



CLINICAL AFFILIATION WITH CROUSE HEALTH **Questions and Answers**

QUESTION: What is the biggest benefit to the Northern New York hospitals of this affiliation?

ANSWER: Access to a tertiary care center and potential expansion of specialty care services, as well as access to expertise and experience at Crouse Health and Northwell Health. This affiliation provides synergy and alignment around culture, mission, values and physician and employee engagement. Like Crouse and Northwell, the participating hospitals are focused on continually strengthening the overall patient experience. Crouse, through its affiliation with Northwell, has expertise in quality improvement and care management that will be a significant benefit as hospitals evolve from a fee-for-service to a value-based model of care delivery. Additionally, the collaboration will keep local care local, while preserving more than 4,700 jobs across the four partnering hospitals.

QUESTION: Did the hospitals consider such an affiliation with Samaritan Medical Center?

ANSWER: Crouse Health's clinical affiliation model allows the hospitals to strengthen patient services, share best practices and expertise, and gain economies of scale while preserving each hospital's local leadership and independent board of directors. This model ensures local communities have a voice in their local health care. All three hospitals had discussions with Samaritan Medical Center about an affiliation but were unable to come to an agreement. River Hospital and Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center consulted with Samaritan on the discussions with Crouse Health, who also had conversations with Samaritan, but Samaritan declined involvement.

QUESTION: What impact will this affiliation have on the hospitals' foundations?

ANSWER: None. Each of the participating hospitals will continue to have their own foundations. However, the affiliation could provide our Foundation staff with opportunities to learn from members of the Crouse Health Foundation and share best practices and expertise

QUESTION: For how long does this affiliation bind the three Northern New York hospitals and Crouse Health?

ANSWER: The initial clinical affiliation is a two-year agreement with the ability for any of the participants to part or exit, if desired.

QUESTION: Does this clinical affiliation require approval by the New York State Department of Health?

ANSWER: No. Because there are no changes to the governance structures of the institutions, a clinical affiliation does not require action by the Department of Health.

CLINICAL AFFILIATION BENEFITS

QUESTION: How much savings could be realized through the benefits of this affiliation and in what areas of operation will it be most noticeable?

ANSWER: Exact dollar figures are unknown, but savings through a variety of programs and operational efficiencies could be significant over time. The hospitals will also have opportunities to participate in Crouse and Northwell's joint purchasing program for general supplies, pharmaceuticals and IT infrastructure, among other initiatives.

QUESTION: Do the hospitals have to pay any money to Crouse Health to maintain a clinical affiliation?

ANSWER: No. The agreement is not an attempt by Crouse or Northwell to increase revenues or for either to create new streams of revenue. The hospitals will remain financially independent and retain responsibilities to their existing individual vendors and creditors.

QUESTION: Carthage, Claxton-Hepburn and River Hospital are community hospitals, built by the community, for the community. Will they maintain their autonomy as community hospitals despite this affiliation?

ANSWER: Most certainly. Each institution remains an independent community hospital. This affiliation aims to strengthen the participating hospitals with access to intellectual capital on a scale they have not previously benefitted from while maintaining local governance.

QUESTION: Does an affiliation with Crouse mean that the participating hospitals will no longer partner with other institutions in certain service areas?

ANSWER: No. The Crouse Health affiliation does not eliminate existing services. We have many different partners and will continue to actively engage them as long as they are committed to helping us deliver quality care in our local market.

AFFILIATION IMPACT ON STAFF

QUESTION: Will any medical or clinical staff be impacted by this affiliation?

ANSWER: In terms of jobs or changes in reporting structure, no. Appropriately so, our medical and clinical staffs will now have access to expertise, experience and resources that will strengthen the care they provide to patients.

QUESTION: Could the affiliation eventually align any departments with Crouse Health that would result in any net job losses locally?

ANSWER: No. This is not a merger or acquisition. Quite the opposite, this affiliation could eventually lead to additional services that would require additional local jobs.

QUESTION: Could the Department of Health challenge this affiliation?

ANSWER: Because there is no change to any governance structure, the agreement does not require DOH review or approval. In fact, the DOH has been very supportive of collaborations and affiliations like this one that enhance access to care and create efficiencies in the delivery of care.

QUESTION: Could another hospital locally challenge this affiliation?

ANSWER: Not that we are aware of. This agreement does not seek to disrupt services at other North Country hospitals. The goal of this partnership is to strengthen the three Northern New York hospitals, not to weaken others.

CROUSE HEALTH

QUESTION: How will Crouse Health benefit from a clinical affiliation with Northern New York hospitals, which are much smaller and farther from Crouse?

ANSWER: The affiliations are consistent with Crouse Health's mission of providing the best in patient care and promoting community health. This will be accomplished through the sharing of best practices in the areas of quality, patient safety and patient experience. In addition, the partnership will support Crouse's strategic focus on expanding much-needed primary care services in areas that may be underserved, as well as the development and expansion of Crouse's population health initiatives in CNY and the North Country.

QUESTION: Why is Crouse Health interested in the Northern New York hospitals as clinical affiliates?

ANSWER: In a challenging health care marketplace where partnerships become more and more important, the affiliations help Crouse Health and all of the institutions remain viable health care providers to the region. In addition to a focus on high-quality health care, Crouse sees significant synergies with the North Country hospitals that will be mutually beneficial to the participating partners and the patients we serve as we work together to build on a clinically integrated care network.

QUESTION: How will this affiliation enable Crouse Health to provide a meaningful clinical impact to patients in the North Country?

ANSWER: Keeping local care local will be a guiding tenet as the collaboration between Crouse and the Northern New York hospitals takes shape. A key benefit of the relationship will be the availability of care and specialized services offered by Crouse that may not currently be available to North Country patients, such as

high-end neurovascular surgery and interventional cardiology. Patients will be able to see specialists from any of the hospitals when needed, either in the hospital, in physicians' offices, or through advanced telemedicine technology, which will be supported through Crouse Health's affiliation with Northwell Health. This will enable quality diagnosis and treatment while eliminating unnecessary travel or time delays for patients in the North Country.

QUESTION: Crouse Health stresses culture, quality and financial health as key to its continued success. Some of the Northern New York hospitals have experienced turbulent financial times in recent years. How are these hospitals a fit for Crouse Health?

ANSWER: Crouse Health is focused on developing relationships with potential strategic partners that share its mission and culture while addressing the shift from "traditional" thinking to "value-based" thinking. In today's dynamic health care environment, achieving and maintaining financial margins is an ongoing goal for all hospitals and health systems. The Northern New York hospitals have a solid clinical and quality reputation. Our goal will be to work hand-in-hand to identify cost efficiencies where it makes sense, with the focus on maintaining financial stability.

QUESTION: What does this new partnership mean for the future of health care in the region?

ANSWER: It's good news for the future of health care in the North Country. This partnership keeps health care and jobs local, while enhancing care and preserving the distinct missions and governance structures of the three hospitals.