



**CHIPPEWA VALLEY ORTHOPEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE FILES LAWSUIT
SEEKING INJUNCTION AGAINST HSHS TO KEEP SACRED HEART
AND ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITALS OPEN UNTIL AT LEAST JULY 21, 2024**

EAU CLAIRE, WI – February 9, 2024 – Chippewa Valley Orthopedics and Sports Medicine (CVOSM), a leading orthopedic medicine clinic serving Western Wisconsin, today filed an injunction in Eau Claire County Court against HSHS to keep Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's hospitals in Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls Wisconsin open and serving patients with critical medical services until at least July 21, 2024. This would be three (3) months past the closure date April 21, 2024, announced by HSHS on January 22, 2024.

In the history of U.S. hospital closures, CVOSM can find none that have filed the legally required 90-day closure plan without ample notice to employees and communities beforehand. HSHS started the 90-day clock ticking on the same day it announced its intent to close its hospitals and Prevea clinics and exit the Western Wisconsin region.

As stated in the legal brief to support the lawsuit, HSHS is "not using the time between now and April 21, 2024, to maintain hospital services at the level that existed prior to the closure announcement."

CVOSM has had a long relationship with HSHS. With its current contract with HSHS, CVOSM has been a call coverage partner since June 2023, providing orthopedic surgical and orthopedic trauma services to patients at Emergency Departments at Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's Hospitals. From managing acute injuries requiring immediate surgical intervention to fracture care that required watchful waiting, CVOSM surgeons provide high quality, equitable access to patients throughout the Chippewa Valley.

Cancellations Continue

Since HSHS's closure announcement, CVOSM and other physicians across the region, have been forced to cancel previously scheduled surgeries, lab studies, and diagnostic imaging

studies for patients at Sacred Heart, despite a clearly communicated continued need for these healthcare services.

CVOSM's contract with HSHS requires 180-day notice to terminate the relationship. No such notice was issued by HSHS to CVOSM. CVOSM, founded in 1954, is a member of the OakLeaf Medical Network.

"Since HSHS announced it is exiting Western Wisconsin, Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's hospitals have been on an accelerated path to systematically shut down services and programs and remove critical, community-funded medical equipment and resources far in advance of the announced April 21st closure date," said Austin Crow, MD, CVOSM's Group President. "These abrupt, pre-mature closure actions interfere with CVOSM's, and hundreds of other area physicians', ability to serve patients today and creates irreparable harm for patients across the region now and for the foreseeable future."

"The lights are on, but less and less is being done to care for the patients HSHS ethically must serve as HSHS actively forces cancellations at a rapid rate," added Crow. "HSHS's actions across Western Wisconsin are antithetical to the Hippocratic Oath all doctors take which pledges that they will 'first, do no harm.'"

The other hospitals in the region have publicly stated they are at or very near capacity. Without Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's hospital beds and critical medical services, the entire healthcare system will be overwhelmed in the region.

"We are already seeing the domino effect of HSHS's accelerated closure plan across the region," added Orthopedic Surgeon Dr. Brent Carlson, MD.

Dr. Crow continued, "We hope the Court will issue the requested injunction and keep the hospitals open until at least July 21, 2024. That additional time is crucial and necessary to protect patients' health now and to develop a plan to continue providing health care to patients in the future."

About Chippewa Valley Orthopedics and Sports Medicine

CVOSM has served patients in the Chippewa Valley since 1954. Today, nearly seven decades later, CVOSM Orthopedic Surgeons, Podiatrist, Neurosurgeon, and Interventional Pain

Management Physician remain committed the ensuring patients receive high quality, safe, and equitable access to musculoskeletal care.

For more information, visit www.cvosm.com.

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