

**Op-Ed Post Employee Forums  
St. James Mercy Hospital  
January 19, 2015**

A new year always brings with it a promise of new beginnings and a fresh look at our opportunities to grow and change. I recently met with St. James Mercy Hospital employees regarding the year behind us and what I expect the year ahead will bring. I want to share with you -- our community -- the same insights.

2014 brought to our community regional collaborators such as Noyes Memorial Hospital, Oak Orchard Health, and Jones Memorial Hospital, providers who researched whether their expertise would be a good fit for our community. This year -- 2015 -- will bring significant change to St. James Mercy.

The New Vision will be realized this year. We will transform from an outmoded hospital serving only a few, to a collaborative group of partner providers serving many.

In the spirit of the New Year, I have a set of predictions for 2015.

I predict Oak Orchard will be able to open its clinic when spring turns to summer. I predict our regional collaborators will continue to help us with transition planning – their efforts shepherded by UR Medicine. We expect our collaborative group of partners will continue providing outpatient care, including emergency services, in the current hospital location for the next 18-24 months, while a new, modern facility is built.

We will need to transform our operations within the framework prescribed by the New York State Department of Health's program to overhaul healthcare in the state. The Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Program is the vehicle for which the state says it will "fundamentally restructure the health care delivery system" in New York State.

This point is critical as many of these changes I am predicting will be subject to approval from the Department of Health. The agency is well aware of our efforts and is supportive of how we are trying to transform our operations. We speak with them nearly daily about our plans and transitions.

Our request for more than \$35 million to build the new facility will be submitted to the New York State Department of Health on February 20. This request will not include space for an inpatient medical/surgical unit or maternity unit, as we have been told the project would not receive this critical funding if it includes these low-volume, unsustainable services. Beyond what the Department of Health has instructed us, no funding source is available to cover the operations losses generated by inpatient care in Hornell.

Once this application is approved and constructed, Hornell will have a state-of-the-art facility to receive the services its residents use most.

In addition, as we first announced in 2014, long-term care and dialysis will be led by new operators. I'm proud to add our addiction recovery services to the list of sustained community services, as we are likely to enter into an agreement with a highly skilled provider in the coming weeks. We hope to announce those exciting changes in the coming weeks.

Without a doubt, the next few months will continue to be a time of change at St. James Mercy. We are incredibly thankful for the hard work our employees put in day-in and day-out, continuing to provide high-quality healthcare to our community. We also are appreciative of the community's passion and commitment to St. James Mercy during this time.

Healthcare in Hornell will continue to evolve through 2015. We are proud of our progress in developing and implementing the New Vision in 2014, and we look forward to this continued evolution and modernization of healthcare in our city.

Jennifer L. Sullivan  
President & CEO  
St. James Mercy Hospital

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