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Staff Report
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Providence acquires Walla Walla hospital

Providence Health will acquire Walla Walla General Hospital this summer through an agreement with Adventist Health, the owner of the 72-bed hospital.

The arrangement will consolidate hospital ownership in the southeastern Washington metro area of about 45,000. For more than a century, Walla Walla has had two hospitals — Walla Walla General and Providence-affiliated St. Mary Medical Center.

The decision comes amid a changing landscape for hospitals, health officials said Monday.

“This is a time for fresh thinking about what the future of health care could look like in Walla Walla,” said Joyce Newmyer, president of Adventist Health Pacific Northwest Region.

Both hospitals will continue operations under Providence Health’s ownership. Staff reductions are possible, though Providence intends to employ a significant number of Adventist Health employees, said Elaine Couture, CEO for Providence Health Services in Eastern Washington.

During Monday’s announcement, officials described the arrangement as a transfer, not a sale. Adventist Health, which is based in California, will transfer Walla Walla General Hospital to Providence, along with an affiliated clinic and home health care services.

Providence will pay \$14 million over 24 years into a newly created fund within the Providence St. Mary Foundation. Adventist Health will control the fund, which is earmarked for community health care needs.

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