

Carle Health, UnityPoint Health® and UnityPoint Health® – Central Illinois sign strategic affiliation agreement

Enhancements in healthcare anticipated to benefit patients as the Peoria and Central Illinois-based hospitals, clinics and services look to join the Carle healthcare system

Urbana, Ill., Peoria, Ill., West Des Moines, Iowa – Carle Health (Carle) is poised to expand access to services, programs and resources and create new innovative opportunities for patients in the Peoria area through a strategic affiliation agreement with UnityPoint Health® – Central Illinois and UnityPoint Health®. With this agreement, Carle Health will replace UnityPoint Health as the parent organization of UnityPoint Health – Central Illinois, which includes Methodist, Proctor and Pekin Hospitals, affiliated clinics, UnityPlace and Methodist College.

Throughout the next several months, all three organizations will work to advance a shared commitment to providing the best care possible and a seamless experience for all patients, team members and community members. Both Carle Health and UnityPoint Health – Central Illinois are committed to providing a broader continuum of services by strengthening and expanding the services our patients rely on – including medical, behavioral health and addiction recovery services. Another goal is to bring additional specialty care services with experts working in the Central Illinois community to make it easier for people to get the care they need close to home.

“We are thrilled about this opportunity to engage with more individuals and families from our Central Illinois communities to help them achieve their best health,” said James C. Leonard, MD, president and CEO, Carle Health. “As we work to earn the status of trusted healthcare partner in the greater Peoria region, we will leverage best practices of both teams to enhance the patient experience and bring innovation and individualized care for years to come.”

The UnityPoint Health – Central Illinois team has established a strong foundation of trust and compassionate care with patients throughout the region for decades. Moving forward with this agreement solidifies the extension of the patient-centered approach to healthcare both systems offer, with the opportunity to expand specialty services and expert innovations in Peoria and the surrounding area. All three organizations are approaching this agreement from positions of strength, both financially and operationally, with excellence in clinical programs that will be expanded for the benefit of patients, team members and the community.

“We are excited to join a strategic partner that shares our commitment to enhancing care close to home in Central Illinois,” said Keith Knepp, MD, President and CEO of UnityPoint Health – Central Illinois. “Carle has a like-minded vision for exceptional care, and this is a unique opportunity for our community.”

The UnityPoint Health – Central Illinois and Carle integration comes at a time when consumer preference for personal healthcare is on the rise and the need for innovative solutions close to home is more important than ever. Streamlining operations as a larger integrated health system through this affiliation would bring great community benefits and a greater understanding of the needs of patients throughout the region, which can further the outstanding level of care that UnityPoint Health – Central Illinois patients have come to depend on.

“This strategic partnership is an opportunity to improve the delivery of care for the people of central Illinois,” said Clay Holderman, President and CEO of UnityPoint Health. “We look forward to collaborating with Carle Health on ways to advance our shared missions and create clear value for our teams, patients, and the community at large.”

The affiliation offers patients and local communities lasting benefits, including:

- **Strengthened and Expanded Community Care:** Providing a broader continuum of services by strengthening and expanding medical, behavioral health and addiction recovery services and bringing added specialty care and services with experts working in your community
- **Healthcare Coverage:** Combining care and coverage together for greater access to preventive care and improved health outcomes
- **Workforce Development:** Enhanced recruitment, retention and integration initiatives focused on physician and team member engagement and recruitment to invest in our current workforce and, importantly, our future workforce
- **Operational Efficiency:** Optimization of services to provide high-quality care and improved support to clinicians

Pending all regulatory approvals, an April 1, 2023 closing date is anticipated. Until that time, current services and programs remain unchanged with patients continuing to see their same providers with no adjustments to procedures or appointments. With a focus on care delivery to those that need it, Carle Health and UnityPoint Health are continuing to explore opportunities to enhance efficiencies, optimize performance and increase access to quality, high-value care in the region.