the integration of Hoopeston Regional Health Center and Carle Foundation and also changes at Hoopeston's new nursing home. This two-part series, based on an interview with Harry Brockus, HRHC CEO, details some of those changes

The Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board gave Carle Foundation and Hoopeston Regional Health Center's plan for integration.

The review board's decision that Carle Foundation does not need to go through the Certificate of Need process to move forward with the change of ownership of HRHC, scheduled to take place on October 1.

Carle Foundation and HRHC have partnered since 2009 to provide enhanced services in the Hoopeston service area. In 2010, the parties announced plans to pursue full integration.

Carle has increased its presence at HRHC through increased services, including increased connectivity between Hoopeston's emergency room and Carle physicians. Also, three Carle cardiologists now practice in Hoopeston and includes the ability to conduct nuclear stress tests.

Additionally, a partnership with Carle Development Foundation financed Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital's construction a new emergency room and surgery suites with a total cost of \$7.5 million for construction and equipment.

In a letter to employees, Harry Brockus, HRHC CEO, called the approval "a legacy moment for Hoopeston Regional Health Center.

The integration is expected to continue to provide increased services, including cancer treatments.

Another change will affect Hoopeston Ambulance Service, which will begin running two full crews with two Advanced Life Support ambulances under a man-

agement agreement with Arrow Ambulance.

Currently, the ambulance service has one full time crew and a backup crew and only one ambulance is ALS-equipped.

The service also will add eight EMTs/paramedics and change to a 24-hour work shifts. Currently only paramedics work 24 hour shifts, with EMTs working eight- or 10-hour shifts but having on-call time.

Under the new schedule, emergency personnel will work two 24-hour shifts each week, working 10 days each month and having 20 days off. Also, there will be no on-call time, so employees can schedule activities on their days off.

Brockus said the ambulance changes will help meet an area need as Hoopeston Ambulance Service gets calls from as far away at Potomac. The expanded crew and two ALS ambulances will allow the service to better serve area residents. If a third ambulance is needed, Arrow will furnish it under the agreement, Brockus added.

The change of ownership will not result in a loss of jobs for HRHC employees, Brockus said. In November 2008, HRCH had 224 full- and part-time employees; that number has grown to 269 and despite each entity having support staff employees, Brockus said all will be needed as both Carle and Hoopeston deal not only with the integration, but also changes in healthcare reporting.

For example, Brockus said, both entities use the ICD 9 coding system, which has about 30,000 item codes for medical conditions. Both will be switching to the ICD 10 system, which has 140,000 codes.

The new system is used more widely in the world, including the World Health Organization.

More coders will be needed to get the integrated organization going and Brockus expects to see the number of employees go up even more, for things like additional

See HOSPITAL on other side

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Hospital continued from other side

surgery staff. In the last 30 days, Brockus said, he has hired a nurse practitioner, two physician assistants and two family practice physicians.

“If there is a loss of positions, it will be through attrition, not anybody losing their job,” Brockus said.

The integration will include Hoopeston’s hospital and Charlotte Ann Russell Medical Center, clinics in Rossville and Cissna Park, a clinic now under construction in Milford and the newly-purchased Roberts Clinic in Watseka. More clinics are planned, but Brockus demurred, saying where those clinics will be located. “I don’t want our competition to have too much notice,” he said.

In a press release issued Monday, Dr. James C. Leonard, MD, president and CEO of the Carle Foundation, said “This is wonderful for both organizations. By integrating, Carle and Hoopeston Regional Health Center will be bet-

ter able to provide more people access to care they need. We are thrilled to continue moving ahead to offer additional medical specialties, advanced technology and enhance the level of care at this critical access hospital. We look forward to coming together in the fall.”

Brockus echoed those sentiments, saying “Receiving approval from the State is a significant milestone in the process. Joining the Carle organization will allow us to do more for our community in terms of direct patient care, but also in contributing to the local Hoopeston economy. This is important for our staff and patients – it makes Hoopeston a healthier and stronger community.”

Weather



Head advisory noon-7 p.m. Slight chance of thunderstorms today. High 99. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 77. Tomorrow, cooler, chance of thunderstorms. High 93, low 69.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.

Police News



A key on a string was found Monday near Parkview Court. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.



Photo contributed

Instructional League champs

What a season of baseball we had. We are so proud of the kids, and all they learned this year. It really was fun to watch each one of them improve week after week, and to get to know all their little quirks. They each had their own unique thing they brought to the team, and made it a great one! Thanks to all the parents as well for a successful season. Congratulations Rotary Club, 2012 Instructional League Champs! Pictured are, back row, from left, Emily Ray, Ethan Harding, Ben Brown, Kamerin Cade, Coach Carroll Ray, Wyatt Herman, Laiton Staley, Waylon Lee, and Asst. Coach Kathy Harding and front row, Wyatt Eisenmann, Gabriel Cano, Alexa Bailey, Will Lind, Dylan Hoopingarner, and Raeghan Dickison.

Men hurt in train/truck wreck

Two Hoopeston men were treated and released from Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana, after a train/truck accident Saturday at 1900 East Road near 850 North in southern Iroquois County.

Matthew S. Brown, 25, was cited for disobeying a sign or signal indicating the approach of a train after his Ford F150 truck was struck in the bed by a Union Pacific freight train. Both Brown and the train were southbound at the time of the accident. The crossing did not have flashing lights or gates, according to printed reports.

A passenger, Jason R. Crose, was ticketed for failure to wear a seat belt.

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