

Gothenburg Family Practice doctor leaving

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Thursday, 25 July 2013 13:40 -



For 27 years, Dr. David Hult has shown up for patients at Gothenburg Family Practice.

On Oct. 30, he'll see patients in the clinic for the last time before moving to Lincoln with wife, Kathy Hult.

Lincoln is home to two daughters, a son-in-law and two grandchildren.

There, the 58-year-old doesn't know yet what he'll do but is looking at two positions—one in a family practice group in Lincoln and the other in Omaha doing palliative care with patients at their end stages of life.

"Gothenburg has been a good community in which to live and we have no regrets," Hult said. "I've had a great patient population, wonderful staff, a nice clinic and good hospital."

Hult said it's also an appropriate time to leave as the clinic and hospital transition from paper to electronic health records.

"There's a lot of money and effort involved in the conversion," he said.

Although he will most likely end up at a facility that has electronic records, Hult said he can step into a position without having to be part of the transition.

Leaving Gothenburg Family Practice offers the community an opportunity for a younger physician to start a practice, Hult said.

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“We’re all in our 50s and 60s here and there hasn’t been room for a younger physician unless one of us leaves,” he said.

Both Hult and GMH administrator Mick Brant said recruitment of medical practitioners to Gothenburg is challenging because of a shortage of family practice physicians and because many don’t want to practice in rural communities.

Brant said most family practitioners seek employment rather than an independent practice as local doctors do.

Because Hult is self-employed, physician assistant Amy Mahar, who works with him, will probably have to seek employment elsewhere unless she’s able to work with a local doctor, Hult said.

In addition to family in Lincoln, Hult’s parents live in Wausa in northeast Nebraska.

The move will be farther away from a son in Ogden, UT, and from Kathy’s parents and brothers who live in Imperial.

Hult said he’ll miss the people and community and “it will be hard to go from something known so something unknown.”

Brant described Hult as a rock for the medical institution and community and said he’s sad to see him go.

“We understand that family is important and we wish him the best,” Brant said.

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In the meantime, he said hospital officials are determining physician needs at the clinic and hospital to see what is needed.

They are also reaching out to physicians with local ties.

If successful, Brant said an interview/recruitment committee of the hospital board, physicians and community members will be formed.

If not, he said a more formal search committee—of the same composition—will be organized and a national search pursued.

“We’d love to have someone before Dr. Hult leaves,” he said, “or in six months but that’s optimistic.”

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