



Stevens + Swedish: More Care Closer to Home

By Mike Carter, president and CEO of Stevens Hospital, and Cal Knight, president and chief operating officer of Swedish Medical Center

SEATTLE, July 23, 2010 – Health care in our community is poised to soon take a major step forward. The Stevens Hospital Board of Commissioners in February unanimously approved an agreement for Swedish Medical Center to lease and assume management of Stevens. We have been tremendously gratified by the support this plan has received from local residents, elected officials, physicians and employees. State regulatory approval is pending, but we are planning for a Sept. 1. effective date.

As we have outlined at recent public meetings in the communities that Stevens serves, there are five important advantages to this new relationship.

- **Additional services:** Together, we are creating an innovative, regional health-care delivery network that will allow Stevens to provide more local services, while giving residents greater access to the latest medical treatments and the comprehensive services of the Swedish system. For example, in April we launched a TeleStroke program that combines videoconferencing with the expertise of stroke teams at Stevens and the Swedish Neurosciences Institute to rapidly diagnose stroke 24-7 and allow treatment to begin immediately.
- **Increased efficiencies:** With the combined assets and talents of Stevens and Swedish, we will be able to better manage costs, provide greater value to patients by improving care-delivery models, and reduce waste.
- **Integration of new technology:** Like any stand-alone community hospital, Stevens needed to ensure its technology was up-to-date and meeting patients' ever-changing needs. Swedish is committed to making significant investments in advanced medical and information technology at Stevens. Soon, the hospital will be integrated into Swedish's Epic electronic health record system, making it much easier for patients to manage their health care and for physicians to provide it. The Epic network offers a powerful set of secure online services such as transmitting lab results, e-mailing doctors, making appointments or paying a bill.
- **Recruitment of staff and physicians:** Because of its strong reputation, Swedish is connected to highly qualified health-care professionals all over the United States. This will help the Edmonds-based hospital recruit and retain first-rate physicians, nurses, therapists, administrators and support staff.
- **Economic development:** From the outset, we knew it was important to maintain Stevens as a vital community resource. It is the largest employer in Edmonds and, as it expands and diversifies, the hospital will be a key driver of positive economic activity in south Snohomish County and beyond.

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Stevens + Swedish: More Care Closer to Home/Page 2

Hospitals all over America are aligning with other similar facilities for a variety of reasons. In this case, both Swedish and Stevens were financially sound, but each needed a strong partner in order to expand and improve care in south Snohomish and north King counties. Swedish, which is Greater Seattle's largest nonprofit health-care provider, has three hospital campuses in Seattle and a fourth under construction in Issaquah, plus an extensive network of primary- and specialty-care clinics as well as freestanding and hospital-based emergency departments.

Stevens and Swedish have collaborated for 18 years on cardiology and oncology services, so we know each other well. There is a good cultural fit on many levels: We have similar missions to serve the community, both hospitals are non-profit and secular, we are locally controlled, we share a commitment to reforming how health care is delivered, and we are dedicated to assisting the underserved.

The Public Hospital District #2 of Snohomish County will continue to exist to provide additional health services to the local community. Stevens Hospital will likely be renamed Swedish Edmonds. Swedish will have full control and management authority over hospital operations, but the board of commissioners for the hospital district will actively participate in certain major decisions.

Under the new lease arrangement, Public Hospital District #2 of Snohomish County will receive monthly lease payments from Swedish of at least \$600,000 and continue to receive tax revenue. District commissioners, incorporating public input, will decide how the money is spent. They are exploring ideas such as community bicycle helmet safety clinics, a collaborative mental health provider network, more hospice care, care for the uninsured and many others.

If you have any questions about the affiliation process, we encourage you to attend any of our public presentations scheduled this summer. For more information about those, visit <http://bit.ly/ahFvc3>.

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About Stevens Hospital

Since 1964, Stevens Hospital has been committed to improving the health and well-being of the community through local, high-quality and compassionate health-care services. Stevens Hospital offers a range of hospital services including cardiac and cancer care, obstetrics, mental health services, emergency services and state-of-the-art diagnostic imaging. In 2010, the community hospital received a five-star rating for the treatment of stroke (two years in a row), pneumonia (two years in a row) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease from HealthGrades, the independent health-care ratings company. Stevens Hospital, licensed for 217 beds with a professional staff of 1,200-plus, serves patients from South Snohomish and North King Counties. More than 400 physicians have privileges. The Board of Commissioners for Public Hospital District #2 of Snohomish County, Washington, is responsible for oversight of the hospital and its facilities. For more information, visit www.stevenshospital.org

About Swedish

Established in 1910, Swedish has grown over the last 100 years to become the largest, most comprehensive non-profit health provider in the Greater Seattle area. It is comprised of three hospital campuses – First Hill, Cherry Hill and Ballard – a freestanding emergency department and ambulatory care center in Issaquah, Swedish Visiting Nurse Services, and the Swedish Physician Division – a network of more than 40 primary-care and specialty clinics located throughout the Puget Sound area. In fall 2009, Swedish broke ground on a new medical office building and hospital in the Issaquah Highlands, as well as an emergency department and medical office building in Ballard. More recently, Swedish announced plans to open freestanding emergency department and ambulatory care center facilities in Mill Creek and Redmond. In addition to general medical and surgical care, Swedish is known as a regional referral center, providing specialized treatment in areas such as cardiovascular care, cancer care, neuroscience, orthopedics, high-risk obstetrics, pediatric specialties, organ transplantation and clinical research. For more information, visit www.swedish.org and www.swedish100.org.