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**Salem Health Hospitals & Clinics and Santiam Hospital & Clinics announce
definitive agreement to partner**

(Salem, Ore. - January 19, 2026) - Two health systems in the mid-Willamette Valley have signed a definitive agreement to partner and will submit a request for approval to the Oregon Health Authority. The goal of partnership between Salem Health Hospitals & Clinics and Santiam Hospital & Clinics is to strengthen clinically integrated care and access while preserving high-quality, not-for-profit, local health care services. This partnership ensures the long-term vitality of patient care throughout the mid-Willamette Valley including the Santiam Canyon.

The two organizations share a long-standing commitment to delivering compassionate, community-based care. Both systems are nonprofit, mission-driven, and deeply rooted in their communities—aligned in vision, values, and a culture that prioritizes keeping care local and accessible. By joining forces, both health care systems will be better positioned to grow services, leverage shared resources, and continue serving patients and their communities for decades to come.

“This is an exciting opportunity to improve health care for the patients we serve and grow services for the Santiam Canyon,” said Cheryl Wolfe, RN, President and CEO of Salem Health Hospitals & Clinics. “We know that deep partnerships can bring strength and stability and ultimately improve care and access for patients in our region.”

Shared patients, shared values

In today's rapidly evolving and financially complex health care environment, Santiam leaders have been actively seeking a strong partner to help ensure the long-term vitality of their organization and assure they are providing quality health care now and into the future. Santiam Hospital & Clinics has been serving east Marion County and the Santiam Canyon for more than 70 years. Salem Health is a longtime regional ally with shared values and a track record of investing in rural health care.

“Salem Health is an ideal partner for us,” said Maggie Hudson, MBA, President and CEO of Santiam Hospital & Clinics. “They share our commitment to the local community and have demonstrated their ability to invest in rural health care. Together, we aim to strengthen our communities through a collaborative, community-driven partnership. We're excited to explore what we can build together.”

Salem Health has a proven history of investing in rural health care, including its affiliation with West Valley Hospital in 2002 and recent expansions in rural clinics and hospital capacity. In 2023, Salem Health's West Valley Hospital expanded from 6 to 25 beds and increased staffing by more than 60 percent. As part of this \$25 million investment in the community, in 2024, Salem Health's West Valley Hospital opened a newly constructed specialty clinic with outpatient services for wound care, anticoagulation, infusion, medication management and outpatient rehabilitation.

Salem Health and Santiam have worked together on joint community health initiatives such as the Marion Polk Community Health Needs Assessment and Improvement Plan, coordinated outreach efforts leveraging dental vans, Community Health Workers, and social determinant of health supports, underscoring their shared mission and commitment to serving shared patient populations, and supporting a vibrant community.

Partnership process overview

Partnership is not yet final and requires Oregon Health Authority approval.

“We are committed to engagement and collaboration as we move forward. This includes listening and proactively engaging with staff, providers, patients, and community leaders to understand how this partnership can best meet the needs of the mid-Willamette Valley,” said Wolfe.

Salem Health Hospitals & Clinics

Salem Health Hospitals & Clinics, a nonprofit health system governed by a volunteer board of trustees, offers exceptional care to people in and around Oregon's mid-Willamette Valley. It comprises hospitals in Salem and Dallas. Salem Hospital in Salem is Oregon's largest hospital and a Level II Trauma Center. West Valley Hospital in Dallas is a 25-bed critical access hospital with a 24-hour emergency department. Salem Health also has a medical group of primary and specialty care providers, plus other affiliated services. Salem Health has more than 6,400 employees and a medical staff of more than 875 physicians and advanced practice providers.

Santiam Hospital & Clinics

Santiam Hospital & Clinics is a community-based nonprofit, acute-care 40 bed hospital, governed by a local, volunteer board of directors. The health system is in the eastern region of mid-Willamette Valley in Stayton, Oregon operating Santiam Hospital and 13 medical clinics serving the Santiam Canyon in Marion and Linn counties. Santiam Hospital & Clinics serves approximately 40,000 residents and employs more than 700 staff, including over 70 medical staff who are committed to excellence in community-based care.

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