

# Culbertson CONNECTION

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CULBERTSON AS THE CHOICE HOSPITAL

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# A Message from Our Executive Director

## New Offerings in the New Year

As I'm writing this letter, Christmas is a few weeks away and the New Year is right around the corner. We at Culbertson Memorial Hospital have much to be thankful for in the past year. We have added service lines, expanded the services offered in our surgical department, added to the depth of our management team, undertook a strategic analysis of the hospital, introduced new educational programs to foster healthy lifestyles, and continued to foster relationships with the regional partners that help us bring specialty care to the communities we serve. But with all we have to be thankful for in the previous year, the changes coming in the new year are truly game changers for our organization.

The first of these changes will occur very shortly after the new year begins. Dr. Eric High from Springfield Clinic will provide surgical services at Culbertson in January. In addition to providing additional access for our patients, Dr. High brings a local tie to our community. His wife, Amy, is originally from Rushville and they maintain many strong relationships with the residents from her hometown. We are excited to have a provider with entrenched interest in our community.

The next big change for our organization and patients is the opening of a Convenient Care Walk-in Clinic. This clinic has been a great need in our service area and allows us to expand access to care for our patients. Located at the Elmer Hugh Taylor Clinic in Beardstown, the Convenient Care Clinic will offer early morning through evening hours to patients needing walk-in or same-day service.

As we press on to the summer months, we look forward to the opening of our new Therapy Services Center. Earlier this year we were approached by the Peterman family about purchasing the site of their appliance sales and repair business.

Thanks to the CMH Foundation — who purchased the property and is spearheading this project — renovations have already begun on the property. We hope to be up and running in the summer/fall timeframe.

The last big change I'm excited to share will be the first phase of a holistic hospital renovation that will take three to four years to complete. Acting on the goals generated from the strategic planning process we undertook earlier this year, the board unanimously voted to approve the renovation of the hospital. To be led by O'Shea Builders from Springfield, the four-phase plan will be kicked off by the renovation of our inpatient rooms. This renovation will fully update our patient rooms by transitioning them into single occupancy and adding in-room showers to every room.

The approval of such a large-scale renovation plan represents a commitment by our organization and board of directors to provide the highest level of care to the communities we serve. We are taking every step possible to ensure a modern, service-rich, high-quality, and financially healthy healthcare system that is here to serve this area for many years into the future. Thank you for being part of the Culbertson Family! 🍷

## Gregg Snyder

Executive Director, Culbertson Memorial Hospital



**Gregg Snyder**  
Executive Director



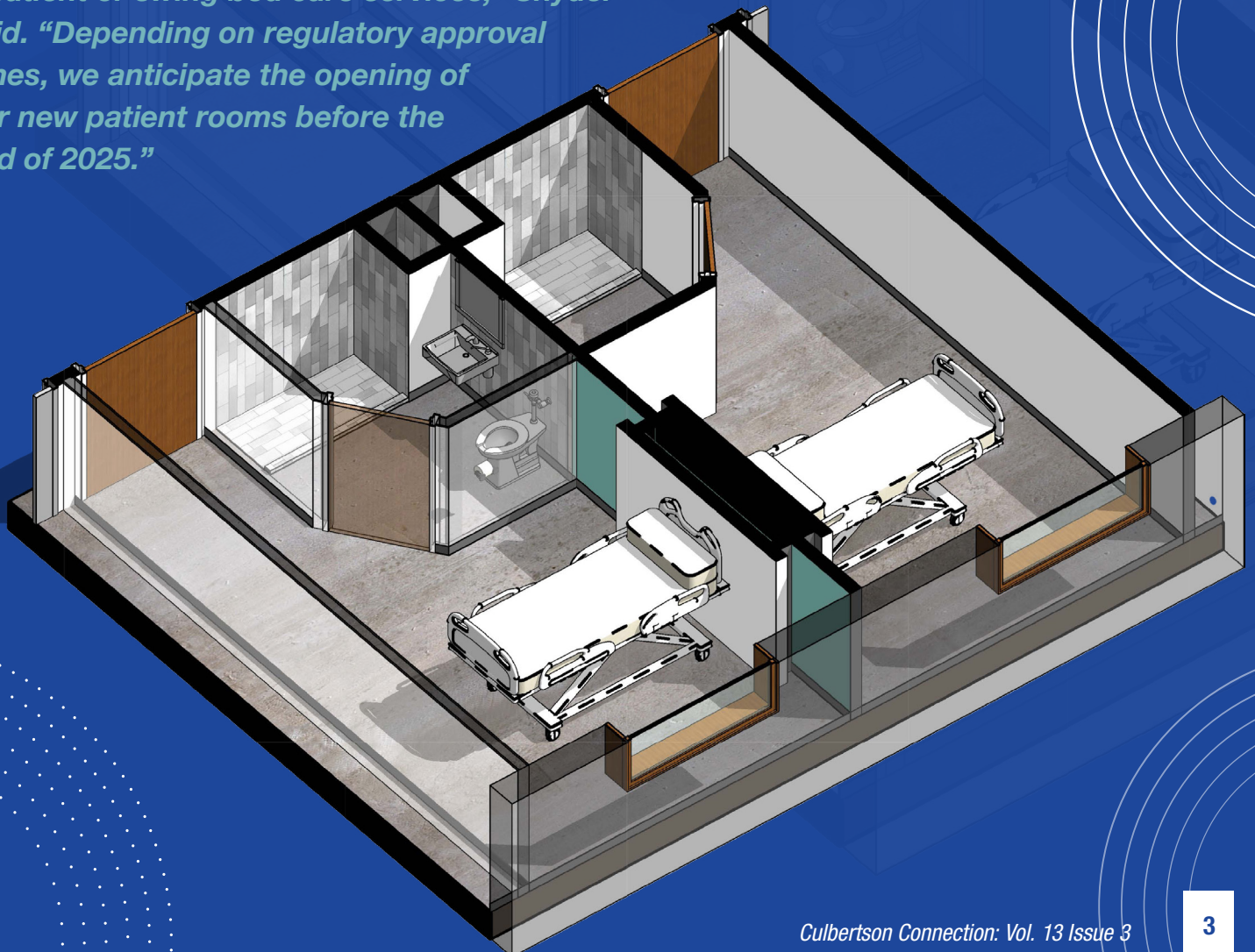
# Renovating for Comfort

## Culbertson Set to Overhaul Inpatient Rooms

**P**atients at Culbertson Memorial Hospital will soon receive a higher level of comfort. The Culbertson Board of Directors recently approved a renovation of the hospital's inpatient rooms. Based on plans created earlier this year with Stroudwater Associates — a consulting firm specializing in data-driven solutions for rural healthcare facilities — the hospital will begin its first phase of the revamped Master Facility Plan, which Culbertson Executive Director Gregg Snyder said will take place in four phases with a timeline of about three to four years.

Led by Springfield-based O'Shea Builders, the project will transition patient rooms into single-occupancy rooms, creating a more private environment for patients. The renovation will also include private shower facilities in each room, providing a more comfortable environment for patients as well as family members staying with them.

*"This will be a huge upgrade for anyone needing inpatient or swing bed care services," Snyder said. "Depending on regulatory approval times, we anticipate the opening of our new patient rooms before the end of 2025."*



# Ensuring a Safe Return Home Swing Bed Program Instills Confidence & Strength

**W**anting to return home quickly after an inpatient stay is understandable, but what if you're not well enough to live independently quite yet? For many patients, more medical care and rehabilitative services may be required before they can return home safely. In such cases, the Culbertson Memorial Hospital Swing Bed Program can help bridge the gap between acute care and discharge. Our Swing Bed Program is a transitional program for patients who no longer require hospitalization and who would benefit from additional, short-term skilled services before returning to independent living.

The Swing Bed Program provides personalized, skilled nursing care and rehabilitative therapies to ensure the patient regains the strength and confidence needed to live on their own again. To be eligible, patients must meet criteria as established by Medicare and/or an individual's insurance company. Per Medicare guidelines, a patient must be hospitalized as an acute care inpatient for a minimum of three consecutive midnights (excluding any observation days) within a 30-day period. Additionally, a patient must also be medically stable for 24 hours prior to transferring to the Swing Bed Program, be alert enough to follow directions, and be willing to participate and make progress toward therapy goals in the rehabilitation program.

## Who could benefit from this program?

- Patients who need rehabilitation or therapy following a stroke, or after surgery
- Patients receiving IV therapy or wound care
- Patients needing to regain strength and mobility after an illness, injury, or surgery

**The Culbertson Swing Bed Program can have a profound impact on patients' lives. But don't just take our word for it — check out this testimonial from two local residents on how the Swing Bed Program affected their family!**



“Our mother, Judith Houser, had a very rough start to 2024. She had a second knee replacement on Dec. 26, 2023, because her knee was full of a raging infection. Her surgery was successful, but her kidneys took a hit from the surgery. She returned home after two weeks of hospitalization, but her kidney function became unstable again and she became septic, so she ended up in the hospital in Springfield once again. Upon this hospital stay, her providers determined she could benefit from a short-term rehabilitation service. Our mom had a few friends who experienced success and great care from the Culbertson Swing Bed Program in Rushville. Upon our first conversation with Patient Care Coordinator Melinda Murk, we felt comfortable immediately. She was kind, understanding, and very transparent concerning the insurance and Medicare process, length of stay, and coverage. She kept us updated every week and we spoke with her several times during our mom's stay. She had a family meeting once a week to discuss our mom's progress and goals. Melinda helped set up doctor's appointments and followed up with us or the doctor after every visit.



The nursing staff was amazing! They were kind and approachable, and we never hesitated to ask them questions. Our mom commented several times on how kind they were. More than one time, a nurse sat and held her hand and talked with her when she could not fall asleep. The staff was quick to get into the room if she ever needed them. Watching the nurses really put our minds at ease. We never worried about the care our mom received the entire time she was at Culbertson. They would order a meal for our dad so he could eat dinner with our mom every night. In our observation, they go above and beyond to make their patients AND family members feel comfortable.

The rehabilitation staff from Culbertson Therapy Services was phenomenal! Our mom received both physical and occupational therapy. Kathy and Jim were a constant daily support for our mom, helping her get back to where she needed to be to return home.

*“Our family also had the pleasure of working with Hospitalist Betsy Birdsley.”*

We credit Betsy for turning our mom’s health around with just the right combination of medicine for her kidney disease. We know she goes above and beyond by researching and digging into the symptoms, illnesses, and diseases her patients are experiencing or diagnosed with. We were impressed every time we had a conversation with her.

After several falls in April 2024 and a trip to the emergency room, our dad was also referred to the Culbertson Swing Bed Program. Melinda was again instrumental throughout the whole process. She kept us posted and called us with any updates concerning insurance and Medicare coverage as well as doctor’s appointments and health goals. Throughout his stay, our appreciation grew for the nursing and rehabilitation staff. The rehabilitation staff, especially Jim, worked hard to get our dad back on his feet.

Rushville is blessed to have such an incredible program available for those in transition with their medical care. For a small community known as a great place to retire, the Culbertson Swing Bed Program offers a perfect fit for its patients and their families.”

— Victoria Tabeek and Doug Houser



# Welcoming Our New Providers!

## Culbertson Adds

## Dr. High, Dr. Niemann, & Dr. Doellman

Culbertson Memorial Hospital is thrilled to welcome three new physicians to our medical staff — general surgeon Dr. Eric High, gastroenterologist Dr. Adam Niemann, and otolaryngologist Dr. Mary Doellman! All three physicians will see patients at the Culbertson Specialty Clinic, 238 S. Congress St. in Rushville.

Having practiced in a clinical setting for 13 years — during which time he has worked as an attending surgeon — Dr. Eric High brings a wealth of knowledge and a wide variety of medical specialties. Most recently, Dr. High has focused on complex abdominal wall reconstruction, minimally invasive techniques for complex hernia repairs, and teaching minimally invasive skills labs for students at the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. Dr. High cites the ability to use these skills to improve the quality of life for his patients as one of the most gratifying aspects of his career.

***“The most rewarding part of my job is seeing a patient with a significant issue that I can fix or alleviate with the skills I’ve gained from almost two decades of learning and educating,” Dr. High explained.***

“I also truly enjoy attending conferences and learning from others about more medical services and procedures we can offer patients. Medical science has come a long way regarding what it can offer patients for complex hernia surgery. I have been able to reconstruct several large hernias with robotic techniques — patients have had limited to zero inpatient time and have done remarkably well.”

After earning his MD from the University of Illinois College of Medicine (Chicago), Dr. High served a general surgery residency at the Southern Illinois University School of

Medicine (Springfield) and a critical care medicine fellowship at the Washington University School of Medicine (St. Louis, MO). Board certified in surgical critical care and surgery, Dr. High is a member of the Illinois State Medical Society, the American Hernia Society, and the Sangamon County Medical Society.

Prompted by an innate fascination with the digestive system, Dr. Adam Niemann uses his skills and training to educate his patients as well as treat them. Specifically interested in patient education, Dr. Niemann has helped develop educational materials for patients with IBD to help them better understand their condition and make healthier choices.

“I appreciate the interplay between gut function and overall health, including the influence of the gut microbiome,” he said. “During my medical training, I encountered many patients whose digestive issues had a significant impact on their quality of life. Being able to help them navigate and improve their conditions was extremely rewarding.”





**Dr. Mary Doellman**



**Dr. Eric High**



**Dr. Adam Niemann**

While he said he understands discussing GI issues can be awkward for some patients, Dr. Niemann said he takes an individualized approach with every appointment to ensure patients feel relaxed and comfortable.

***“I understand these procedures can be intimidating, so my first step is to create a supportive environment where patients feel comfortable expressing their concerns,” Dr. Niemann said.***

“I thoroughly explain the procedure, including what to expect before, during, and after. I also emphasize the benefits of the procedure — such as early detection of conditions and relief from symptoms — which helps patients see the value in going through with it. I also address any specific concerns they may have.”

After earning his MD from the University of Michigan Medical School (Ann Arbor, MI), Dr. Niemann served an internal medicine residency at McGaw Medical Center of Northwestern University (Chicago) as well as a gastroenterology, hepatology, and nutrition fellowship at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (Nashville, TN). Dr. Niemann is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Raised in a rural community, Dr. Mary Doellman understands the unique challenges and medical needs of

patients in Rushville and surrounding communities. Growing up in Georgia and practicing in south central Missouri immediately after serving in the military, Dr. Doellman said she feels right at home in rural environs, providing expert otolaryngological (i.e., ear, nose, and throat) treatments and procedures to patients of all ages.

“I am qualified to perform Inspire implants for sleep apnea, thyroidectomies, and salivary gland surgery,” Dr. Doellman said. “I also perform sinus and nasal surgeries, pressure equalization tubes, ear drum repair, and surgery on the vocal cords, tonsils, and adenoids.”

Improving the quality of life for her patients, Dr. Doellman explained, is the most gratifying part of her job. “What I enjoy most about working in otolaryngology is the patients! There is a significant increase in quality of life when patients have their ENT problems treated,” she said. “I really enjoy sharing that with my patients.”

Earning her DO from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (Erie, PA), Dr. Doellman served an otolaryngology residency at the San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium (San Antonio, TX). She is board certified by the American Board of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery, serves as a fellow/diplomat for the American Academy of Otolaryngic Allergy, and is a member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology.



# Peace of Mind Culbertson Providers Complete Mental Health First Aid Training

Did you know about 1 in 5 people in the United States lives with some form of mental illness? Unfortunately, of the 59.3 million American adults living with a mental condition in 2022, only about half received adequate treatment. While social stigmas still surround mental wellness, the truth is millions of Americans continue to suffer the devastating effects because of lacking or inaccessible care. For them, immediate care can be lifesaving.

Culbertson providers Rachel Allen, RN and Kathleen Price recently completed a mental health first aid training course provided by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. This online course teaches providers to identify challenges regarding mental health and substance abuse disorders in adults and respond to them accordingly.

“This training will help medical personnel recognize early warning signs of mental health distress and take the important first steps needed to treat it,” said Culbertson Chief Nursing Officer Kristi Hinegardner, DNP, MSN, RN. “This training extends beyond patients — the skills obtained during this training will help staff identify co-workers, loved ones, and the general public who are struggling with mental illness and get them the help they need.”



**Mental health first aid training covers a variety of topics related to conditions and effects of mental illness, including:**

- Signs and symptoms of mental health and substance abuse challenges
- Interacting with someone experiencing a crisis
- Connecting patients with help
- Education and content on trauma, substance use, and self-care

**The training also teaches providers to respond with the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE):**

- Assess for risk of suicide or harm
- Listen nonjudgmentally
- Give reassurance and information
- Encourage appropriate professional help
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies

**If you or someone you know is dealing with a mental health crisis, don't wait — dial 911. For more information about mental health and substance abuse counseling from Cathy Rigg, LCSW, contact Rushville Family Practice at (217) 322-3345 or the Elmer Hugh Taylor Clinic at (217) 323-2245.**



# Accessible Medical Care Convenient Care Clinic Opening in Beardstown

Life can often get in the way of getting the healthcare services you need when you need them. Between work, school, and family obligations, scheduling an appointment to see a primary care provider isn't always easy. Thankfully, a brand-new service from Culbertson Memorial Hospital offers a more convenient way for patients to address their medical concerns.

The all-new Convenient Care Walk-in Clinic at the Elmer Hugh Taylor Clinic allows patients to get the prompt medical attention they need without the hassle of scheduling an appointment. Additionally, the Convenient Care Clinic features extended hours past the regular Rural Health Clinic, allowing for more flexibility for patients with busy schedules. The clinic will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to noon Saturday.

*“In today’s fast-paced world, taking off work or missing school for a medical appointment can often be challenging,” said Culbertson Executive Director Gregg Snyder. “With extended hours and no appointments required, the Convenient Care Clinic can provide much of the care you need outside normal business hours without a trip to the Emergency Department.”*

**The Convenient Care Clinic is slated to open in spring 2025 and available for patients with minor illnesses and injuries, including colds and flus, sprains, and strains. For more information, visit [cmhospital.com](http://cmhospital.com) or call (217) 323-2245.**

## Emergency Department, Primary Care, or Convenient Care: Which Should You Choose?

When an illness or medical condition requires immediate attention, how do you know where to seek help? Some patients have trouble deciding between the Emergency Department, primary care, or convenient care for treatment — if you find yourself in a situation like this, check out this helpful guide to guide you to the most appropriate provider.



### Emergency Department

- Severe breathing problems or shortness of breath, including choking
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest, left arm, or left jaw
- Severe burns and cuts (i.e., cuts that won't close or stop bleeding)
- Seizures
- Severe allergic reactions
- Stroke symptoms, including slurred speech, sudden numbness or weakness in any part of the body, facial drooping, or sudden loss of balance or vision
- Sudden confusion or dizziness
- Loss of consciousness
- Traumatic injuries or possible broken bones
- Vaginal bleeding if pregnant or bleeding through more than one pad per hour for several hours in a row accompanied by symptoms of lightheadedness or dizziness, weakness, shortness of breath, or chest pain



### Primary Care

- Annual health screenings
- Anxiety, depression, & mood disorders
- Chronic illnesses or conditions
- Immunizations
- Male and female exams
- Newborn, infant, & adolescent care
- Physicals
- Preventative care & wellness checks



### Convenient Care

- Abrasions
- Allergies
- Colds and flu
- Earaches
- Fevers
- Insect bites, rashes, & minor abscesses
- Minor back pain
- Minor breaks, sprains, & strains
- Minor burns
- Minor eye infections
- Stomach pain
- UTIs & STDs
- Vomiting & diarrhea

# Improving Care Standards

## Culbertson Adopts New ED Quality & Satisfaction Metrics

An Emergency Department visit is understandably stressful by nature. But factors like wait time and bedside manner can have a profound effect on a patient's experience — for better or worse. So, how can hospitals be sure providers' actions meet the high standards and expectations?

Recently, Culbertson Memorial Hospital standardized its Emergency Department quality and satisfaction metrics based on those set by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Designed to help hospitals identify and resolve areas of improvement in ED patient care, these

metrics will help Culbertson provide a higher level of care and comfort in the ED.

“Culbertson Memorial Hospital benchmarks against other hospitals as well as our own performance month after month. Benchmarking key metrics such as wait times, average length of stay, and transfer times can provide leadership with insight for strategic, data-driven decisions,” said Culbertson Chief Nursing Officer Kristi Hinegardner. “This data also can improve the quality of patient care and reduce costs by streamlining care and increasing throughput.”

Measure Identifier	Technical Measure Title	Measure as Publicly Posted	Update Frequency
ED-2-Strata 1	Median admit decision time to ED departure time for admitted patients	Average (median) admit decision time to time of departure from the Emergency Department for ED patients admitted to inpatient status	Annually: October
ED-2-Strata 2	Median admit decision time to ED departure time for admitted patients and psychiatric/mental health patients	Average (median) admit decision time to time of departure from the Emergency Department for ED psychiatric or other mental health patients admitted to inpatient status	Annually: October
EDV	Emergency Department volume	Emergency Department volume	Annually — January
OP-18b	Median time from Emergency Department arrival to Emergency Department departure for discharged patients (Excludes psychiatric/mental health and transferred patients)	Average (median) time patients spent in the Emergency Department before leaving from the visit	Quarterly: January, April, July, October
OP-18c	Median time from Emergency Department arrival to Emergency Department departure for discharged patients (Only psychiatric/mental health patients)	Average (median) time psychiatric or other mental health patients spent in the Emergency Department before leaving from the visit	Quarterly: January, April, July, October
OP-22	Left without being seen	Percentage of patients who left the Emergency Department before being seen	Annually: January
OP-23	Head computed tomography (CT) scan results for Acute Ischemic Stroke or Hemorrhagic Stroke who received head CT scan interpretation within 45 minutes of arrival	Percentage of patients who came to the Emergency Department with stroke symptoms who received brain scan results within 45 minutes of arrival	Quarterly: January, April, July, October





## A Therapeutic Move Culbertson Acquires New Space for Therapy Services

Patients receiving specialized therapy will now have a new space to develop and regain their abilities. The CMH Foundation recently announced it had acquired the property at 220 W. Clinton St. in Rushville to be used as a brand-new Therapy Services building.

Culbertson Executive Director Gregg Snyder added his gratitude to the Peterman family, who operated Peterman Appliance at the property for six decades. Renovations have already begun thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Culbertson Memorial Hospital Foundation and the new facility plans to open in summer/fall 2025.

“After 60 years of serving the community, the Petermans decided to retire and provide us with the opportunity of being the future stewards of their property,” Snyder said. “We immediately knew this would be a perfect location for our Therapy Services.”

According to Therapy Services Manager Cathy Wilson, the new location will be more visible, in addition to providing improved parking and accessibility for patients whose mobility may be restricted. “Therapists will have more room to increase pediatric treatment spaces, enabling them to include enhanced sensory-related treatment options as well as family and caregiver training,” she said. “The new building will include room for expanded services and updated equipment, allowing us to meet the needs of physical, occupational, and speech therapy patients.”

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# A Better Patient Experience

## Culbertson Raising Funds for Patient Room Renovation

As part of its ongoing commitment to providing superior healthcare services, Culbertson Memorial Hospital is moving forward with Phase 1 of the Master Facility Plan to renovate the hospital's patient rooms. Because the physical atmosphere of the hospital plays a significant part in each patient's healing journey, Culbertson intends to upgrade its patient rooms to include private showers and bathrooms, making the rooms more patient friendly and providing a more private and relaxing healing environment.

"Comfort and privacy are key components of the recovery process during an inpatient stay," said Chief Nursing Officer Kristi Hinegardner. "By converting our patient rooms to single occupancy and adding private showers and bathrooms, we'll create a more comforting, healing environment for our patients as they continue their road to recovery."

However, this realization requires financial resources, and while the hospital has made some headway, the generous support of local residents makes this renovation possible. The Culbertson Memorial Hospital Foundation kindly asks you to consider making a gift toward this cause. However big or small, your gift will make a significant impact on the hospital's patients with every dollar going directly to the renovation of patient rooms. This project will potentially transform and significantly improve the experience for all patients who receive care at Culbertson Memorial Hospital.



To donate to this year's fundraiser  
visit [cmhospital.com/foundation](http://cmhospital.com/foundation) or call  
(217) 322-5269.