



**OUR COMMUNITY ROOTS ARE DEEP:
Celebrating a History of 150 Years of Hospitals in Warrensburg**

1864

The story of hospitals in Warrensburg begins with an introduction to the career of one physician who came to this area in 1864 to implement a Civil War Hospital. Near the end of the devastating Civil War, Dr. Alexander Reese, a native of Madison, Ind., was in charge of the first hospital for the duration from 1864 to 1866 when it ceased operation.

The Warrensburg Civil War Hospital was housed in a Presbyterian Church at 219 West Gay Street which had been commandeered by the United States Government. It was stripped of its spiritual furniture and made to function as an infirmary, surgery and death-house for scores of Union soldiers and civilians.

Dr. Reese left Warrensburg following the end of the Civil War. He served his next assignment issued by the Army as a surgeon at Fort Leavenworth. However, a few years later he came back to Warrensburg, married Miss Susie Baile and built his home at 209 West Culton. He practiced for many years in Warrensburg and was very active in this community. In recognition of his work with the community school system, the Reese School building was named after him.

With the advance of years, Dr. Reese retired from practice and moved to a farm south of town. He died in 1907, a loyal citizen remembered and mourned by many of his townsmen.

This story would not have been told if it were not for the diligence of a particular volunteer working on the archives of Western Missouri Medical Center (WMMC). She noted Oak Hill Sanitarium was not the first hospital in Warrensburg's history. (WMMC would like to thank Jane Reynolds, who brought the above information to us from a book written by another pioneer, Mrs. L. E. Smiser's, "The Golden Years.")

1908

Oak Hill Sanitarium at 519 South Holden was opened by Dr. Harry F. Parker. This five-patient-room hospital used the third floor for the surgery section as it had large skylights for natural light and ventilation. Oak Hill closed in 1937 when Dr. Parker was appointed as Missouri State Commissioner of Health.

1910

Two years after Oak Hill opened, Drs. L. J. Schofield, W. R. Patterson and O. B. Hall bought the Gilkeson home at 122 East Market for \$9,000. When it opened, this facility had seven patient beds with a large front porch which was utilized. Both hospitals attended to the healthcare needs of Warrensburg throughout the thirties.

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1940



As Warrensburg's population grew, more doctors came to town and more patient rooms were needed. The physicians encouraged a bond issue to build a new hospital, but it was voted down. The three original owners felt they could not continue in the same building and chose to sell their interests in the clinic. Dr. Hall sold his interest to his son-in-law, Dr. R. Lee Cooper, father of Dr. Robert L. Cooper and father-in-law of Dr. Hugh A. Hanna. Dr. Patterson sold his interest to Dr. Ralph McKinney and Dr. Schofield's interest was sold to Dr. O. H. Damron.

1941

With an investment of \$45,000, these doctors began and completed the remodeling and construction of a 12-bed addition. The name of the facility became The Warrensburg Medical Clinic.

1945

These physicians formed a nonprofit corporation and the new facility became known as The Warrensburg Medical Center, Inc.

1949

As the community grew, more referrals from surrounding areas came to the physicians. They realized another addition was needed. In 1949, they added an 84-foot addition to the front of the structure.

1959

Despite the best efforts of those who owned the hospital and their concerns for patients, the cost of changing the physical plant and new rigid state laws forced the owners to make a critical decision. In December 1959, an announcement was made that the Warrensburg Medical Center, Inc. would close.

1960

Realizing the importance of a modern hospital, Johnson County residents voted in favor of a bond issue to build the current facility at a cost of \$1.6 million.

1963

The newly completed 58-bed Johnson County Memorial Hospital (JCMH) opened on July 31, 1963, at 403 Burkarth. Before the day was over, Wilma and John Pfeffer became the parents of Julie Dianne Pfeffer, the first baby born at JCMH as the staff was transferring patients from the old hospital to the new one.

1965

Betty and John Ridge were the parents of the first set of twins born at JCMH on Jan. 21, 1965.

1967

JCMH received its first accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals in September.

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1968

Members from three study clubs began a Gift Shop at JCMH and the American Medical Association approved the facility as a Radiological Technology School.



1969

As a result of an increased patient workload, the Radiological Technology School was closed and a 22-bed obstetrical and medical/surgical area was completed.

1973

The C. W. Sheppard Wing was added with another 20 beds as well as an uncompleted shelled-in area for future expansion.

The 60s and 70s

These years included many changes in healthcare such as; the birth of Medicare, the formation of a 16-person volunteer chaplaincy program, the hospital began preparing all the Meals on Wheels food for this community, along with multiple additions and renovations occurring.

The 1980s

These years brought two significant changes. The beginning the Skilled Nursing Facility and Johnson County Memorial Hospital became Western Missouri Medical Center (WMMC) on Jan. 1, 1986.

The 1990s

During the 1900s numerous new physicians moved into the area. As the population of the Warrensburg area continued to grow, so did WMMC.

Clinical Documentation on the computer system went live as planned, on Dec. 3, 1996, and was successful. Many hospitals in Missouri regard WMMC's computer usage.

WMMC received the highest level of accreditation possible from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. This was the second time WMMC received the "Accreditation with Commendation" Award, one that only 2% of hospitals nationwide have ever received.

2009

WMMC expanded family healthcare services with the addition of Western Missouri Family Healthcare in Holden, Mo.

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2010

WMMC continued to see growth. In fact, WMMC leaders agreed upon a Master Facility Plan to expand the medical center to roughly 215,000 square feet, nearly double the previous facility. The plans included a state-of-the-art Patient Tower featuring 72 private-patient rooms, a tranquil healing garden, new lobbies and nearly 500 parking spaces. The plans also included renovations to the medical center and Diagnostic Imaging.

On April 19, 2010, WMMC broke ground on the nearly \$51.5 million building project. The year also saw the opening of Western Missouri Family Health in Knob Noster, Mo.



2011

WMMC acquired Western Missouri Internal Medicine—formerly Warrensburg Medical Clinic—on Jan. 1, 2011.

WMMC continued to see advancement in technology with the completion of the new Diagnostic Imaging Department and arrival of the MAGNETOM Verio 3 Telsa (MRI scanner), SOMATOM Definition AS (128-Slice CT scanner), and AXIOM Luminos (radiographic and fluoroscopy imaging system). WMMC now offered patients one of the most sophisticated imaging experiences in the region.

2013

On July 10, 2013, WMMC broke ground on a new Medical Office Building. The \$8.4 million project is a state-of-the-art, three-story Medical Office Building that features 43,298 square feet attached to the current facility. The building will house a variety of specialties including general surgery, cardiology, oncology and pulmonology, with room to grow for additional specialists.

2014

On July 8, 2014, WMMC celebrated the completion of the new Medical Office Building (MOB). The new MOB includes a Cancer Center, Pulmonology Clinic, Outpatient Lab, Cardiac/Pulmonary Department, Pain Center, Sleep Laboratory and office suite for Surgical Services of Warrensburg.

2016

WMMC continued to grow specialty services for the community. Recognizing a need for behavioral health, WMMC opened the new Bridge Behavioral Health Unit to provide care for senior adult (65+) patients whose psychiatric symptoms have posed significant problems or safety hazards to their activities of daily living.

In addition, the medical center began developing strategies to adapt to the changing trends in healthcare. The best solution to continue providing the best care, closer to home, was for WMMC to join forces with local providers to establish an Integrated Community Care Model. These partnerships enhance care coordination and allow for patient record integration.

WMMC Today

WMMC has significantly expanded in order to bring innovative healthcare closer to home. Over the years, it has welcomed numerous physicians, partnered with other health organizations and purchased new technology and equipment to bring advanced care to our region.

The medical center is embedded into the community with participation in health fairs, screenings, support groups, seminars and classes, various task forces, projects, teams, committees and wellness initiatives. WMMC has had years of glowing reports from our auditors complimenting our stability and resources. Our roots continue to grow deep as we work to leave a lasting legacy for Warrensburg and the surrounding communities.

WMMC is a fully-accredited acute care county medical center. WMMC prides itself in emergency care, obstetrics, orthopedic and general surgery, family healthcare, internal medicine, outpatient clinics, ambulatory care, rehabilitation services and more. Inpatient services include medical, surgical,



intensive, obstetrical, orthopedic, pediatric and skilled nursing care, as well as a wide range of therapeutic and diagnostic outpatient services.