



Salina Regional
Health Foundation

2025 Regional Impact Report

Celebrating 30 Years

1995 – 2025



Our System



Salina Regional
Health Center



Salina Regional
Health Foundation

We are affiliated with a wide variety of clinics, charitable organizations and three critical access hospitals in Concordia, Lindsborg and Abilene. Each hospital has its own board, but all employees are employed by SRHC.



North Central Kansas
Medical Center
Salina Regional Health Center



Lindsborg
Community Hospital
Salina Regional Health Center



MEMORIAL HEALTH SYSTEM
Memorial Hospital
ABILENE Salina Regional Health Center

North Central Kansas Medical Center

Family Care Center
Cloud County Foundation for Health Care

Lindsborg Community Hospital

Lindsborg Family Health Care Clinic
Lindsborg Urgent Care Clinic
Lindsborg Community Health Care Foundation

Memorial Health System

Heartland Health Care Clinic
Home Health & Hospice of Dickinson County
Frontier Estates
Village Manor
Impact Sports & Fitness
Memorial Health Foundation
Memorial Hospital Wound Center
Pulmonary Rehabilitation
Rehabilitation & Sports Medicine
Senior Life Solutions

Salina Regional Health Center

COMCARE at Salina Regional Health Center
Heart Center at Salina Regional Health Center
Occupational Health Partners at Salina Regional Health Center
Salina Pediatric Care at Salina Regional Health Center
Salina Regional Endocrinology
Salina Regional ENT & Audiology
Salina Regional Gastroenterology
Salina Regional Home Medical Services
Salina Regional Neurosciences
Salina Regional Neurosurgery
Salina Regional Podiatry
Salina Regional Orthopedic Clinic
Salina Regional Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine
Salina Regional Sports Medicine

Salina Regional Surgical Associates
Salina Regional Urgent Care Clinic
Salina Women's Clinic at Salina Regional Health Center
Tammy Walker Cancer Center at Salina Regional Health Center
Vein Clinic at Salina Regional Health Center
Veridian Behavioral Health at Salina Regional Health Center
Salina Regional Outpatient Pharmacy
Rebecca A. Morrison House at Salina Regional Health Center
Salina Regional Mobile Imaging Service
Salina Regional Affiliate Network
Sunflower Health Network
Crossroads Health Resources

A Strong Heritage

2025 marks an important milestone in our history – the 30-year anniversary of uniting Salina's two hospitals to form what is now Salina Regional Health Center. That decision, made with courage and foresight, was about more than combining facilities. It was about building a sustainable future for health care in our community and ensuring that generations to come would have access to exceptional care.

Thirty years later, that vision has not only endured – it has grown! What began as a commitment to Salina has expanded into a mission that reaches across north central and western Kansas. Today, Salina Regional stands as a regional health system dedicated to advancing medicine, expanding access and strengthening the vitality of the communities we serve.

This year's Regional Impact Report reflects on that journey. It highlights the ways our health system has grown, innovated and partnered to meet the needs of our region – always with the goal of saving lives and providing care close to home.

Our belief is simple but unwavering: north central Kansas and western Kansas matter. The people who live here deserve the very best care, delivered with excellence, compassion and vision for the future. That belief guides every decision we make, every service we expand and every life we touch.

As we honor 30 years of progress, we also look ahead – with confidence in our mission, gratitude for the trust we've been given and determination to shape the future of health care for our region.



Joel Phelps
President/CEO

New and noteworthy...

Record Race

Fe for a Cure raises \$79,183 with 1,214 participants – both records – to support patients at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center.

KHA Honors

SRHC Board member Phil Gilliland named Trustee of the Year. Retired MHS administrator Harold Courtois named Charles S. Billings Leader of the Year. Joel Phelps named to KHA Board of Directors.



Accreditations

- The American College of Cardiology recognized Salina Regional Health Center with Heart Failure Reaccreditation.
- Tammy Walker Cancer Center earned APEX Accreditation from the American Society for Radiation Oncology.
- Salina Regional Health Center was recertified as a Primary Stroke Center by the ACHC.

Gastroenterology



Salina Regional expanded its gastroenterology services adding Drs. Paul Johnson, Jessica Brown, Luke Johnson and PA Kaylee Wiens to lead the team.

Awards

- SRHC received the 2025 Gold Plus and Gold Rural Stroke awards from the American Heart Association.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas recognized SRHC with a Blue Distinction® Center+ designation for Spine Surgery and Blue Distinction® Center designation for Knee and Hip Replacement.

New affiliate leadership



Mark Rooker and Kimberly Haverly were named hospital administrators at Lindsborg Community Hospital and Memorial Health System.



Giving Back

The Salina Regional Health Foundation was established 30 years ago when St. John's Regional Health Center and Asbury – Salina Regional Medical Center came together with a shared vision – to improve the health and well-being of our region. Since its inception, the Foundation has remained steadfast in its mission: to expand, manage and distribute assets that improve the health of our regional community.

While we often highlight the reinvestment of Foundation dollars through grants to area nonprofits and community initiatives across north central Kansas, we also want to recognize another important part of our impact – our investment in properties that serve our communities. These property investments have created homes for local nonprofit organizations, important health services and institutions for higher education and workforce development. Among our notable property investments are:

Rebecca A. Morrison House – Providing a home-away-from-home for families of patients receiving care at Salina Regional Health Center.

W.H. and Helen M. Graves Blood Platelet Center – Supporting lifesaving treatments through the collection of vital blood components.

Donna L. Vanier Children's Center – Housing essential programs such as Salina Regional's Infant-Child Development Program, CAPS and the Salina Child Care Association.

Salina Health Education Center – Home to the University of Kansas Schools of Nursing and Medicine-Salina, training the next generation of health care professionals.

Center Street Park – Featuring Olivia's Playground, an inclusive space where children and families can play, connect and thrive.

The Salina Regional Health Foundation is proud to continue investing in spaces and partnerships that make our region healthier, stronger and more connected.



Marla McElderry
Executive Director
Salina Regional Health Foundation

Community Health Investment Program awards \$1.364 M

The Salina Regional Health Foundation’s Community Health Investment Program (CHIP) provides grants to organizations that, like the hospital, are working to improve the health of people in north central Kansas. The Foundation established the program in 1995 and Salina Regional Health Center continues to provide the primary funding. Since the program’s inception, more than \$18.15 million in grants have been awarded to area community organizations.

In 2025 CHIP awarded 17 grants totaling \$1,364,192. Funding priorities for CHIP primarily focus on children’s health, childhood obesity, mental health, substance abuse, aging populations, heart disease and stroke.



Salina Family Healthcare Center plans new, expanded facility with CHIP support

Salina Family Healthcare Center announced plans in 2025 for a new, state-of-the-art facility that will expand access to care for underserved populations in the Salina area and strengthen health services across rural Kansas. The \$55 million project received a \$1 million leadership grant through CHIP for the Healthy Salina, Healthy Kansas \$10 million local capital campaign.



An artist’s rendering of the new Salina Family Healthcare Center facility that will be constructed at 1001 Edison Place in Salina.

“The Foundation’s support through CHIP has been critical to the success of the capital campaign,” said Robert Kraft, MD, CEO of the Salina Family Healthcare Center. “It made a strong statement to the entire community that Salina Regional Health Center and Salina Family Healthcare Center stand together to tackle the region’s toughest health care challenges.”

As a Federally Qualified Health Center, SFHC’s new facility will dramatically increase its capacity to deliver integrated services, including medical, dental, behavioral health, vision care and pharmacy to area residents.

Once completed, the program will be able to serve thousands more patients annually and enhance the region’s health infrastructure for generations to come.

The Salina Family Healthcare Center also is home to the Smoky Hill Family Medicine Residency Program, which is dedicated to training physicians for rural practice across Kansas. Since its inception in 1979, it has trained 175 family physicians – over 90% of whom have gone on to practice in Kansas. The vast majority of those graduates also practice in rural communities across the state.

“Salina Regional stands as the single-most important educational partner in the success of Smoky Hill,” Dr. Kraft said. “The Salina Regional – Smoky Hill collaboration in training health care professionals stands out as an example for a nation looking for solutions to dire rural health professional shortages.”

Smoky Hill residents receive a significant amount of their clinical training experience at Salina Regional.



Smoky Hill Family Medicine residents practice obstetric laceration repairs on beef tongues as part of a training led by Mariah Crumbaker, MD, a faculty member at Smoky Hill.

Blessed Hope Family expands services to caretakers of foster, adoptive families

When Blessed Hope Family officially formed its own non-profit in 2021, the organizers already had about a decade of experience serving caretakers of foster and adoptive families throughout the region. A \$50,000 CHIP grant in 2025 is helping the organization to expand its offering of scholarships for programming.



“All of our time and talent is focused toward caregivers,”

Staff members Rindi Guildner, Leah Graves and Meadow Piepho at Blessed Hope Family.

said Leah Graves, executive director of Blessed Hope Family, one of the organization’s founders. “Any parent or caregiver knows that if you are not personally in a connected and resourced place, then you’re going to struggle to be an advocate for the needs of a hurting child and function as a family.”

Many foster or adoptive families who are caring for a child who has been through a lot of trauma, or grand-parents who are raising grandkids, find they need a lot of support and resources to keep families functioning. Blessed Hope Family provides a myriad of free resources including:

- Monthly support groups and personal coaching that cover topics like dealing with trauma, marriage and caregiver crisis, sibling impacts and more.
- Access to unique mental health and counseling services customized for foster/adoptive families from a licensed mental health counselor on staff.
- Trading Post access to free, tangible items like clothes and supplies for children to ensure successful placement into a home.
- Educational resource library.
- Childcare to enable caregivers to fully participate in programming.

Clients of Blessed Hope Family come from across north central Kansas and beyond. In 2024 the organization served 770 unique individuals and had experienced a 48% increase in program attendance and a 60% increase in need for childcare services from the previous year.

Graves says a lot of the program’s growth is attributed to word of mouth and the organization’s connections with the many nuanced systems set up within the state for foster and adoptive care.

Community Health Investment Program 2025 Grant Recipients

Salina Family Healthcare Center (Building campaign)	\$1,000,000
CKF Addiction Treatment (The Nest at Pathfinder)	\$60,000
Blessed Hope Family (Services expansion)	\$50,000
School Marathon Foundation (School Marathon Prog.)	\$45,000
Salina Area United Way (Childcare initiative)	\$37,500
CAPS (Educational program funding)	\$28,346
Resilience Clubhouse (Kitchen equipment match)	\$26,000
Good Neighbor Fund (Community grant requests)	\$21,200
Scouting America (ScoutReach after school program).....	\$16,530
Sober Living University (Tuition scholarships)	\$15,100
Big Brothers Big Sisters (Mentor program)	\$10,000
North Central Kansas-Flint Hills Area Agency on	
Aging (Sunflower Senior Fair)	\$10,000
American Red Cross (Community Blood Drives)	\$10,000
Salina Education Foundation (Nurse emergency funds,	
Heartland Weekend Meals & other initiatives)	\$8,500
Salina Family YMCA (Recumbent cross trainer)	\$7,216
Salina Public Library (Nursing moms room furnishings)	\$5,000
Rolling Hills Zoo (Dream Night)	\$5,000

Total Grants - \$1,364,192

Foundation awards \$1,308,047 to SRHC programs, local scholarships

In addition to the Community Health Investment Program, the Foundation Board of Trustees offers funding to Salina Regional Health Center programs and community initiatives that impact patient care. An additional \$1,308,047 in grants supporting 14 different initiatives were awarded by the Foundation Board in 2025. The Foundation Board has awarded \$64.246 million outside of CHIP since inception in 1995.



Scholarship support plays a critical role in helping fulfill future staffing needs that are vital to Salina Regional’s future. Funding also is utilized to improve patient care by implementing technology or services that will improve patient experience, but is not revenue-positive for the hospital. Foundation Board grants also may be utilized to support external agencies leveraging matching funding for services that will provide a long-term benefit to hospital patients and services.

New patient simulator used to enhance staff, student skills

A new high-fidelity patient simulator was added to the Simulation Lab at Salina Regional Health Center in 2025 thanks to a \$48,473 grant from the Foundation.

The new simulator is an adult female capable of creating a large number of patient care scenarios and possesses soft silicone female anatomy that presents the opportunity to perform clinical breast exams, cervical exams and even the ability to palpate ovaries to evaluate cancer risk. Other physical features allow the placement and utilization of feeding tubes, catheters and



Kaitlin Nelson, education coordinator in Salina Regional’s Organizational Development department, demonstrates how to check blood glucose using the new patient simulator purchased thanks to a Foundation grant.

performance of finger pricks to test for blood glucose. The manikin also talks and moves its eyes and performs many other lifelike functions.

The patient simulators are utilized for staff certifications like Advanced Cardiac Life Support offered in house, and also to practice many other skills by nurse assistants, nurses, respiratory therapists, physicians, residents and nursing students performing clinical rotations at the hospital. The newest addition brings Salina Regional's total to six high-fidelity patient simulators available in the Simulation Lab.

"The Foundation has helped us purchase all of these simulators over the last decade," said Sarah Rasco, education coordinator in Salina Regional's Organizational Development department. "Our complete offering really rivals what many nursing schools or large urban hospitals might have available."

All Salina Regional Health Center and affiliate hospital new graduate nurses also complete a one-year Nursing Residency Program after they are hired. The specialized training program heavily utilizes patient simulation so that nurses can gain confidence applying their knowledge and critical thinking skills to patient care scenarios using the hospital's standards for care. The program is tailored to help nurses develop their clinical judgment quickly and effectively.

"Nurses who cultivate strong clinical skills and confidence in their practice are well-positioned for long and successful careers," Rasco said. "Our goal is for new nurses to first encounter critical situations, such as a patient's vital signs dropping, in the simulation lab. This allows them to apply their knowledge, training and our established policies and procedures in realistic scenarios without risk to a patient's life."

2025 Foundation Board Grant Recipients

SRHC Physician Recruitment Program.....	\$298,079.68
SRHC Infant-Child Development Program.....	\$156,120.44
SRHC Nursing Scholarships.....	\$133,000.00
Tammy Walker Cancer Center.....	\$120,900.81
OCCK Transportation (Med-A-Van services)	\$110,000.00
Friends of Nursing Scholarships.....	\$107,000.00
Miscellaneous Restricted Grants.....	\$83,247.80
KU-Salina School of Medicine Scholarships.....	\$57,600.00
KWU Nursing Program	\$50,000.00
SRHC Program for Accessing Continuing Education.....	\$45,022.98
SRHC Organizational Development (Patient simulator).....	\$43,473.00
Patient Emergency Assistance Fund.....	\$26,261.25
Heartland Dermatology (KAT Program).....	\$25,000.00
Wichita Cancer Foundation (Patient insurance premiums)....	\$25,000.00
SRHC Women & Children's Services (Fetal monitoring equipment).....	\$18,000.00
SRHC Tech Position Scholarships.....	\$6,000.00
SRHC Outpatient Physical Therapy (Transport chair).....	\$3,341.04
Total Grants - \$1,308,047	

OCCK Med-A-Van receives \$110,000 Foundation grant

The Salina Regional Health Foundation has been a longtime partner with OCCK Transportation's Med-A-Van non-emergency health care transportation service and supported the program with a \$110,000 grant in 2025.

The grant covers 30% community matching funds needed to leverage 70% matching federal dollars for the service. All rides to or from a Salina Regional Health Center affiliated facility are given free of charge to patients. Rides to non-SRHC medical facilities are just \$2 per trip or \$4 per round trip.

In 2020, 3,696 round trips were provided by the service. In 2024 ridership grew to 8,944 round trips - more than doubling over the four year period.

"We used to say OCCK Transportation was the best kept secret," said Trell Grinter, OCCK Transportation director. "It's not a secret anymore! Since COVID our ridership has increased exponentially, and our staff has also grown to meet the need.

"More and more people throughout the area have learned that you don't have to miss medical appointments because you don't have a ride," Grinter said. "Many of the people we serve are older adults and individuals with disabilities who have no other means for transportation. That makes this service an essential bridge to better health outcomes."

After Salina Regional Health Center, the top three most frequent destinations for the service are the Salina Medical Arts Building, Tammy Walker Cancer Center and North Central Kansas Medical Center in Concordia.

"Our partnership with the Salina Regional Health Foundation for Med-A-Van has been beautiful for close to 30 years now," Grinter said. "We have a shared mission for improving community health."



An OCCK Transportation van travels down Santa Fe Avenue after dropping a patient off at their medical appointment. The service is offered free-of-charge thanks to a longtime Foundation partnership.

Scholarships help recruit the next generation of nurses

The Salina Regional Health Foundation offers substantial support to nursing students accepted into, or currently enrolled in, a nursing program through \$10,000 annual scholarships. Each scholarship requires a one-year service commitment to Salina Regional Health Center, or an affiliated hospital or clinic, ensuring that skilled nurses contribute to local health care. Scholarship funds are sent directly to the nursing programs, designated for educational expenses. In 2025, the Foundation awarded a total of \$240,000 in nursing scholarships reinforcing its dedication to developing a strong nursing workforce in the community.

“The SRHC nursing scholarship impacted me significantly during nursing school because it provided the financial support that I needed to be successful throughout nursing school. Due to the scholarship, I was not financially stressed during school, so I had more time to focus on studying than working. The scholarship also provided me with a job as soon as I passed the NCLEX, which was very helpful in starting my nursing career as a new graduate nurse.”

- Araceli Davila, 3 Southeast Nurse



Araceli Davila works as a nurse on 3 Southeast at Salina Regional Health Center after receiving scholarship support through the Foundation.

Physician Stipend Program attracts future physicians

The Salina Regional Health Foundation’s physician recruitment initiative supports eligible medical residents and fellows in their final two years of an approved residency or fellowship program. Candidates must fulfill a specialty need identified in the latest physician needs assessment to qualify. Through monthly stipends, which vary in amount and are intended to assist with living expenses, the program aims to ease financial burdens and attract skilled providers to the region. In 2025 alone, the Salina Regional Health Foundation awarded \$298,079.68 in stipends to new providers, strengthening local health care services.



Randee Roe, MD, joined the Emergency Department at Salina Regional Health Center in 2025.



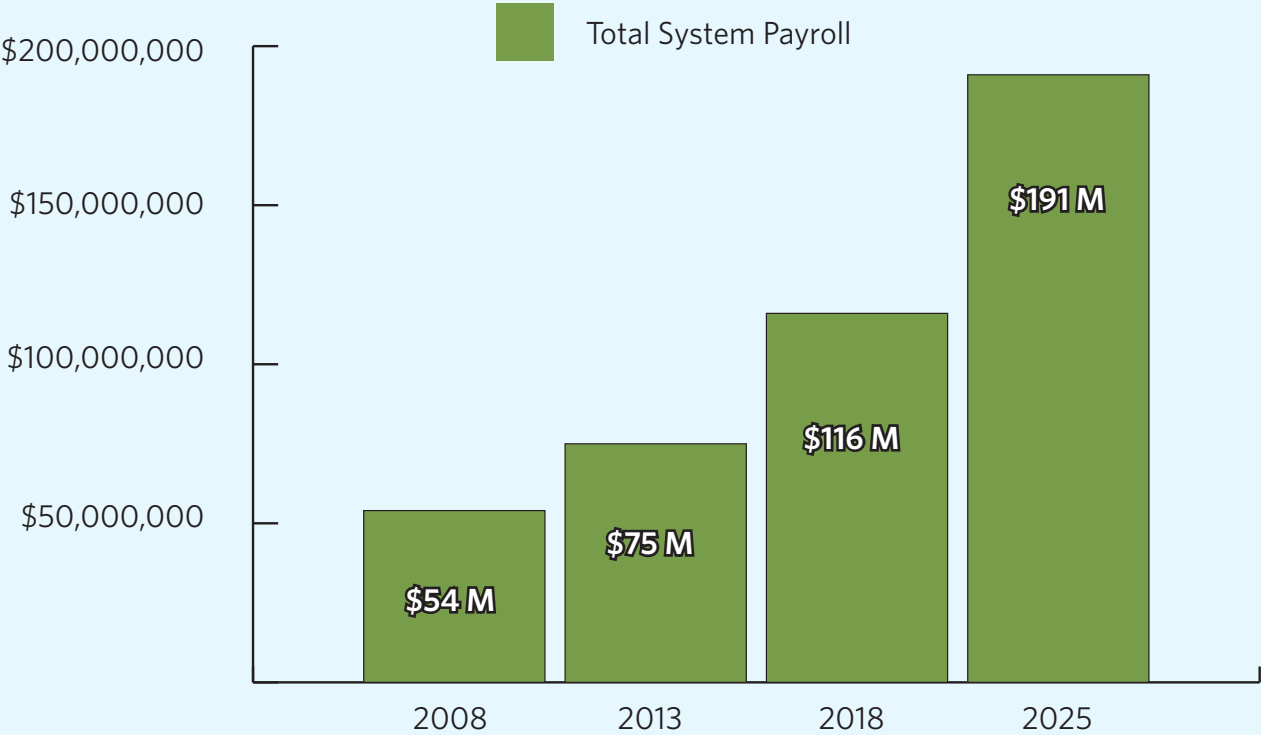
“Residency training was exceptionally difficult and time consuming. The long hours were often met with sleepless nights. At times it felt like it would never end. Financially, residency was also an extremely taxing time as well. Receiving the monthly stipend from the Salina Regional Health Foundation truly allowed me more freedom to study and focus my time on learning rather than stressing about finances. The generosity of the Foundation gave me the opportunity to truly immerse myself in my training and helped ease the financial burden of medical education. I am extremely grateful for the generosity and how it truly affected my final years in residency.”

- Dr. Alex Yoxall, Emergency Physician

Celebrating 30 Years



Economic Impact



Direct Wage Impact

As one of the area’s largest employers, SRHC’s system-wide payroll of \$191 million is invested directly into the communities where our employees live. These wages are recirculated through home and vehicle purchases, groceries, dining and other everyday services — generating measurable sales tax revenues for local counties and cities.



Employed Providers

According to a 2018 American Medical Association study, each physician generates an average of \$3.2 million in economic impact. The SRHC system employs 93 physicians and 91 advanced practice providers, multiplying that impact across north central Kansas.

Visitors

SRHC and its affiliate hospitals draw patients from across Kansas and beyond. Many who travel for medical care also spend on lodging, dining and shopping – further strengthening the local economy.

Economic Growth

The advanced specialty services and procedures available through SRHC help make north central Kansas an attractive location for businesses. Just as access to natural gas and water are essential infrastructure, access to high-quality health care is a critical factor in site selection for employers. SRHC’s designation as a Level III Trauma Center also ensures that area employees and their families have timely access to life-saving care in the event of major medical incidents such as auto accidents or serious falls.

County Impacts

	Hospital Sector Jobs	Additional non health care jobs through multiplier	Total Employee Income for direct and indirect jobs	Estimated total local retail spend by those employees	Estimated total annual local sales tax generated
Saline County	1981.4	1254	\$228.6 M	\$109.9 M	\$3.1 M
McPherson County	546.7	250.8	\$45.5 M	\$16.4 M	\$392,200
Cloud County	142.1	75.2	\$16.5 M	\$6.8 M	\$132,900
Dickinson County	431.5	152.8	\$36.3 M	\$11.4 M	\$247,500

**Data provided by the May 2025 Importance of Health Care Sector to the Saline, McPherson, Cloud, Dickinson County Economy report, prepared by the Institute for Policy and Social Research, University of Kansas. Numbers include all hospitals in Saline and McPherson counties, not just SRHC and its affiliates. Follow the QR code for the full reports.*



2025 Quick Stats:

2,602
Employees

545,350
Patient Encounters

93
Physicians

13,878
Total Virtual Care Visits
(Not including inpatient behavioral health)

91
Advanced Practice Providers

6,828
Total Discharges

637
Nurses

5,567
Surgeries

1,161
Babies Delivered

30,752
ER Visits

\$7,000,000
Charity Care Salina

Access to Specialty Care for Rural Living



Abilene

Podiatry
Dr. Rebecca Johnson
Oncology
Dr. Jeffrey Geitz
Dr. Peeran Sandhu
Endocrinology
Dr. Richard Gomendoza
Orthopedic Surgery
Dr. Todd Reilly
OB/GYN
Dr. Emily Budden
Cardiology
Dr. David Battin
General Surgery
Dr. Justin Klaassen
Dr. Jesse Gray
Dr. Leah Speaks
ENT & Audiology
Melissa Crawford, PA
Kaitlin Lafreniere, AuD
Tonya German, AuD

Belleville

ENT & Audiology
Dr. Mark Bell
Kaitlin Lafreniere, AuD
Tonya German, AuD

Beloit

ENT & Audiology
Dr. Mark Bell
Kaitlin Lafreniere, AuD
Tonya German, AuD
Neurosurgery
Dr. Scott Boswell

Concordia

Endocrinology
Kaleigh Knox, APRN
Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine
Dr. Kent Berquist
Neurology
Dr. Trent Davis
Pediatric Neurology
Dr. Britton Zuccarelli
Podiatry
Dr. Rebecca Johnson
General Surgery
Dr. Justin Klaassen
Dr. Leah Speaks
Orthopedic Surgery
Dr. Travis Rump
OB/GYN
Shanda Schroeder, APRN
Cardiology
Dr. David Battin
ENT & Audiology
Melissa Crawford, PA
Kaitlin Lafreniere, AuD
Tonya German, AuD

Clay Center

Hematology Oncology
Dr. Peeran Sandhu
Podiatry
Dr. Rebecca Johnson
Endocrinology
Dr. Richard Gomendoza

Clyde

Family Medicine
Dr. Dorothy Breault
Dr. Justin Poore

Ellsworth

Gastroenterology
Dr. Paul Johnson
Cardiology
Julia Jennings, APRN

Great Bend

Neurosurgery
Dr. Scott Boswell

Hesston

Pediatric Neurology
Dr. Britton Zuccarelli

Hillsboro

Podiatry
Dr. Lucas Cosens

Hoisington

Neurosurgery
Dr. Scott Boswell
Sports Medicine / Non-Operative Orthopedics
Dr. Kevin Klug

Jamestown

Family Medicine
Dr. Justin Poore

Lindsborg

General Surgery
Dr. Jesse Gray
Podiatry
Dr. Lucas Cosens
Cardiology
Dr. Karil Bellah
Julia Jennings, APRN
Mikaela Anderes, APRN
Sports Medicine / Non-Operative Orthopedics
Dr. Kevin Klug

Lyons

Podiatry
Dr. Lucas Cosens

Manhattan

Pediatric Neurology
Dr. Britton Zuccarelli

McPherson

Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine
Dr. Kent Berquist
Neurology
Courtney Huggans, PA
Amanda Doubrava, APRN
Orthopedic Surgery
Dr. Todd Reilly
Cardiology
Dr. Karil Bellah
Kaleigh Ramey, PA

Plainville

Gastroenterology
Dr. Jessica Brown

Russell

Pediatric Neurology
Dr. Britton Zuccarelli
Endocrinology
Leslie Mack, APRN
ENT/Audiology
Dr. Mark Bell
Kaitlin Lafreniere, AuD
Tonya German, AuD

Smith Center

Orthopedic Surgery
Dr. Travis Rump

Improving Access to Care



Jorge Cedano, MD, pulmonologist at Salina Regional Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine, implemented use of the Ion Robotic-Assisted Bronchoscopy System in 2024. The technology is groundbreaking for early diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer.

Ion Bronchoscopy brings advanced lung screening to region

In August 2024, Salina Regional Health Center launched its Ion Robotic-Assisted Bronchoscopy Program – bringing the most advanced lung cancer diagnostic technology available today to patients across central and western Kansas. The program is led by pulmonologist Jorge Cedano, MD, who has quickly established SRHC as a regional leader in

early lung cancer detection.

The Ion system represents a new era in minimally invasive lung procedures. Using robotic precision and advanced navigation, it allows physicians to reach deep into the lung's airways to biopsy nodules that were previously difficult or impossible to access.

The procedure is typically performed on patients who have had a lung cancer screening that revealed a suspicious nodule, or those whose incidental findings – something noticed on a scan performed for another reason – require further evaluation.

Since performing the first Ion bronchoscopy in August 2024, Dr. Cedano has completed 155 procedures, resulting in 77 confirmed cancer diagnoses. That means nearly half of the patients undergoing

the procedure at SRHC have received critical, early answers that allow treatment to begin sooner. Just as remarkable as the volume of procedures is the accuracy rate. SRHC's diagnostic success rate using the Ion system is 94.4%, compared to the national average of 88% among facilities using similar technology.

That accuracy means fewer repeat procedures, faster results and most importantly – more lives saved.



Special procedures staff members and Dr. Jorge Cedano celebrated completion of the 100th Ion Robotic-Assisted Bronchoscopy in June 2025.

“Early detection is everything when it comes to lung cancer,” Dr. Cedano said. “If the disease is found in Stage I or Stage II, treatment options are far more effective and outcomes are significantly better. The Ion platform gives us the ability to find and diagnose cancer at those early, treatable stages.”

Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death in the United States, often because symptoms do not appear until the disease has advanced. By combining routine low-dose CT screening with the precision of the Ion bronchoscopy, SRHC is closing that gap, offering patients an earlier, faster path to diagnosis and treatment.

The program's reach extends well beyond Salina. Patients from across central and western Kansas are referred to SRHC for this advanced procedure – eliminating the need to travel to larger metropolitan centers for specialized lung diagnostics.

“This technology is truly life-saving,” Dr. Cedano said. “It's rewarding to know that people in our region now have access to the same level of care you would find in the country's top academic medical centers – right here at home.”

As the Ion Robotic-Assisted Bronchoscopy Program continues to grow, SRHC remains committed to expanding access to early detection and treatment for lung disease. With world-class technology and a clear mission to improve outcomes, SRHC is helping patients breathe easier, one diagnosis at a time.

“Early detection is everything when it comes to lung cancer. If the disease is found in Stage I or Stage II, treatment options are far more effective and outcomes are significantly better. The Ion platform gives us the ability to find and diagnose cancer at those early, treatable stages.”

– Dr. Jorge Cedano, Pulmonologist

Regional Partnership

Affiliation with Salina Regional strengthens LCH for future

When Lindsborg Community Hospital (LCH) affiliated with Salina Regional Health Center in 2013, it wasn't a decision made lightly. It was a thoughtful step toward ensuring that quality health care would continue to thrive in Lindsborg and surrounding communities for generations to come. For Board Chairman Chuck Oleen, who has served in leadership roles with the hospital since 1986, the decision to affiliate was rooted in one simple goal: keeping local health care strong and accessible.



Lindsborg Community Hospital affiliated with Salina Regional Health Center in 2013 to strengthen the organization and preserve access to health care services in the community for generations to come.

Lindsborg Community Hospital's story began in the early 1950s, when the original hospital was built next to its current location. By 1991, the hospital moved into a new facility to better meet the needs of the growing community. In 1993, the Lindsborg Rural Health Clinic was established to attract more physicians and expand outpatient services. In 2012, the clinic transitioned to become a department of the hospital – an early sign of the hospital's commitment to adapting and finding efficiencies that benefit patients and staff alike.

Around that time, the board began having frank conversations about the hospital's long-term sustainability. "We were struggling and wondered how long we could keep going as a stand-alone hospital," Oleen recalled. Through the Sunflower Health Network, board members attended regional meetings to share challenges and ideas. At one such meeting, a health care consultant emphasized the importance of partnerships in preserv-

ing rural hospitals. "He said he wasn't focused on bigger hospitals – he was trying to save rural hospitals," Oleen remembered.

That comment resonated. Oleen approached Salina Regional leaders with a simple but decisive question: "At this point, what is Salina Regional ready to do? Because Lindsborg is ready to talk."

From that conversation, a series of collaborative meetings began. Both organizations carefully explored what an affiliation could look like. With input from legal and financial experts, they built a structure that satisfied both teams. When the Lindsborg Community Hospital Board of Trustees along with the Foundation Board voted unanimously to approve the affiliation, it marked the beginning of a new chapter.

The benefits quickly became clear. The affiliation improved physician recruitment, strengthened employee benefits, expanded education opportunities and connected the hospital to Salina Regional's IT systems and electronic medical records – a major step forward in patient care coordination. "Almost everything is easier because of the affiliation," Oleen said. "We can take better care of our employees, our patients and our community."

Concerns that a larger partner might "take over" the hospital quickly faded as residents saw the results. "Nobody in Lindsborg thinks about it now," Oleen said. "They understand how fortunate we were to have Salina Regional take us under their wing."

Today, the Lindsborg-Salina affiliation stands as a model for other rural partnerships. It was the first successful affiliation for Salina Regional – one that paved the way for two more to follow.

For Oleen, the motivation remains the same as when he first joined the board decades ago: "We're just trying to keep health care in this area. If you keep people closer to home, in a hometown hospital, the better off they'll be."



Jaime Elseth, physical therapy assistant at Lindsborg Community Hospital, offers outpatient treatment to a patient.



The Foundation's new annual golf tournament, Fairways Fore a Cause, supported SRHC's Infant-Child Development Program.



David Dupy, MD, sees a patient at Salina Regional's Urgent Care Clinic.



2025 Fe for a Cure Race/Walk