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# Ferguson Medical Group to Join St. Francis Healthcare System

AUGUST 28TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Saint Francis Healthcare System and Ferguson Medical Group have entered formal discussions regarding the group's joining Saint Francis Medical Partners on January 1, 2019. A merger between Saint Francis and Ferguson allows both organizations to focus on a shared vision – patients outcomes, experience and value.

The more than 40 providers at Ferguson Medical Group would all join Saint Francis Medical Partners, employed by the Healthcare System, should the merger proceed. With more than 250 members, Saint Francis Medical Partners is the preeminent provider network in the region.

“I have had the privilege of serving my community of East Prairie for 20 years. The practice of medicine has changed dramatically during this time. It seems that many of those changes have made providing good care in a timely fashion more difficult. What has not changed are the relationships I have with the people I care for,” says Steven Douglas, MD, Ferguson Medical Group. “The true joy of the practice of medicine is opportunity to help people live a fuller and better life, physically, emotionally and spiritually. The merger of Ferguson Medical Group and Saint Francis Medical Center will enable me to do this. We will combine the resources and talents and be stronger and more efficient in the years to come.”

Such a merger stands to benefit both healthcare organizations and their patients throughout the region. Ferguson Medical Group's health professionals will have direct access to Saint Francis' powerful resources, state-of-the-art facilities, integrated medical records and network of physicians and advanced practice professionals.

As regional healthcare providers, both Saint Francis and Ferguson are familiar with the practical and economic challenges of practicing medicine in rural areas. Rural populations are often underserved in terms of medical resources but, by joining forces, Saint Francis and Ferguson will take a crucial step toward assuring access and improving long-term patient health outcomes in Southeast Missouri and beyond.

"This agreement marks a significant step for both Ferguson Medical Group and Saint Francis Healthcare System," says Maryann Reese, RN, MHA, DHA, FACHE, president and chief executive officer for Saint Francis Healthcare System. "We know the positive impact cooperation can have in healthcare, especially in service to rural communities. The knowledge, skill and dedication of Ferguson Medical Group's many physicians and staff members is remarkable and will be an excellent addition to our Saint Francis Family. We are proud for the opportunity to call them colleagues as we continue our efforts to build healthier communities across our region."

Ferguson Medical Group has served the communities of Southeast Missouri for nearly 60 years. The group was organized in 1959 by Wilson J. Ferguson, MD, along with three associate physicians. Since its establishment, the group has grown to include more than 40 providers, including physicians, mid-level providers, behavioral health specialists, who provide services at eight locations throughout Southeast Missouri.

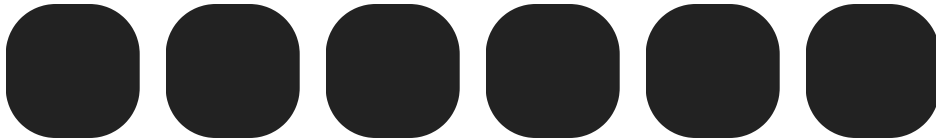
As a proud and active member of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Saint Francis Healthcare System is guided by our mission to provide a ministry of healing, wellness, quality and love inspired by our faith in Jesus Christ. Founded by Franciscan Sisters in 1875, our priority remains the same: serve all who enter with dignity, compassion and joy. Serving nearly 713,000 people across Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas, our focus is on patients outcomes, experience and value.

Anchored by Saint Francis Medical Center, a 308-bed tertiary hospital, and supported by nearly 2,800 employees and more than 250 providers in eight communities, the Healthcare System is a driving economic force in the region. Major services include the Cancer Institute, Emergency and Level III Trauma Center, Family BirthPlace and the regions only Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Heart Hospital, Neurosciences and Orthopedics.

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