

# Gundersen Health System, Marshfield Clinic Health System: To remain independent

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After several months of productive, collaborative discussions on how they might come together to collectively enhance the level of care across Wisconsin, northeast Iowa and southeastern Minnesota, Gundersen Health System and Marshfield Clinic Health System have mutually decided to remain independent.

The organizations will continue to individually focus on improving healthcare access in rural areas through telehealth services, the enhancement of Critical Access Hospitals and clinics in small communities, recruiting and retaining clinicians to practice in rural areas, and many other initiatives.

Gundersen and Marshfield will also continue to partner on current initiatives like the Wisconsin National Community Oncology Research Program to improve patient access to cancer clinical trials and the Wisconsin consortium of the National Institutes of Health's *All of Us* precision medicine research program led by the Marshfield Clinic Research Institute, and future opportunities as they arise.

"This was an opportunity we had to explore. Yet, we have to make the right decision for our patients and for our organizations," says Scott Rathgaber, MD, chief executive officer, Gundersen Health System. "We each still have a commitment to delivering the best care possible to those we serve. We will continue to improve the health of our communities, while working to reduce the cost of care and offering an outstanding experience for those in our care."

"We are thankful to Gundersen for coming together with us to have these discussions. Bringing two entities together of our size and scope is an incredibly

complex process, and first and foremost in that process is making sure it was the best path forward for our patients, staff and communities,” said Dr. Susan Turney, chief executive officer, Marshfield Clinic Health System. “While we mutually decided to remain independent, we will continue to execute our strategy of smart growth as we look for opportunities to ensure residents across rural Wisconsin have access to excellent health care close to home.”