

# GREAT NEWS

IVER HEALTH SYSTEMS

December 27, 2017

## **Southeast Iowa hospitals to evaluate merger** **Great River Health System and FMCH look to turn competition into collaboration**

Great River Health System and Fort Madison Community Hospital (FMCH) have entered into an agreement to evaluate a merger of the two health facilities. The due diligence phase, which helps determine viability of a merger, is expected to last three to six months.

A merger would help ensure continuation of high-quality primary and specialty care in southeast Iowa by a locally owned health system. Great River Health System is based in West Burlington, and FMCH is in Fort Madison.

"This will be two historically competitive organizations looking into the idea of creating an alliance – the greatest opportunity our communities have ever had in creating a foundation for patients to receive comprehensive, coordinated care long into the future," said FMCH Interim President and CEO Jeremy Alexander. "It also would create an environment friendly to new specialties."

The agreement was a decision of the boards of directors at both organizations. The evaluation begins as 20-year Great River Health System President and CEO Mark Richardson retires and new executive Matt Wenzel assumes leadership Tuesday, Jan. 2.

"To remain financially strong in health care today, hospitals and health systems must work together to continue providing quality care while facing reduced reimbursements," Richardson said. "Partnering with FMCH would, foremost, benefit patients and improve the stability of our organizations."

### **About Fort Madison Community Hospital**

FMCH is a not-for-profit rural health care organization that consists of a multispecialty clinic and hospital services. The 472 FMCH employees are dedicated to their mission to advance the health and well-being of all being through compassionate, quality care, education and community service.

### **About Great River Health System**

Great River Health System in West Burlington, Iowa, is a 378-bed comprehensive, regional health care system that offers acute, skilled and long-term care, 25 primary-care and specialty clinics, three retail pharmacies, and two retail medical equipment and supplies stores.



## New provider



**Sarah Wingate, ARNP**

Great River Health System  
1221 S. Gear Ave.  
West Burlington, IA 52655

Medical education: Maryville  
University, St. Louis

## Casual day, school donations top \$14,900

Great River Health System employees donated \$13,773 through casual day contributions in 2017. On designated Fridays, employees may wear jeans to work in exchange for \$2 casual day stickers.

The money was given to more than 20 organizations and services, including:

- Des Moines County Humane Society
- Hetta Gilbert Society for children's medical needs
- Iowa Donor Network
- Ronald McDonald House
- Special Olympics

More than \$1,100 was donated in two casual days and in a Cafeteria donation box for the Burlington Community School District and West Burlington Independent School District. The money will be used to fulfill student needs through school nurses or social workers. Employees also donated hats, mittens and other winter gear to the schools.

## Hospital patient visiting restricted

### Increasing flu cases in southeast Iowa reason for temporary change

To protect patients, Great River Medical Center is limiting visitors until flu season ends.

#### General visiting

People who are 14 or younger are not allowed to visit.

#### Emergency Department

Visiting is limited to one adult. Patients who have flu-like symptoms will be asked to wear masks to protect others in treatment and waiting areas.

#### Obstetrics Unit

Only spouses or partners, grandparents and healthy siblings of the baby may visit. Siblings must be free from flu symptoms for 48 hours before visiting.

#### Pediatrics Unit

If a patient is in isolation for any reason, visitors will be limited to parents and grandparents.

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and it can lead to death.

People can infect others with the flu about 24 hours before they have symptoms. Those who have been exposed to someone with the flu or who have flu symptoms should not visit patients. Symptoms include:

- Body aches
- Cough or sore throat
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Fever or chills
- Headache
- Runny nose
- Tiredness

## Two diabetes classes in January

Great River Diabetes Education Program offers four-week group diabetes classes monthly. The next afternoon series will be from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Mondays beginning Jan. 8. Morning classes are from 10 a.m. to noon Thursdays beginning Jan. 25.

Group diabetes classes are for people newly diagnosed, making a change in treatment, or having complications or concerns. A physician referral for diabetes education is required.

Class topics include:

- Proper eating for diabetes
- Managing blood sugars
- Medicines
- Diabetes-related health problems
- Exercise

Diabetes educators will assess needs for specific information and skills, teach self-care and provide continuing help. Most insurance companies cover the fee for the class series. A family member or friend is encouraged to attend at no additional cost.

The American Diabetes Association has awarded Great River Health System-Diabetes Education with its Education Recognition Certificate for providing a high-quality diabetes self-management program. Recognition assures that education programs meet the National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education and are an essential component of effective diabetes treatment. The Iowa Department of Public Health also has accredited the program.

For more information or to register, please call 319-768-4165.

## Three prenatal classes in January

Great River Health System is offering three prenatal classes in January – Childbirth Prep, Big Brother and Big Sister, and Prenatal Breastfeeding.

### Childbirth Prep

6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 4  
Oak Room

Childbirth Prep is a free four-week series that helps take the mystery out of the birth process, alleviates fear and helps expectant parents prepare for this memorable event. It includes:

- An extensive tour of the Women and Family Center
- Discussion, questions and answers about labor and delivery
- Vaginal and cesarean section birth
- Birthing videos
- Pain-relief options
- Breathing and relaxation techniques
- Completing preadmission paperwork

### Big Brother and Big Sister

9:30 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 6  
Walnut Room

This class helps children ages 2 to 10 develop realistic expectations about their new baby brother or baby sister and helps reduce the anxiety about being separated from their mothers. It includes:

- A tour of the Obstetrics Unit
- Dressing up in hospital gowns, masks and caps
- Story time about having a baby
- Role playing for children

### Prenatal breastfeeding class

6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 23  
Oak Room

This class is for expectant mothers who want to learn more about breastfeeding their babies. Fathers are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Register for a prenatal class [HERE](#).

# Friends accepting scholarship applications

Applications for Great River Health Systems-Friends scholarships for the 2018-2019 school year are available. Two types of scholarships are offered to students pursuing health care careers:

- **High school scholarship** – Applicants must be seniors in high school, have minimum 3.0 grade point averages, and live in or attend schools within Great River Health System's service area (about 60 miles).
- **Continuing college student scholarship** – Applicants must have graduated from high schools in Great River Health System's service area in the last 10 years and have completed at least one year of college. Students in graduate school may apply.

Scholarship applications must be postmarked by Thursday, Feb. 15, or delivered to the Volunteer Services office by Feb. 15.

## Casual days

Employees purchase \$2 stickers for the opportunity to wear jeans to work on designated Fridays. The January casual days and organizations they benefit are:

- 5 Burlington Homeless Shelter**
- 19 Hair, Hats and More**

### What is Hair, Hats and More?

Hair loss from chemotherapy or total brain radiation is a visible sign of cancer. It can make patients feel self-conscious or embarrassed about their treatment. Besides providing high-quality care, Great River Medical Center-Cancer helps patients' emotional well-being by giving free wigs and other accessories to its patients.

## 2 clinics have new names

- Burlington Area Family Practice Clinic is now **Great River Health System-Family Medicine**.
- Great River Family Practice Clinic is now **Great River Health System-Family Medicine, Mercy Plaza**.

## SCC BASKETBALL

### Great River Health System night

Southeastern Community College

vs.

Southwestern Community College

7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 9

Fans will receive a Great River Health System reusable ice pack.



# EMPLOYEE PROFILE

## John Reusch

### Construction Manager Plant Operations

#### Start date:

November 1993

#### What a typical day looks like for me:

I design and plan office and clinic remodeling projects, which includes getting estimates, coordinating the work and purchasing furniture. I also am chairman of the health system's Environment of Care Committee. We do weekly rounds to identify safety concerns and building maintenance issues.

#### What I wanted to be when I grew up:

A farmer or a construction worker, which I did for several years. After working during rainy seasons and the Flood of '93, I decided it was time to get a drier job.

#### Hometown / Where I live now:

Burlington

#### Family:

- Wife, Jodi, a physical therapist assistant at Great River Health System-Home Health
- Son, Hunter, 23
- Daughter, Taylor, 21
- Yellow Lab, Nelly

#### Things I enjoy:

Anything outdoors – Duck and deer hunting, fishing, riding ATVs and camping



#### My mentors:

- My dad, Kenny Reusch
- My grandfather Lloyd Gerhardt
- My high school building trades teacher, Norbert Bentler

#### People would be surprised to know ...

I am an Eagle Scout, and I was scoutmaster of Troop 40 in Burlington for several years.

#### My motto or personal mantra:

Make dust or eat dust!

#### Hidden talent:

Operating heavy equipment. I competed in a backhoe rodeo.

#### My biggest achievements:

Moving the hospital in 2000 and Great River Health System-Klein Center in 2013, and receiving the health system's Community Excellence in Practice award in 2011