



January 20, 2023

To All Employees and Staff:

It is with regret that effective at 7 a.m., Saturday, January 28, 2023, we will no longer have emergency room physician coverage at SMH-Peru. The current provider of physicians terminated their contract effective at that time and we cannot find, nor financially support, a new ER provider. In addition, we have not been able to attract enough staff to continue to operate both hospitals.

Because of this, we must temporarily suspend operations at the SMH-Peru hospital. We have been advised by IDPH that hospitals cannot operate without an open and fully staffed emergency room.

How did this happen?

Many factors contributed: In addition to COVID, the cyber-attack (which meant we could not bill nor get paid, in a timely manner, for the services we'd provided) and staffing shortages which required us to use temporary agencies to fill positions at a significantly higher pay rate. And, like you, we have been faced with rising costs for goods. This all came at great financial cost. It is obvious to the Board and Administration that action is needed now.

What will WE do next?

- 1) Notify IDPH we are temporarily closing the Peru hospital;
- 2) Contact all scheduled SMH-Peru patients of this change and move their appointments to SMH-Spring Valley;
- 3) Move hospital services (ICU, Med-Surg/Peds, all surgeries, emergency, lab, x-ray and other outpatient hospital services) to SMH-Spring Valley;
- 4) Notify EMS providers that we are closing SMH-Peru and that all emergency transports must be brought to SMH-Spring Valley effective January 26;
- 5) Make arrangements for OB deliveries to be provided elsewhere (Ottawa, Pontiac, Morris). The OB unit is closing;
- 6) Continue efforts already under way to convert Peru to a Rural Emergency Hospital (REH). This includes working with our local legislators to expedite adoption of the REH regulations that were just issued by Centers for Medicare Services (CMS).

How can YOU help (what can you do)?

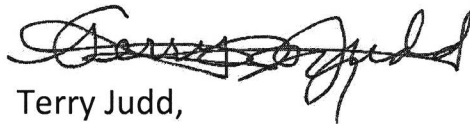
- 1) If you are an SMH-Peru hospital employee, you are encouraged to explore the Job Board and apply for open, posted positions for which you qualify;

- 2) Contact our local legislators (Sen Sue Rezin, Rep Lance Yednock) and ask for their assistance in the immediate adoption of the rules pertaining to the REH (see contact info and sample letter attached);
- 3) Continue to provide our patients with the Mission-Driven healthcare they've come to expect.
- 4) Continue to be patient.

The last three years have been difficult for everyone involved. We appreciate all you've done to help be a part of the solution. We assure you, we are working diligently and on many levels to stabilize our financial condition. Our goal is still to maintain one hospital to serve the healthcare needs of our communities.



Tim Muntz,
President & CEO



Terry Judd,
Chairperson – Board of Directors