

Making the Switch for Little Company of Mary

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

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It's like a well-choreographed wedding ceremony. After a courtship and, in this case, relatively brief engagement, Little Company of Mary Hospital and Health Care Centers in Evergreen Park, Illinois, is now, officially, OSF HealthCare Little Company of Mary Medical Center.

At the stroke of midnight February 1, the systems that powered everything at Little Company of Mary were converted to OSF systems. The initial push to get everything up and running took about 2-and-a-half hours, but will take much longer for everyone – and everything – to get settled comfortably into place.

It's a process that takes months of planning and involves more than 1,000 people across the OSF Ministry. But when you're having to take care of patients during the transition – there were more than 200 patients at switchover, not including those coming into the emergency department – you can't miss a beat. It's a finely tuned process.

"We're converting close to 600-700 different systems, bringing all of those systems live at one given time. It's kind of an anomaly. It means taking everything from every department within the organization and changing it, which also means training, education around the systems but even the technical cut which is really the things that happen starting from about noon on the day prior all the way through the wee hours of the morning which we're at now, really takes a tremendous amount of coordination and effort because there's a lot of sequence of events and a lot of pieces that have to occur to ensure that patient safety is kept to the highest a degree possible along with keeping all of our systems functioning effectively," explained Jim Mormann, CEO, Integrated Solutions and Chief Information Officer for OSF HealthCare

It's Mormann's job to make sure conversions such as this go smoothly. And three hours after cutover, he was cautiously pleased.

One of the areas he worries most about is the pharmacy.

"Hats off to the pharmacy staff because it's always one of the hardest jobs, here is to validate all of the pharmacy orders but then crosscheck, ensuring all of that stuff is 100% accurate. And then from there actually keeping track from the time we actually take systems down, they actually have to maintain that until we bring systems back live. So it's a tremendous amount of work."

Members of the integrated solutions team and others will remain onsite for the next several weeks, even months, to make sure everything is running smoothly and that the new OSF Little Company of Mary Mission Partners are comfortable with them – it's called being at the elbow.

Ultimately, it's the patients who will benefit most.

"Normally an activation like this would nine months to 24 months to get in place. So they come on board with us – OSF – day one and they have new systems, even though it's going to take them some time to get comfortable enough with all of the systems, they automatically move themselves ahead because all of the value propositions in clinical care, all of the value propositions of the work flow process are made available to Evergreen Park and all of its patients right from the get-go."