



One
Year.

One
Community.

One
Direction.

Healthcare

Mercy Hospital Joplin (formerly St. John's Regional Medical Center)

St. John's Regional Medical Center, a 367-bed hospital in the heart of Joplin took a direct hit. The nine-story building was still standing, but windows were blown out, the roof was destroyed, every floor was filled with water and debris, and irreparable damage was done to the building's infrastructure, including emergency generators and a power distribution system. The lack of power meant that 183 patients and 117 hospital staff were left in the dark. Water, sprinkler, gas and sewer pipes were disrupted. Liquid O2 tanks were damaged. Eighty-six physicians' offices were severely damaged or destroyed.

Despite the challenges, hospital staff, visitors and strangers worked tirelessly to evacuate all the patients in approximately 90 minutes. Wounded residents streamed onto the hospital's property seeking help. Triage areas were set up. Samaritans showed up with pickup trucks and SUVs to help transport patients, and buses from three area school districts were pressed into action to transport the wounded. Though the on-site aircraft was destroyed, St. John's MedFlight provided air medical service throughout the night with its Nevada, Missouri-based helicopter. Ultimately, inpatients were transported to more than 50 facilities in four states.

To restore medical services as quickly as possible, Mercy set up a command post and utilized resources from within its hospital system, as well as local, state and federal governments and others. To keep its 2,200 Joplin employees on the payroll, Mercy arranged to talent-share them with other health systems throughout the region.

- ◆ A Missouri Disaster Medical Assistance Team was pressed into service to assist in treating patients. The team treated 157 patients from two locations.
- ◆ Within a week, a mobile medical unit—a 60-bed field hospital—was erected on a hospital parking lot east of the main hospital, enabling doctors to restore much of the hospital's surgical capabilities. The unit had an emergency room, operating room, intensive care, chemotherapy suite and full imaging capabilities. Medical professionals treated an average of 130 patients daily for the first two weeks. The unit, provided by the State of Missouri, leased by Mercy and funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operated until Oct. 7 when services moved to a second temporary location.



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Healthcare (cont)



- ◆ In August 2011, a temporary “Clinic Park” was opened for patients just east of the former Medical Office Building. The 33,000-square-foot specialty clinic consists of six modular structures and is home to 35 specialists who have been practicing out of Memorial Hall since the tornado. Some specialists will stay until permanent facilities are completed in January 2014, while others will move to renovated office space in late 2011 and early 2012. More than 20 physicians have integrated with Mercy Clinic since the storm. New specialties include hematology/oncology, hospitalists, pathology, psychiatry and urology.
- ◆ Also in August, Mercy announced plans to build a new 327-bed hospital in Joplin about three miles from its tornado-ravaged facility. The new hospital is part of a nearly \$950 million rebuilding plan to restore a large portion of the city’s damaged healthcare infrastructure. Funding will come from the hospital’s insurance proceeds, FEMA and other sources.
- ◆ In April 2012, a 120-bed interim hospital opened to its first patients. The facility, constructed of component units, is intended to be a fully serviceable and certified healthcare facility offering a similar level of services to the destroyed hospital. The new, 150,000-square-foot facility includes a full-scale emergency department, four high-tech surgical rooms, a heart and vascular department



- equipped and staffed to perform open heart procedures, a radiology wing , a dedicated labor and delivery department and six dedicated pediatric rooms. Anticipated use: Three to five years. Funding is coming from the hospital’s insurance proceeds and more than \$100 million from FEMA, among other sources.
- ◆ A permanent, state-of-the-art hospital is under construction at I-44 and Main Street, about three miles south of the old hospital. Expected completion is 2015.
 - ◆ Two of Joplin’s destroyed grade schools will be combined and built on 13 acres of the hospital property, which Mercy Hospital Joplin donated to Joplin Schools.

Freeman Health System

Freeman Health System was the only hospital left standing after St. John’s was directly hit by the tornado. Within minutes of the storm striking Joplin, Freeman’s emergency room was brimming with critically injured patients—children impaled by debris, head traumas, broken bones and severed limbs. Literally every inch of space—the trauma rooms, the lobby, the hallways, the sidewalks and parking lots outside—were packed with people in wheelchairs, on gurneys and on the floor.

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Healthcare (cont)



Ambulances from Joplin and surrounding communities brought hundreds of patients to Freeman West. The injured also arrived in the backs of strangers' pickups and SUVs. Some were carried in on car hoods and doors ripped from homes.

More than 500 wounded were treated at Freeman West in the first hours after the storm, many by staff who had climbed from the rubble of their own homes. In the first 12 hours, 22 life-saving surgeries were performed at Freeman Hospital West. As the days progressed, more than 1,700 victims of the tornado sought care from Freeman.

As a result of the storm, 10 major construction projects are now underway or have been completed, so Freeman can meet the growing healthcare needs of the community. Among these projects are the completion of two floors to add 58 beds; the addition of a step-down Intensive Care Unit; the expansion of Freeman Neosho Emergency Department; the establishment of Will's Place, a healing center for children named in memory of Will Norton, killed during the tornado on the way home from his high school graduation; and the construction of a new rehabilitation facility.



Other Medical Support:

- ◆ Many other medical professionals – physicians, dentists, etc. – have temporarily relocated to other facilities in town or built new offices.

Contacts:

Mercy Hospital Joplin - Angie Saporito

Ph: 417-434-1220

Freeman Health System - Christen Stark

Ph: 417-434-3458

Brooke Haneborg

417-347-6621