

Our History, In-depth

In November 1967, Springfield General Osteopathic Hospital (SGOH) Acquisition, Inc., a locally owned, private, for-profit corporation, built and occupied a hospital facility located at 2828 N. National. This hospital operated under the name, "Doctors Hospital of Springfield" from March 1992 to October 1995 and then as "Columbia North" until the hospital closed in June of 1997. It remained closed for two and half years until it reopened as "Doctors Hospital of Springfield" on January 1, 2000.

In March 1992, Doctors Hospital of Springfield acquired the assets of SGOH, including a 95-bed facility and assumed all existing debts. The hospital operated profitably from fiscal year 1992 through fiscal year 1994.

By October 1995, the hospital had grown to 110 beds which SGOH contributed, all other assets included, to a limited partnership with Columbia/HCA in return for an equity interest in the partnership. Columbia/HCA also contributed the operating assets of a 200-bed hospital doing business as "Springfield Community Hospital." The two hospitals began doing business as "Columbia North" and "Columbia South."

In June 1997, Columbia/HCA, acting as general partner, closed Columbia North as an acute-care facility. Almost immediately thereafter, SGOH began negotiations to dissolve the partnership with the intent to re-open the north facility. After a long process involving the Cox Health System of Springfield, SGOH and Columbia/HCA dissolved the partnership.

SGOH then took title to Columbia North through a contract with Cox Health that granted SGOH the option to participate in the Cox Health managed care network (Primrose) in the event SGOH was able to re-open the hospital. Cox Health received the south facility which is currently operating as Cox Walnut Lawn in Springfield, Missouri.

In January 1, 1999, SGOH had zero employees and an unlicensed hospital facility with a badly leaking roof. Fortunately, the group was able to obtain a certificate of need from the State of Missouri on June 28, 2009 to operate the osteopathic hospital. Construction for the new facility began in July, but not without extra costs. Due to hospital licensing requirements, the facility lost its "Grandfather Status" and thus had to comply with "new" building requirements. These 1999 specifications cost the hospital its original working capital and prevented it from opening a larger facility. But by January 1, 2000 SGOH opened "Doctors Hospital of Springfield" to the public as a renovated 45-bed hospital.

Several years later, Doctors Hospital of Springfield agreed to transfer ownership and operation of its health system to Ozarks Community Hospital, Inc. (OCH), a not-for-profit corporation in January 1, 2008. The nonprofit corporation was created for this purpose and received no financial support from any third party, nor was it affiliated with any other health system or organization. The transfer of ownership was to take place when OCH became a qualified tax-exempt charitable organization. During the interim, OCH was managing the healthcare system on behalf of Doctors Hospital of Springfield under a management agreement.

Due to economic challenges and a delay in receiving the IRS tax determination, Doctors Hospital of Springfield resumed operational control of the healthcare system currently doing business as Ozarks Community Hospital, effective July 1, 2008. In order to lessen public confusion, the for-profit corporation chose to continue doing business as "Ozarks Community Hospital."

In 10 years, OCH has grown from a closed single-hospital facility to eight clinics and an additional hospital known as Ozarks Community Hospital of Gravette. Now, OCH is one of the top 20 employers in the Springfield area with more than 750 employees. OCH continues to provide a substantial community benefit throughout the Ozarks and deliver healthcare access to the underserved.

Ozarks Community Hospital
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