



Pacific Medical Centers Inpatient Hospital Services Transition from Virginia Mason to Swedish First Hill in downtown Seattle

Timeframe: 2014 / 2015

Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions address common topics about the new relationship between Pacific Medical Centers and Swedish First Hill in downtown Seattle.

High-Level Background on Swedish Medical Center

Founded in 1910, Swedish is the largest nonprofit health provider in the greater Seattle area. Swedish is respected as a regional referral center, providing specialized treatment that includes cardiovascular care, cancer care, neuroscience, orthopedics, high-risk obstetrics, pediatric specialties, organ transplantation and clinical research.

The mission and vision of Swedish and PacMed are complimentary. By working together, we will improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve and make care more affordable.

Swedish Values:

- Patient-centered
- Respect, caring and compassion
- Teamwork and partnership
- Continuous learning and improvement
- Leadership

Pacific Medical Centers Values:

- Respect for our patients and fellow team members
- Integrity and fairness for all
- Service to our community
- Excellence and continuous learning
- Stewardship of our resources

Why is Pacific Medical Centers utilizing Swedish First Hill in downtown Seattle instead of Virginia Mason Medical Center for their inpatient hospital services?

Pacific Medical Centers has decided to move our inpatient hospital services from Virginia Mason Medical Center to Swedish First Hill in downtown Seattle. This decision was made so that we could more closely align our hospital services with partners in the community and groups affiliated with accountable care organizations (ACOs). This change will help us streamline our services and partnerships--and thereby, improve the way healthcare is organized, paid for and delivered to the greater community.

We remain focused on continuing to provide the very best care for our patients (commercially insured patients, active duty family members, and uniformed services retirees and their families).

Why did Pacific Medical Centers choose Swedish First Hill in downtown as a hospital partner?

As a physician-based, multi-specialty medical group, we approach the practice of medicine in a similar way. Swedish has a history of providing superior healthcare in our community, and we are proud to be affiliated with such an outstanding organization.



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Will my primary doctor remain the same?

Yes, your relationship with your primary care provider at Pacific Medical Centers will remain the same, and you will continue to have access to our nine clinics. You will continue to receive the same high-quality care from your Pacific Medical Centers provider and staff.

Will there be any changes to my benefits?

- There will be no changes to your benefits or the cost structure of your plan: *this applies to US Family Health Plan patients only.*
- For fee-for-service (FFS) patients, your benefits will continue to be subject to your individual insurance plan.

Can I continue to see the same medical specialists?

- The Pacific Medical Centers specialists you see now will not change.
- If you are now seeing a specialist who is not a Pacific Medical Centers provider, we will review the continuity of your care. Any transition will be approved by your primary care provider at a time that is clinically appropriate.
- In the future—as in the past—if you need to see a specialist, you and your primary care provider will make the decision together.

Will I still be able to see my specialist at 1101 Madison Street?

Yes. Our specialists will maintain clinic hours at our First Hill clinic, as well as our other primary care clinic sites.

If I need to go to the hospital, how do I decide which one to go to?

If you need to be hospitalized, the decision as to which hospital you will go to will continue to be made by you and your provider. And as before, your Pacific Medical Centers provider will oversee your hospital care.

What do I need to do? What happens to my medical records?

- Pacific Medical Centers will assure the transition is as seamless as possible. PacMed will share your medical records with Swedish First Hill in downtown Seattle, as needed. You won't need to coordinate this change.
- If you are referred to Swedish First Hill in downtown Seattle for care, PacMed will give you an information packet with details about the care you will get at Swedish, phone numbers, forms and a map of Swedish facilities.
- There will be no new paperwork. You will complete the same paperwork prior to being hospitalized or receiving specialized treatments that you would fill out today.

Will Pacific Medical Centers continue to offer medical care to military retirees in the Puget Sound area?

- Yes, we have signed a 10-year contract to continue to provide care to US Family Health Plan members in the Puget Sound area.
- Today, we provide health-care services to some 14,769 military retirees and their families and the dependents of active duty personnel.
- In the future, we expect to continue to add locations and services that are attractive to new and existing patients.



Washington State has a “Death with Dignity” act. Will my rights under this act be affected with this change?

This change will not affect how PacMed responds to the Death with Dignity Act. PacMed currently does not fill prescriptions for lethal medications. This will not change. PacMed doctors can consult with a patient who considers assisted suicide. Our doctors will not be the attending physician or prescribe lethal medications. PacMed physicians will have no restrictions on what they can talk to you about. This includes all options available under this act. PacMed believes this approach respects the physician-patient relationship while providing careful oversight.

Will this change impact how PacMed handles reproductive health services for women?

There will be no changes. Patients will have the same access to care as they do today. PacMed will continue to prescribe contraceptives.

Also, doctors will perform sterilizations and other procedures as they do today. PacMed currently does not provide elective pregnancy terminations. PacMed doctors will continue to refer patients seeking abortions to outside providers.

I have an appointment at Virginia Mason that was scheduled before this change. Can I still go to it?

Yes. All appointments already scheduled at Virginia Mason will be held as planned. It is important to us that you don't experience any disruption in your care.

If I have a medical emergency, where do I go?

Our new partner for hospital care is Swedish Medical Center on First Hill in downtown Seattle. However, you have a choice of where to go. Your benefit coverage is unchanged.

- If you need emergency care services, you should go to Swedish—or to the nearest emergency room. At Swedish, you will be cared for by a team of community physicians. These doctors may be with PacMed, Swedish, Minor & James, or other groups. Your electronic medical record will be automatically updated.
- You may still use Virginia Mason's emergency room. Your care will be provided by Virginia Mason providers.