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Mercy, MSTI partner up

Hospitals will work together to enhance cancer services provided in Nampa

TREASURE VALLEY — Two health care neighbors announced Wednesday that they will partner to enhance cancer services provided in the western Treasure Valley — but the change won't affect staffing levels at either location.

Nampa's St. Luke's Mountain States Tumor Institute and Mercy Medical Center aim to provide a "comprehensive continuum" of care — "from diagnostics and outpatient treatment at MSTI to diagnostics and inpatient care at Mercy," according to a press release.

Mercy spokesperson Ken Taylor said the two facilities, which are located next door to each other in south Nampa, have already been working together on patient referrals. However, the partnership creates a financial collaboration between them.

"Both hospitals recognized that in today's complex health care environment, it is important for health care organizations to partner where appropriate for the benefit of the patients we serve," Nicole Bradshaw — director of St. Luke's MSTI Nampa, Fruitland and Meridian — said in a press release.

The agreement entitles each hospital to 50 percent of the MSTI Nampa building and equipment, as well as equally shared revenue.

"This fiscal partnership will ultimately open the door to enhanced communication and cooperation," Bradshaw said. "MSTI and Mercy leaders have hopes that the partnership will eventually allow us to work in a seamless system that involves oncologists, referring physicians, other specialists and hospital/clinic staff. This level of integration will be a wonderful benefit for patients."

Officials anticipate enhanced communication and access between the two hospitals through the sharing of electronic health information and compatible information technology systems. St. Luke's spokesperson Beth Toal said these technological improvements already are in the works.

Mercy CEO Joe Messmer stated in the release that the two facilities have collaborated in the past. However, Wednesday's partnership announcement represents the first formal relationship between them, Toal said.