

The Eau Claire Chamber's HSHS/Prevea Task Force

**MEDIA RELEASE
STATEMENT
February 13, 2024**

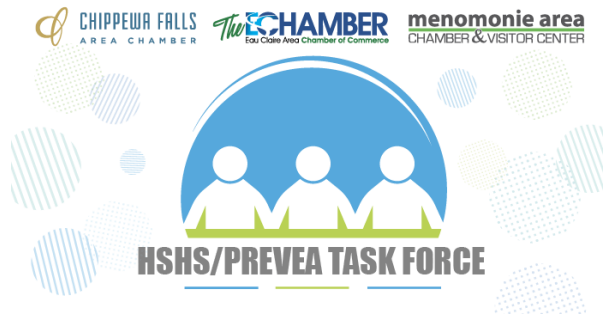
On behalf of the Chamber Task Force for the HSHS/Prevea Closures – We would like to share the following statement on progress made after learning that HSHS and Prevea are leaving the Chippewa Valley. This news was upsetting and has left patients and our community questioning what happens next.

This past week, several communities and counties passed resolutions asking HSHS and Prevea to collaborate with local healthcare providers to ensure safe and adequate care continuity plans for patients impacted by the hospital and clinic closures. I'm pleased to share that the Task Force has received an unwavering commitment from the leaders of HSHS and Prevea that they will continue to work hand-in-hand with local area providers to ensure patient care needs are safely and responsibly transitioned.

We have also had conversations with the OakLeaf Medical Network leadership about their outreach to HSHS and Prevea. We understand those discussions are occurring between legal counsels for the parties and, therefore, it is not appropriate for the Task Force to participate in those conversations.

The Task Force, along with our local communities and area providers, will continue to work to move forward collectively and to identify solutions that will best serve the Chippewa Valley Region—preparing for a new healthcare landscape in our community and promoting an open dialogue about how best to address future healthcare needs.

(Over the past three weeks the Task Force has been working with all of the medical partners to understand what each entity is able to assist with and areas that they are unable to help with. Attached is information on three new companies: NorthLakes Community Clinic - The Remedy - Pivotal Health are investing in the Chippewa Valley area. These companies will directly affect gaps in services from the closure of HSHS/Prevea. Services will be available as early as spring of 2024.



The Task Force is pleased to learn that Marshfield Clinic Health System is doubling its labor and delivery beds at MMC-Eau Claire to meet the community's needs after the recently announced hospital closures.

They will be expanding its obstetrics unit from 8 beds to 20 beds, which could accommodate an additional 550 births a year. The hospital is actively identifying the level of additional staffing, technology needs and timeline to begin operating the expanded unit.

"As other hospitals and health systems are making difficult decisions, we have determined the steps we can take to increase delivery and labor beds for expectant mothers and their families," said MMC-Eau Claire President Brad Groseth. "We know the importance of having a comfortable space with high-quality staff and resources to deliver their child to families in the area."

They also stated that they are finalizing plans for an expected increase in patient volume, especially in emergency and urgent care, and that recruitment is underway for open positions, and additional job fairs will be scheduled.

"The Mayo Clinic Health System team is actively working to identify opportunities to safely increase our ability to care for more patients. Some patients needing cancer treatment, wound care and other services have already been transferred to Mayo Clinic Health System to ensure continuity of care. Other efforts include increasing the total number of patients we can care for in our five hospitals in Northwest Wisconsin, significantly increasing the number of deliveries we can do in our Family Birth Center and investigating ways to care for more patients in Emergency Departments and Urgent Care clinics across all our sites. We are using innovative approaches to serving patients in the comfort of their own homes, including working to expand our Advanced Care at Home program, which allows some patients who would otherwise need to be hospitalized to receive care at home. Our recently introduced virtual care app, Primary Care On Demand, gives patients and community members 24/7/365 access to care, including video visits with a physician, for various urgent medical needs. For those who are looking for a new primary or specialty care provider, we have dedicated teams taking their calls.

In addition to an increase in patients needing care, healthcare workers and students have been impacted by these changes. We are working to match qualified healthcare workers with open positions that are appropriate for their skills. For nursing students and other medical learners who need clinical experience to complete their education, we are adding more than 10,000 clinical hours for training. We will continue to participate in the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce Recovery Task Force, which has brought community leaders together to identify and address the challenges patients and healthcare workers are experiencing".

Richard Helmers, M.D., regional Vice President, Mayo Clinic Health System in Northwest Wisconsin

The task force also wants to share that the leadership from Marshfield Medical Clinics and Mayo Clinic Health Systems continues to meet with the leadership of the Task Force to discuss the community's future healthcare needs and how these services can be financially sustainable.

As we discuss the community's future health needs, we must remember that any steps taken by our current or new healthcare entities that may come to our community to provide new or expanded services must be done so financially sustainably.

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HSHS/Prevea Recovery Task Force:

- Jerry Jacobson (co-chair) President Northwestern Bank
- Dr. Bill Rupp (co-chair) Retired Mayo CEO
- Jeff Halloin President Landmark Company
- Karl Hoesly – President Xcel Energy for Wisconsin & Michigan
- Dave Minor, Eau Claire Chamber President & CEO
- Ashley DeMuth, Menomonie Chamber President & CEO
- Allyson Wisniewski, Chippewa Falls Chamber of Commerce President

NORTHLAKES COMMUNITY CLINIC

There is a relative newcomer to our healthcare community, NorthLakes Community Clinic. They are a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), providing a wide range of outpatient primary care services, including medical, dental, and mental health care. They focus on Medicaid beneficiaries and uninsured or underinsured folks who often have significant challenges accessing the care they need. NorthLakes has provided pediatric dental services in Eau Claire for the past two years. Last fall, they added mental health counseling.

NorthLakes has existed for 15 years, with 17 clinics in small rural communities across northern Wisconsin. They planned to expand slowly in the Chippewa Valley, working with partners over time to check out the needs to ensure they both duplicate and compete with other providers in the area. FQHCs exist to fill healthcare gaps and improve access for underserved populations. However, those slow-growth plans have changed due to the immediate needs of our communities.

CEO Reba Rice, who lives in Altoona, said, "We're excited to work with the community to do our small part to fill the needs. It's going to take a lot of us doing whatever we can. There is much concern, fear, and anger in the community right now, which makes sense. And, there are also many positive opportunities and resources right here."

The services NorthLakes hopes to have up and running by May of 2024 include primary medical, pediatric, and general dentistry, mental health counseling, and full-spectrum outpatient recovery (including individual and group therapy and medication-assisted treatment). They are actively recruiting providers and staff.

Anyone interested in employment opportunities or wanting to be updated on their plans can visit their website landing page expressly set up for this situation. [NorthLakes Responds to HSHS and Prevea Closings in Western Wisconsin – NorthLakes Community Clinic \(nlccwi.org\)](https://www.nlccwi.org)

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THE REMEDY

Dear Community Members,

I hope this memo finds you well during what undoubtedly must be a challenging time for the Chippewa Valley Communities. We are writing to express our deepest condolences regarding the pending closure of HSHS and Prevea Health and the impact it will have on the patients, their families, and the residents of your communities. The closure of such a vital institution brings forth a wave of uncertainties, especially in terms of healthcare access, and we want to assure you that we are committed to providing ongoing support.

Considering this unfortunate situation, we are pleased to introduce The Remedy Mental Health, a Wisconsin and Minnesota based mental health clinic committed to meeting patients where they are with forward-thinking treatments that offer a better quality of life. We understand the importance of mental health services and the impact that disruptions in care can have on individuals and their loved ones. While we are not able to fill the void of all the critical services impacted by the departure of HSHS and Prevea Health, we are uniquely positioned to maintain and enhance outpatient mental health and substance use disorder services. We are pleased to announce that we have **successfully hired 95% of the employees of Prevea Behavioral Health outpatient clinics**. This will provide for a seamless transition of care without any disruption to patients.

Our team consists of highly skilled and compassionate professionals, including experts in psychiatry with specializations in addiction, interventional, perinatal, hospital-based and outpatient psychiatry. This diverse skill set ensures that we can address a wide range of mental health needs and offer comprehensive care tailored to the unique circumstances of everyone. Specifically, our team has a proven track record in inpatient psychiatry, providing compassionate and effective care to individuals requiring hospitalization. Our consult-liaison psychiatry expertise allows for seamless collaboration with medical, emergency, and surgical specialties, ensuring integrated care for patients with complex medical conditions. Additionally, our passion for addiction psychiatry enables us to address the unique challenges associated with substance use disorders.

The Remedy Mental Health goes above and beyond and sets itself apart as we also can provide cutting-edge interventional psychiatric treatments including transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) and Ketamine/Spravato services. Additionally, we can provide electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) if needed. At Remedy Mental Health, we believe in providing comprehensive and personalized care to address the unique challenges that individuals may face. Our expansive clinic is equipped to cater to a spectrum of mental health concerns, ensuring that each patient receives the attention and support they require for their well-being.

Moreover, we understand the broader impact of the hospital closure on the community, including potential job losses. The Remedy Mental Health is committed to working collaboratively with the community to alleviate these concerns. We aim to create a supportive environment for both patients and residents, fostering a sense of continuity in care and stability in employment.

We are here to assist and support you during this transition, and we look forward to the opportunity to contribute positively to the mental health and well-being of the Chippewa Valley Communities. Please see the attached guide that provides further information on our clinic and how we can help meet the needs of your communities.

The Remedy Mental Health – Media Contacts (UPDATED)			
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PIVOTAL HEALTH

Urgent healthcare, delivered right to your doorstep. That's the innovative vision behind Pivotal Health, a Wisconsin-based startup that's transforming healthcare access and affordability.

Since launching in 2021, Pivotal Health has provided over 10,000 on-demand home visits across metro Wisconsin, bringing urgent care, primary care and preventative health directly to patients. Their network of providers travel to you, at the time you choose, sparing you those dreaded waits in a crowded clinic or hospital ER.

Through an intuitive tech platform, Pivotal Health makes every part of the healthcare experience remarkably seamless - from insurance coverage verification and transparent pricing, to automated scheduling, payment, clinician charting and follow-up care. Patients benefit from convenience and lower costs, with visits a fraction of the price of an ER trip. Providers benefit from streamlined workflows that enable a new care delivery model.

Now, Pivotal Health is actively looking to expand their innovative model for urgent care and primary care to the Chippewa Valley region. They have providers in the area ready to start seeing patients in March. Pivotal Health is fully in network with all major and regional health insurers including UnitedHealth care, BlueCross BlueShield, Network Health, Medicare, and more.

They're in talks with stakeholders about financing growth, and meeting with employers about a direct-to-business offering that radically lowers company healthcare costs. At its core, Pivotal Health aims to make quality care more accessible and affordable using smart technology. That innovative vision is transforming Wisconsin's healthcare landscape for the better.

Some notes:

- Pivotal Health has an innovative model for clinician house calls for urgent care and primary care for patients of all ages - easier for consumers and for our providers.
- We've done over 10,000 visits across 3 WI metro areas since starting our operations in late 2021.
- We have a team of providers in the Eau Claire area that want to work for us and bring our model to the region. We can start seeing patients in less than a month - March 2024.
- We will serve Eau Claire County, Chippewa County, and Dunn County initially.
- We are looking for \$1 million of investment and/or debt for our expansion costs.
- We are also looking for employers that are interested in signing up for our Direct Care model. We already have a few employers with over 300 employees ready to sign up.

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