

Stoller announces plans to leave JMHCC

Jacobson Memorial Hospital Care Center CEO Theo Stoller has notified the board of directors that he will be resigning from his position in early 2023. He also serves as the CEO of the Richardton Health Center and will be stepping away from that role as well. Stoller has accepted another opportunity in North Dakota to advance his career within the health care industry and will assume those duties in the second quarter of 2023.

He will continue with JMHCC and RHC as the boards set up a transition plan.

“We are saddened by Theo’s decision to move on. Yet, we fully understand his determination to further his career beyond what he can at our critical access hospital. We truly wish him the best in his advancement in career. He has been beneficial in determining the next steps for JMHCC. I am confident that he will continue to work on those projects until his departure, leaving JMHCC in an even better position than it is today,” said JMHCC Board President Leslie Niederman.

“This decision was not one that I came to easily, nor without a heavy heart. To work alongside an organization filled with such compassionate individuals who selflessly serve those in need has been an absolute pleasure and honor. I cannot stress enough how privileged I feel to have led this organization,” Stoller said.

Stoller started with JMHCC as human resources and IT director in 2008, then stepped into the CEO role in 2013. He also became CEO of RHC in 2019, serving in both roles since.

During his tenure, Stoller led improvements in quality, the physical plant and JMHCC’s financial sustainability.

JMHCC has been named a Top 100 Critical Access Hospital in both 2020 and 2022 through a recognition program that honors outstanding performance among the nation’s rural hospitals.

“When I think about what we’ve been able to do as a group, I think that’s super important,” he said.

Since 2013, JMHCC has shown consistent average bottom-line gains of more than \$500,000 as well, which is a unique position for a critical access hospital, he pointed out.

The hospital has also increased the number of providers from three to six currently, and was selected as one of only 10 hospitals in the nation to participate in the Frontier Community Health Integration Project, which allowed JMHCC to begin operations of the New Leipzig-Elgin ambulance service and increase its number of beds.

Improvements to the physical plant included medical equipment upgrades, updating the boiler system and renovating or updating the entire facility.

“We have been able to update or renovate the entire building, inside and out,” he said.

“This is a review of how awesome we’ve done as a group,” he said.

At RHC, Stoller led the team in bringing the facility from a one-star facility to a five-star facility.

“From the perspective of the board of RHC, we are sad to lose Theo as our administrator and all of his intelligence, integrity, energy and grace he brought to his role. We are also excited for the new position that he is taking on and truly know that he will continue to provide the best service to people in western North Dakota. He will be missed at RHC,” said Brother Michael Taffe, board chair of RHC.

“Under Theo’s work as administrator, JMHCC took over the management of the Richardton Clinic. The ability for a small rural town to have its own clinic is beyond incredible and the community is very grateful to JMHCC and Theo and all of the staff at JMHCC,” Taffe added.

“The COVID pandemic brought many, many challenges to health care and nursing homes. Theo was instrumental in managing a team of exceptional and motivated staff to provide the best care to residents. Through the challenges of the changing landscape, Theo and his team continued to monitor various laws and requirements by various agencies and still kept the care of the residents at the forefront,” Taffe said.

“I have worked with Theo as board chair of JMHCC for the past nine years,” Niederman said. “It has been a pleasure watching him grow in his career. I often would never have believed the 27-year-old young man before me would accomplish the things he has accomplished since then. He has developed a huge network of peers and other organizations. There aren’t many people in the hospital realm and beyond in this region with whom he doesn’t either know or have a working relationship. It’s mind-boggling to me.”

Stoller volunteered for both ambulance services in Glen Ullin and Elgin/New Leipzig and has been an active member of the Elgin Lions and served on city councils in New Leipzig and Elgin.

Among his professional achievements, Stoller was named North Dakota’s Outstanding Rural Health Professional in 2018 and was included in the Bismarck Tribune’s “40 under 40” special section in 2014. He also serves on numerous state task forces and boards.

“Theo has worked very well with the JMHCC board of directors. He has always been upfront and honest from the get-go. He has been patient and considerate of each one of us, including those who served and have since left the board. I think I can speak for each of them and say we have all been proud of the work we have accomplished with Theo as our CEO. This hospital has achieved so many things under his leadership,” Niederman said.

Crystal Stoller, who serves as the JMHCC lab director, will be resigning from her position earlier to start the school year with the couple’s two children in their new home.

“I cannot give all this credit to Theo without mentioning what his wife, Crystal, has done for JMHCC. She has helped develop a state-of-the-art laboratory in this facility. Few small hospitals can compare with what she has accomplished. Crystal has worked very hard here. She has been willing to take more call than probably anyone, other than our one-and-only radiology person. This has not been an easy task for her along with her day-to-day operation as lab director. She will be dearly missed as well,” Niederman said.

“Our community will miss Brooklyn and Easton growing up in our school system and community. So, I feel the need to mention these two young people. We hope they enjoy their new home and new schools. It is the hope of the JMHCC board of directors the community will commend and wish this young family a fond farewell when their times come to depart,” Niederman said.