Transition of Labor and Delivery Services in Barron and Menomonie to Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why are labor and delivery services in Barron and Menomonie being transitioned to Eau Claire?

OB-GYN physicians are required to provide 24/7 coverage at locations that offer labor and delivery services. This ensures family physicians have support for unexpected events during labor and delivery, such as an emergency C-section.

Labor and delivery services require a full team of medical professionals to be available around the clock for the safety of patients. This includes not only the delivering physician and team of nurses, but also a doctor for the baby, and a surgical team including anesthesia, to be available 24/7. Operating birthing centers in Barron and Menomonie is no longer an option due to a nationwide shortage of OB-GYN physicians.

After October of this year, Mayo Clinic Health System — Northland in Barron will not have any OB-GYN physicians and Mayo Clinic Health System — Red Cedar in Menomonie will only have one OB-GYN physician. We have been aggressively recruiting for several open physician positions over the past two years. Despite relentless efforts, we have been unsuccessful in filling these critical physician openings. This is reflective of a worsening OB-GYN physician shortage across the country.

Due to an extreme and worsening national OB-GYN provider shortage, and to continue ensuring the safety of patients, Mayo Clinic Health System has made the difficult decision to discontinue labor and delivery services in Barron and Menomonie.

When is this transition taking place?

The Barron transition of labor and delivery services to Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire is effective immediately. Labor and delivery services are no longer available in Barron.

Labor and delivery services in Menomonie will end on Dec. 31, 2022. Beginning Jan. 1, 2023 all labor and deliveries will take place at Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire.

What OB-GYN services remain available at Mayo Clinic Health System in Barron and Menomonie?

Mayo Clinic Health System in Barron and Menomonie will continue to provide high-quality services with prenatal care (12-15 office visits during pregnancy) and postpartum care (office visits after delivery), OB Nest (a virtual prenatal care program) and gynecological care remain available on the Barron and Menomonie campuses. Hospital-based labor and delivery are the only services transitioning. There will be no hospital-based care for labor and delivery at the...
Barron hospital after Aug. 26. Labor and delivery services at Menomonie will be discontinued after Dec. 31.

**Will an experienced obstetrics provider care for me during labor and delivery?**
Yes. Speak with your current health care professional to learn about your options.

**I see a family medicine health care professional for my pregnancy care. Why does it matter if an OB-GYN is available?**
OB-GYN physicians are required to provide 24/7 coverage at locations offering labor and delivery services. This ensures family physicians have support for unexpected events during labor and delivery, such as an emergency cesarean section.

**What happens if I am too close to delivering my baby and cannot make it to the Family Birth Center in Eau Claire or have another pregnancy-related emergency?**
As with any medical emergency situations, please call 9-1-1 immediately, or go to the hospital or emergency department closest to you.

**What do I do if I have a scheduled C-section or induction of labor?**
C-sections or inductions of labor scheduled to occur in Barron or Menomonie after the transition dates will move to Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire. Your health care professional will make plans with you to transfer your care to the Family Birth Center in Eau Claire.

**Where should I go when it is time to deliver? What if I go into labor naturally before my scheduled C-section or induction of labor?**
Call the Family Birth Center at 715-838-3135 to let them know you are on your way. The address is 1221 Whipple Street, Eau Claire, WI. Park in the free ramp and enter through the main hospital entrance. A staff member will escort you to the Family Birth Center. If you arrive after hours, the front entrance will be locked. Press the intercom button or call the Family Birth Center to let them know you have arrived. A staff member will meet you near the hospital entrance.

You can call the number below to reach the desk in the Eau Claire Family Birth Center. They can answer your questions and will be prepared for your arrival for the delivery of your baby.

**Mayo Clinic Health System**
1221 Whipple St, Eau Claire
Family Birth Center: 2nd floor of the Luther Building
715-838-3135

**What are the benefits of delivering in Eau Claire? This is a greater distance for me to travel.**
Transitioning labor and delivery services to Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire will offer patients the most comprehensive care available in northwest Wisconsin at one location.

Because of the close collaboration between Mayo Clinic Health System and Mayo Clinic, we can provide immediate consultations with world-renowned Mayo Clinic experts in Rochester, Minnesota.
Eau Claire has a Level 2 Special Care Nursery, providing a higher level of care than is available at our critical access hospital locations.

Patients will have greater access to lactation consults and social work support. It has already been standard practice for all high-risk pregnancies to deliver in Eau Claire. These patients previously were not able to deliver at a critical access hospital location as they needed a higher level of care.

Please note: Mayo Clinic Health System in Barron and Menomonie will continue to provide high-quality services with prenatal care (12-15 office visits during pregnancy) and postpartum care (office visits after delivery), OB Nest (a virtual prenatal care program) and gynecological care remain available on the Barron and Menomonie campuses. Hospital-based labor and delivery are the only services transitioning. There will be no hospital-based care for labor and delivery at the Barron hospital after Aug. 26. Labor and delivery services at Menomonie will be discontinued after Dec. 31.

What number should I call if I have questions?
For routine questions regarding your pregnancy, you should call the number for the local clinic providing your prenatal care.

For questions regarding potential labor, please call the Family Birth Center in Eau Claire at 715-838-3135.