
News Release

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Mayo Clinic Health System transitions medical and surgical hospitalizations from Albert Lea to Austin the week of June 24

ALBERT LEA and AUSTIN, Minn. — Mayo Clinic Health System – Albert Lea and Austin is transitioning inpatient medical and surgical care (overnight hospitalizations) from the Albert Lea campus to the Austin campus the week of June 24. Consolidating medical and surgical care onto one campus will allow the medical center to keep one unit fully staffed vs. two separate units minimally staffed, and will offer higher levels of care in a larger, state-of-the-art unit.

“This week, we close a door and open another door to the future,” says Mark Ciota, M.D., CEO, Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea and Austin. “It’s an emotional week, especially for staff that have worked in the Albert Lea unit for many years and cared for our patients.”

While changes such as this transition are challenging and emotional, Ciota notes this is a new beginning for our new medical/surgical unit on the Austin campus, especially as it will evolve over the next year or so.

“By transitioning medical and surgical hospitalizations onto one campus, we’ll be able to care for sicker patients more often locally, which will help reduce the need for transfers to Rochester or elsewhere for care,” Ciota says. “We’ll also be able to invest more in the latest technology and equipment because we won’t be staffing and equipping two identical units in neighboring communities.”

Currently the unit has 12 newly remodeled private rooms available for patient care, along with existing semi-private rooms; and upon completion of the entire unit in mid-2020, there will be a total of 39 rooms — 37 private and two semi-private, bringing the capacity of the unit to 41 patients.

Lori Routh, R.N., nurse administrator at Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea and Austin, says remodeling of the entire unit will occur in phases over the next year and a half to allow the unit to keep as many rooms in service as possible during construction. “An increase of approximately 30 additional nursing staff also will be needed, allowing for more consistent workloads,” says Routh. The number of providers working on the new unit in Austin also will increase to three at all times versus one previously in Albert Lea and two in Austin.

Plus additional staff also will be needed in other areas, such as pharmacy, lab, radiology, dietary, and housekeeping.

“A combined unit will ultimately allow staff to care for patients who need a higher level of care locally on a more regular basis,” says Routh.

With medical and surgical hospitalizations transitioning to the Austin campus, the Albert Lea campus will continue providing care locally, including inpatient psychiatric care in the new unit that opened late last year, as well as labor and deliveries until it transitions to Austin. “It’s important to remember if you need emergency care, go to the emergency room in Albert Lea just like you have done in the past,” adds Dr. Ciota. “If you need to be hospitalized and require an ambulance, you will be transferred to the Austin campus at no cost to you. All outpatient services (clinic visits), such as family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, gynecology, care during pregnancy and after delivery, outpatient surgeries, pharmacy, lab services and many others also will stay on the Albert Lea campus.”

In the end, Ciota praises the staff for all they’ve done during this time of transition. “Words cannot express how appreciative we are to all of our staff who have kept our patient’s best interest in mind during this transition,” Ciota commends. “It’s because of our dedicated staff that our patients will continue to receive high-quality care locally for years to come.”

View the [complete list of all care](#) that will continue to be available on the Albert Lea campus.

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Mayo Clinic Health System consists of clinics, hospitals and other facilities that serve the health care needs of people in more than 60 communities in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The community-based providers, paired with the resources and expertise of Mayo Clinic, enable patients in the region to receive the highest-quality health care close to home.