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## Southern Pines Women's Health Center Becomes FHC Clinic

PINEHURST – A formal partnership with Southern Pines Women's Health Center (SPWHC) has more closely aligned FirstHealth of the Carolinas with the area's most comprehensive provider of women's health care services.

The professional services agreement for provider and clinical services became effective on Monday, July 1, and the practice is now known as FirstHealth-Southern Pines Women's Health Center.

According to the SPWHC's John Byron, M.D., the stronger relationship is intended to broaden the scope of quality obstetrical and gynecological services throughout the region. It allows SPWHC to continue to manage the practice and maintain its own identity and electronic medical record system in a collaborative approach to care management.

"We feel like this is the time to grow and develop the sub-specialties that women get here at home without the need for travel," Dr. Byron says. "Southern Pines Women's Health Center has had a very good relationship with FirstHealth over the years, and we believe we can do a lot more by working together toward our similar goals of quality in women's health care."

Seven physicians and a family nurse practitioner – all board certified or eligible – comprise the medical staff of SPWHC, which has offices in three Sandhills locations: 145 Applecross Road, Turnberry Woods, Pinehurst; 313 Teal Drive, Raeford; and 101 Medical Park Circle, Rockingham. Their services cover the full range of women's health care including the management of routine and high-risk pregnancies; the evaluation and treatment of infertility; and the examination, diagnosis and treatment of gynecological conditions and diseases.

In addition to their board certification or eligibility, each physician is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Dr. Byron is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

The recent addition of gynecologic oncologist Michael Sundborg, M.D., to SPWHC brings another level of care to the clinic's services and is part of a regional strategy to implement planned growth. "Dr. Sundborg's addition is the first part of that strategy," Dr. Byron says.

With the exception of radiation oncology, Dr. Sundborg provides the full spectrum of patient care – including surgery and chemotherapy – for women who have been diagnosed with gynecological cancers.

According to CEO David J. Kilarski, FirstHealth of the Carolinas welcomes the opportunity to partner with SPWHC to offer enhanced women's health care services to the region.

"Southern Pines Women's Health Center has a longstanding reputation for providing exceptional care to women throughout the Sandhills area," he says. "FirstHealth looks forward to working more closely with the clinic's staff to support the expansion of health care services available to women throughout our region and to continue to provide the very best patient care possible."

Southern Pines Women's Health Center has served women in the Sandhills since 1981, and its founder, Barry K. Buchele, M.D., continues to be a partner in the practice. In addition to Drs. Buchele, Byron and Sundborg, SPWHC providers include Walter S. Fasolak, D.O.; Pamela J. Kantorowski, M.D.; Kendall R. Zmiewsky, M.D. Sarah Bowen-Pasfield, M.D.; and Melissa Mang, R.N., FNP-C.

According to Dr. Byron, patients should not notice any difference in their care or in the way it is delivered with the new FirstHealth affiliation. Services always have been and will continue to be "patient-centered," he says.

"We will continue to take care of our patients," Dr. Byron says. "Nothing will change, except we will get better."

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