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Uniontown Hospital Media Release

Hospital exploring new partnership to strengthen care for region

Uniontown Hospital officials have announced that they are in discussions with representatives from WVU Health System regarding a new relationship to strengthen their combined services for the residents in and around Fayette County.

“We are in the process of establishing a relationship with WVU Medicine regarding a broad range of services,” Uniontown Hospital CEO Steve Handy said. “We have been impressed by WVU Medicine’s clinical growth and expansion. It was easy to recognize the value for our community to partner with such a great organization. WVU Medicine has expressed an interest in helping us meet the healthcare needs of our community. This was an offer that we have welcomed and embraced. The potential for expanded local access to healthcare in our community is exciting.”

Handy said that while the specific parameters of the relationship are still being finalized, hospital leaders recognized the unique benefits of creating partnerships with WVU Medicine, noting the proximity of their hospitals in Morgantown to Uniontown. Morgantown is roughly half the distance of Uniontown to Pittsburgh.

“We’re excited to explore with Uniontown Hospital ways we can partner and collaborate to serve better the people of Fayette County and the

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surrounding area. Our shared goal is to utilize our respective strengths to ensure people have better and more convenient access to advanced specialty care,” Albert L. Wright, Jr., president and CEO, West Virginia University Health System, said.

While new avenues for collaboration are being determined, Handy said that the hospital maintains a solid relationship with UPMC and will continue partnerships in some aspects of care. Uniontown Hospital will also continue to accept UPMC, Aetna and most Highmark plans as part of this change. “This move will be all about what is best for our patients and for the community we serve,” Handy said. “Our decisions are never just about the bottom line or the short term, but what options are available to us to provide the best care and sustain that level of care long term. We will continue to partner and collaborate with those that recognize the importance of Uniontown Hospital to the region and Uniontown Hospital providing the best care for the region.”

The announcement comes just a few months after a major announcement last fall regarding renovations to the Uniontown Hospital campus and continued investment in the 160-bed facility.

In October, hospital officials announced that they were awarded one of the largest United States Department of Agriculture loans in the state, nearly \$27 million, to move forward with a major campus renovation in the coming years.

The Rural Development loan through the USDA will allow the facility to construct a three-story parking garage as well as a new patient and visitor

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entrance and other enhancements at the acute care facility, located on Berkeley Street in Uniontown.

The \$32 million upgrade has been a part of strategic plans at the hospital for several years as administrators worked through the scope and scale of proposed upgrades and began pursuing the funding necessary to make the plans a reality.

In recent years, Uniontown Hospital has been transformed with all in-patient departments having undergone significant renovations (all patient rooms are now private with new beds, furniture and décor.)

In addition, the ICU has been completely renovated with a generous donation from Joseph A. Hardy, III, along with the surgical area, maternity, pediatrics, pharmacy, much of the laboratory and a new education center with patient care simulation rooms.