

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### PLHS Affiliation Agreement and Epic Announcement

**1. What is an affiliation agreement?**

An affiliation agreement is a formal partnership between two organizations that allows them to collaborate and share resources while maintaining their independence.

**2. Will Prairie Lakes Healthcare System still operate independently?**

Yes, Prairie Lakes will continue to function independently while benefiting from collaborative resources with Sanford, enhancing patient care.

**3. How will this affiliation impact my care?**

There will be no disruption to current care, however you may see improved access for some services.

**4. Will I still see my same doctor?**

Yes, Prairie Lakes patients will continue seeing their current providers at Prairie Lakes.

**5. Does this affect my insurance or billing?**

No, this agreement has no effect on insurance coverage and billing process at Prairie Lakes.

**6. Does the Affiliation Agreement change insurance coverage at Prairie Lakes Healthcare System?**

No, Prairie Lakes Healthcare remains an independent organization, accepting a variety of insurance plans, including health plans common to this region such as Avera, Sanford, Blue Cross-Blue Shield and Wellmark.

**7. Will this change result in lower healthcare costs?**

The affiliation aims to enhance efficiency and resource sharing, but direct cost reductions will vary depending on services.

**8. Will my personal information be shared with the other organization?**

Patient privacy remains a priority, and only necessary information will be shared to facilitate care, in compliance with HIPAA regulations.

**9. How long will this affiliation last?**

The affiliation agreement is ongoing, with both organizations committed to evaluating and improving collaboration over time.

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**10. What are the benefits of this affiliation for the community?**

The affiliation will allow us to standardize on a market leading EHR to improve coordination of care.

**11. Why has Prairie Lakes signed this agreement with Sanford Health?**

PLHS entered into an Affiliation Agreement with Sanford Health to enable implementation of Epic as our electronic health record (EHR) and to evaluate other opportunities to enhance services for the communities we serve.

**12. Is this the first step in Sanford acquiring Prairie Lakes Healthcare System?**

No. There is no provision or intent for Sanford Health to acquire PLHS with this Affiliation Agreement.

**13. Will Prairie Lakes only partner with Sanford Health for services and resources?**

No, Prairie Lakes will continue to collaborate with organizations to optimize care and care support options for the patients we serve. For example, we partner with North Central Health for vascular services, Aberdeen Asthma and Allergy, and Ophthalmology Ltd for eye surgeries. We will also continue to provide outreach services to other healthcare facilities including Sanford and non-Sanford affiliated health organizations.

**14. Will employees of Prairie Lakes and Sanford receive benefits across both systems?**

No, employee benefits, including discounts, will remain specific to their respective employers.

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