



Press Release
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Health System Reflects on Year of Achievements

Growth and expansion were achieved at Castro County Healthcare while maintaining fiscal strength.

DIMMITT, Texas (Dec. 29, 2023) – Castro County Healthcare (CCH) has seen important growth and milestone projects over the past year. From local donations to staff development and facility upgrades, 2023 was a great year for the local healthcare system.

“The advancements we've achieved in Castro County over the past few years consistently leave me in awe,” says Elisha Rosier, CEO, RN, BNS at Plains Memorial Hospital. “Despite numerous rural hospital closures in Texas over the past decade, we have successfully sustained positive growth while responsibly managing our finances.”

In reflection of noteworthy initiatives, Rosier shares highlights across the health system.

Medical Team Updates

After a dedicated service to Castro County since 1985, Dr. Gary R. Hardee retired in May. His departure leaves a notable void, and he will be greatly missed. During his 38 years of service, Dr. Hardee delivered excellent care to patients in the region.

In a commitment to upholding the legacy of quality healthcare, the district embraced the addition of new physicians to its esteemed team. Dr. Kimberly Smith joined in May, and Dr. Mike Ruggerio followed suit in September.

These dedicated physicians extend their care to patients of all ages at the Medical Center of Dimmitt, ensuring the community receives ongoing access to comprehensive and compassionate medical services.

Medical Clinic

In January, the Medical Center of Dimmitt underwent a comprehensive remodeling, introducing separate waiting areas—one for healthy patients and another for those seeking care for illnesses.

Additionally, the clinic incorporated Behavioral Health Telehealth Services, a valuable enhancement that local schools and residents in the surrounding area have warmly embraced.

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The thoughtful redesign and expanded telehealth services contribute to a more tailored and responsive healthcare experience for the community.

Emergency Medical Services

EMS and 911 ambulance services were seamlessly reintegrated into the hospital district in June. CCH made significant investments by acquiring two state-of-the-art ambulances, one dedicated to 911 services and the other as a reliable backup.

Implementing a full-time EMS crew, with a backup team for transfer has notably reduced wait times for patient transfers to higher-level facilities.

As part of these improvements, the onsite crew's quarters underwent a comprehensive remodel, now featuring private sleeping areas, a welcoming lounge, a fully equipped kitchen, and a designated workspace.

These enhancements not only elevate the operational efficiency of emergency services but also prioritize the well-being and comfort of the dedicated EMS teams.

Plains Memorial Hospital

The hospital completed its Trauma Designation and was reapproved as a Level 4 Trauma Center. This achievement is paramount for a rural hospital like Plains Memorial, as a Level 4 Trauma Center designation signifies the capability to provide initial emergency care and stabilization to trauma patients.

This designation is vital for ensuring that residents in rural areas have timely access to critical medical services, particularly during emergencies, significantly improving the overall readiness and responsiveness of the hospital to trauma cases within the community.

The radiology department implemented an upgrade to the CT scanner this year, which now features the advanced Incisive 16-slice technology. This updated scanner is routinely employed for various medical services, including inpatient, emergency room, and outpatient procedures.

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In addition, Shared Medical Service has enhanced the MRI unit deployed at the hospital. The upgraded system boasts a "wide bore" and an adjustable table, facilitating the scanning of larger patients with improved precision and comfort.

Physical Therapy

Welch Rehab steadfastly continues its commitment to meeting our community's physical and occupational needs. Mitchell Brockman, MPT, has assumed the director role, concurrently managing responsibilities for quality, ethics, and compliance within CCH. In demonstrating a dedication to improved service, the rehab department has expanded its resources by acquiring an additional NuStep, specifically aimed at better serving the diverse needs of patients and fitness members in the gym.

Curated Care Residence

Country View Living, a long-term and senior-living residence which is part of CCH, continues to deliver outstanding 4-star-rated care to local and area residents. With an average of 50 residents, the facility provides a high standard of living and support for those who need it most. Country View recently welcomed Christina Pantoja, who recently earned her master's in occupational therapy, as the new rehabilitation director at the community.

In November, Country View held a cake auction, which they host annually, and achieved tremendous success, with a generous donation of \$27,000 earmarked for resident activities and special needs. Funds raised contribute significantly to the facility's ability to continue enhancing residents' lives.

Fundraising Arm

CCH Axillary remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting the district, exemplified by the recent acquisition of two cutting-edge Mindray Passport units. These modern devices are dedicated to efficiently and accurately recording vital signs for hospital inpatients, enhancing the overall quality of patient care.

Focus on the future

In recent years, CCH has undergone multiple expansion and renovation projects, consistently exceeded the expectations of Castro County and established the health system as a resilient medical care platform for future generations.

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Castro County Healthcare

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While the health system remains dedicated to addressing the community's evolving healthcare requirements, the hospital sustains positive cash flow and enjoys robust local support.

“We have been fortunate to witness our growth with minimal impact on changes in local funding,” Rosier says. “Our community recognizes the importance of local medical programs and services. Healthcare is a cornerstone of a thriving community, and that's precisely what we have in the greater Castro County region.”

To learn more about local healthcare programs and services, please visit www.plainsmemorial.com.

About Castro County Healthcare

Founded in 1963, Castro County Healthcare provides healthcare for residents of Castro County, Texas, and the surrounding region. Anchored by Plains Memorial Hospital, the healthcare system offers many medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, advanced radiology services, including CT scanning and MRIs, outpatient lab, physical and occupational therapy, surgical services, swing bed services, patient education, and more. For additional information, please visit www.plainsmemorial.com.

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