

St. Joseph's acquisition complete

By JODY MURPHY
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PARKERSBURG — Signature Hospital Corp. completed its acquisition of St. Joseph's Hospital Tuesday.

With the sale, St. Joseph's becomes the fourth and largest facility in the Signature family.

"We are very enthused about becoming a part of the Parkersburg and Mid-Ohio Valley communities," said Charles R. Miller, president and chief executive officer of Signature. "We look forward to working closely with the physicians, staff, board of trustees and the community to build on St. Joseph's heritage as a trusted, compassionate provider of care."

Tuesday's announcement follows approval from the West Virginia Health Care Authority and culminates eight months of review. St. Joseph's, formerly a Lifepoint Hospital, was placed for sale by the company last March.

"This brings a tremendous sense of stability to our hospital and employees," said Patsy Hardy, chief executive officer at St. Joseph's. "We can now move forward knowing that we have a strong partner that supports our values and shares our vision for the future of St. Joseph's Hospital."

The hospital staff has spent the past several months completing behind-the-scenes work interfacing computer systems, according to St. Joseph's vice president Jill Parsons.

Parsons said the computer systems work marked the final stage of the acquisition.

According to the release, one of Signature's first operational decisions will be the installation a state-of-the-art digital imaging and picture archiving and communication system called PACS. The new system will improve image quality, making it easier for physicians to access past records and to examine new images from remote locations.

"We are excited they are already committed to this," Parsons said.

Parsons said the PACS system is vastly superior to traditional film-based imaging systems.

"Our focus is adding value to the delivery of health care. Assuring that our patients have access to affordable state-of-the-art technology is just one of the many ways to do that," Miller said. "Our 'value-added' mission is the standard that drives our strategy and guides our decision making. We believe that emphasis truly differentiates Signature from other health care providers."

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