

FullCircle

Your best life. Our one purpose.

Message from the CEO

The last few months have been busy ones for MercyOne! In June, we passed a huge milestone on our road to One Regional Health Ministry (RHM) under Trinity Health: all of our MercyOne colleagues, except our Genesis Health System colleagues, are on the same technology platforms! This is a significant step and was a huge task for our Central Iowa colleagues to complete.



In July, leaders across the RHM participated in Culture Circles — a time to come together to focus on how we transition our MercyOne culture into Trinity’s culture. This event served as a great reminder for our leaders to remember their “why” — why they got into health care in the first place. Often, it is to serve and help others and to make a difference. The stories shared in these circles reinforced the importance of our Focused Storytelling practice — many of which you can find in this newsletter. This practice is vital to our Culture, especially given today’s many challenges; it is too easy to forget the

excellent care we provide to our communities each day.

In August, we held an online Virtual Registered Nurses (vRN) Career Fair. Nearly 60 applicants came through — an exceptional response! vRNs work in a team care model designed to improve patient care through collaboration and technology — a unique model that improves the patient and RN experience. This innovation and the colleagues behind it are two of our many blessings at MercyOne.

September marked our annual Mercy Week celebrations centered around Mercy Day on September 24. On this date in 1827, Catherine McAuley opened the first House of Mercy in Dublin, Ireland. This was the first official ministry of the Sisters of Mercy. This year, the week was filled with colleague recognitions, a special Mass, Blessing of the Hands and our third annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Virtual Summit.

Of course, these are just the highlights of the past four months. There have been, and will continue to be, changes as we carry on in the transition to Trinity Health and bringing Genesis into MercyOne. We

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will continue to grow stronger as One.

It is an honor to serve with you as we follow in the steps of the Sisters of Mercy.

Bob Ritz
MercyOne President and CEO



Colleagues please:

- Share job opportunities online [MercyOne.org/Careers](https://www.mercyone.org/careers) Leave an Indeed Review



People

Portfolio

Purpose

Performance

People

Dr. Hijinio Carreon named one of Becker's chief medical officers to know

MercyOne Chief Medical Executive, **Hijinio Carreon, DO**, is one of 130 chief medical officers of hospitals and health systems to know in 2023, as selected by Becker's Hospital Review. He was the only Iowa-based health leader in Iowa to be honored by Becker's Hospital Review as "89 chief medical officers to know" in 2022. [Read more](#)



1,500 robotic surgeries for MercyOne surgeon

Dennis Whitmer, DO, performed his 1,500 robotic case last week. Congratulations to Dr. Whitmer and his surgical team.



2023 Women of Character Award

Congratulations to **Maria Guevara Hernandez, MD**, MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center on receiving the 2023 Women of Character award. Read more information [here](#).

Recruitment

Interested in becoming a MercyOne Ambassador? **Apply now by completing our online questionnaire.**



Team Spirit Days are back!

Many of our locations hold Spirit Days on Fridays throughout the fall, a day for colleagues to wear their favorite football team's gear. On Sept. 8, we celebrated the always-popular CyHawk game! Check out photos from across our Ministry!



Purpose

Loras College + Mercy College of Health Sciences

Mercy College of Health Sciences and Loras College are partnering to offer a new 3+1 program that provides an opportunity for students to earn two degrees in four years; a bachelor's degree (BA or BS) from Loras and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) through an accelerated pathway from Mercy College. The one-year, full-time, fully accredited Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) is one of the largest and most affordable accelerated programs in the country! With three starts per year, we offer labs and clinicals in Des Moines, Iowa City and Dubuque, all designed to help getting your BSN easier and faster than ever. Apply by January 1, 2024, for priority consideration. [Read the press release](#) and learn more about the program.



Performance



Congratulations to **MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center, MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center, MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center** and **MercyOne Waterloo Medical Center** for earning Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield's Blue Distinction® Center and Blue Distinction® Center+ designations in the area of maternity care. Give kudos!



MercyOne is nationally recognized for commitment to providing high-quality stroke care

MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center has received the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines® - Stroke GoldPlus quality achievement award for its commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines, ultimately leading to more lives saved and reduced disability.

"MercyOne is committed to improving patient care by adhering to the latest treatment guidelines," says Sam Schone, neuroscience service line director. "Get With The Guidelines makes it easier for our teams to put proven knowledge and guidelines to work on a daily basis, which studies show can help patients recover better. The end goal is to ensure more people in Iowa can experience longer, healthier lives."

[Read more](#)

Portfolio

Purpose		August '23	YE Target
Total DEI Plan Completion*	↑	0%	100%
Preventable hospitalizations (dually enrolled)	↑	\$1,131,809	\$11,343,055

Performance		August '23	YE Target
Operating Cash Flow Margin	↑	-2.65%	1.52%
Access to Care	↑	97.40%	97.20%
Falls with injury rate	↓	Build Still in Progress	
OSHA Recordable Injury Rate	↓	6.25	5.88

Key:
On Target (met target) ↑ We are looking for higher numbers on this metric
Progressing (above baseline) ↓ We are looking for lower numbers on this metric
Off Target (below baseline)

People		August '23	YE Target
Voluntary Turnover	↓	23.6%	22.0%
Colleague Engagement Index**	↑	Build Still in Progress	
Likelihood to Recommend in Acute Care	↑	63.59%	64.43%
Likelihood to Recommend in the ED	↑	61.34%	63.02%
Likelihood to Recommend in Medical Group	↑	92.26%	93.09%

FY24 Scorecard Footnotes

***Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan Completion:** Please note that the DEI Plan Completion metric will be reported on a quarterly basis, with updates provided by September 30, December 31, March 31 and June 30.

****Colleague Engagement Index:** The Colleague Engagement Index will be a baseline setting year for MercyOne as the organization begins to transition to Trinity Health's StandOut platform in the Spring of 2024.

MercyOne Balanced Scorecard measures defined

Health Equity Plans (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion)

- Measures our commitment to advance health and racial equity where those we serve have a just and fair opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Progress toward completion of the Health Equity plan will be measured quarterly:
- **By Q1 End:** Hospitals will develop a Health Equity Team AND Identify 1 person to complete the AHA Health Equity Assessment (25%)
 - **By Q2 End:** The local Health Equity Team will gather all available DEI, SOGI, RACI data to better understand disparities in their market. AND Hospitals will complete the AHA Health Equity Assessment. (38%)
 - **By Q3 End:** The Health Equity team will select 1 or 2 disparities to address for their hospital and create a comprehensive, attainable plan to address the identified health disparities. (18.5%)
 - **By Q4 End:** Begin implementation of the Health Disparity plans. (18.5%)
 - Critical Access Hospitals will only be required to complete the AHA Survey

Community Impact Improvement

- Measures our commitment to promote optimal health for people experiencing poverty and other vulnerabilities in our communities by addressing patient social needs, building community capacity and dismantling racism
- IRS defines community benefit (CB) as programs or activities that provide treatment and/or promote health and healing as a response to identified community needs to improve access or increase the public health of the community.
 - **Community Impact Improvement** = CB categories (financial contributions, CB operations, community building, community health improvement) + External Grants/Philanthropy received + CHWs in Clinically Integrated Network
 - Measured monthly
 - Source is CBISA, self-reported grants received and CHW increase in CINS
 - National Health Ministries and Continuing Care are excluded from this measure
 - This Measure Excludes Genesis in FY24

Operating Cash Flow Margin

- Measure reflects operational and financial performance that drives cash flow needed to re-invest in the organization, setting us on our path to achieve long-term financial sustainability.
- Operating Cash Flow / Operating Revenue
 - Operating Revenue = Net Patient Service Revenue + Other Operating Revenue
 - Operating Cash Flow = Operating Income + Depreciation + Interest

Access to Care

- Measures our ability to accept new business, within the parameters of when patients want to be seen. Represents the organic growth of our business.
- Satisfactory Access Rate
 - Rolling 6 month average % of Patients Able to Appear in Primary Care within their preferred timeframe,
 - Measured by Press Ganey Fusion Top Box Score for the question "Routine appt/ check-up as soon as needed"

OSHA Recordable Injury Rate (RIR)

- Reflects the number of serious injuries to our colleagues on a monthly basis supporting our journey to Zero Harm
- Measured as (number of recordable incidents/FTE productive hours) x 200,000 - excluding recordable incidents related to COVID-19
 - Measured on rolling 12 months
 - Measured monthly as MercyOne roll up, also by ministry and able to drill into specific injury type on the TogetherSafe dashboard

Falls with Injury Rate

- This measure reflects the rate of falls with injuries in the acute care environment on a monthly basis supporting our journey to Zero Harm
- Acute Inpatients Measured as number of falls with injury minor or greater per 1,000 patient days utilizing NDNQI definition
 - Measured on rolling 6 months
 - Measured monthly as MercyOne roll up, also by ministry and RHM
 - IRF measured as number of falls with major injury per 1,000 patient days utilizing CMS definition and national average

Colleague Voluntary Turnover

- Measures how well our organization retains our colleagues
- Maintain baseline for voluntary turnover
 - Calculated as the percent of colleagues that voluntarily leave the organization during the reporting period, annualized.
 - Measured monthly on a six-month rolling basis, annualized
 - Excludes providers, temps, and interns.

Likelihood To Recommend – Acute, ED and Medical Group

- Measures a patient's Likelihood to Recommend our services and allows for benchmarking performance within Trinity Health
- LTR Acute-Top Box response to "Would you recommend this hospital to your friends and family"
 - LTR ED-Top Box response to "Likelihood of you recommending our Emergency Department to others"
 - LTR MG-Top Box response to "Would you recommend this provider's office to your family and friends"

A strong workforce delivers Mission-centered care

We are MercyOne: a connected system of health care facilities and services dedicated to helping you and your community live your best life.

More than 20,000 colleagues strong, our care providers and colleagues make health and happiness their highest priority, so Iowans can get well — and stay well. With 230+ care locations, our clinics, medical centers and affiliates allow us to improve the lives of individuals and communities across Iowa and beyond.

STRONG WORKFORCE PIPELINE

MercyOne is committed to creating partnerships, programs and pathways for our colleagues and in the communities we serve to develop a robust, diverse pipeline of talent. Here are several examples around the efforts underway across Iowa:

High School Partnerships:

To address the need for people in the health care field, MercyOne provides awareness and exploration activities providing exposure to the variety of health care careers. With more than 50 events attended or hosted by MercyOne in the 2022-2023 school year, 9,000 students were impacted by these efforts, driving interest and networking post-graduation. Since 2023, more than 100 high school students have been hired into MercyOne facilities in roles spanning from Certified Nurse Assistants and Emergency Medical Technicians to Radiology Aides and Environmental and Food Services Associates. Given the success of these efforts, MercyOne has more than 20 events scheduled for next year, including summer camps, exploration events, speaker sessions, and worksite tours with a prospective impact of over 11,500 students.

Local College Partnerships:

Across the system, MercyOne partners with post-secondary institutions to provide clinical space for health care programs. We partner with these institutions to build our pipeline by supporting a diverse demographic of students to create a strong supply of workforce. Some programs of focus include nursing, imaging, respiratory, laboratory sciences, and paramedic and Earn and Learn programs like our Medical Assistant

program utilized across the state in partnership with Mercy College of Health Sciences. Moving forward, MercyOne's focus needs to be around expanding current partnerships with surrounding post-secondary institutions and creating new relationships to hire hard-to-fill positions.

Community Partnerships:

Iowa Vocational Rehab Services (IVRS) is a great example of a community partner who collaborates with MercyOne for workforce. IVRS understands our needs related to specific roles and requirements, reviewed training plans and potential accommodations, and determined how their clients can be successful within our organization. With 24 hires in 2022, MercyOne ranked in the top ten list of employers in the state in employing clients from IVRS, and has set a goal of 100+ hires in the coming fiscal year. MercyOne will approach the partnership through phases spanning from establishment, strategic planning and a system-wide training to include all MercyOne leaders and stakeholders in the conversation.

“The pandemic, along with a large number of nurses retiring, has created significant nursing shortages. Leaders need to be creative in retention and recruitment strategies. Contract labor is not a financially sustainable process for health care organizations, nor is it good for the overall morale and culture of our frontline workers.”

— MercyOne Nursing Leader

Support innovative care delivery models

The national health care workforce shortage is felt here in Iowa, and at MercyOne, and it creates an unstable and unpredictable work environment for all involved. As a result, major change is necessary for MercyOne to continue to build a strong future.

One initiative, TogetherTeam, is creating new care models and other important transformational initiatives to grow and to better serve our patients. TogetherTeam is an innovative care model, supported by technology and processes providing patient/member-centered care with a three-person team. This team includes a Bedside RN, RN Partner and Virtual RN. The team works together to provide coordinated, efficient care that supports better outcomes, safety and an exceptional experience.

This model brings many benefits including:

- Increased patient safety and satisfaction.
- Improved expertise and mentoring at bedside.
- Meeting caregivers where they are in their career and offering advancement opportunities.
- Providing a stable, predictable working environment.

ADDRESS WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Though workplace violence was an issue prior to the pandemic, it has worsened considerably in recent years. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported health care workers accounted for nearly three-quarters of violence-related workplace injuries and illnesses, with hospital workers six times more likely to suffer job violence than private sector workers as a whole. (AHA)

A survey published in Workplace Health & Safety revealed two-thirds of nurses experienced verbal abuse in early 2020, especially those caring for COVID-19 patients (IHA). A high-pace, high-stress environment – including the pressure of limited capacity – creates an overwhelmed staff. When that environment is coupled with violence, the strain on workforce stability is exacerbated. More than a third of nurses recently surveyed by one staffing firm said they plan to leave their current jobs by the end of this year.

To address workforce shortages, MercyOne is intensifying retention and recruiting efforts to attract new staff and provide current colleagues the support they need. We are also improving communication through policies and procedures education when this happens onsite, and how our colleagues can receive support and help.

At our Genesis Health facilities in Davenport, we deployed “No violence” signs throughout the hospitals. We have distributed staff-worn personal alarms (panic buttons) and mounted additional alarms on registration desks. Duress alarms have also been installed throughout the exterior areas of the hospitals.

Other elements of our approach to improving security and reducing workplace violence include:

- State-of-the-art video surveillance technology with significant coverage and extensive video storage.
- Tight badge access controls between public and colleague areas.
- Department lock-down capabilities.
- All colleagues are required to review Run, Hide, Fight training at least once a year.
- Strong relationships with area law enforcement and city officials.
- Meetings with County Attorney, Mayor, Chief of Police and City Administrator asking for additional support and advocating for stronger penalties against those who assault our colleagues.



Use this QR Code to contact your members of Congress!

What is Juneteenth?

Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day, Juneteenth Independence Day, or Black Independence Day, is the oldest known U.S. celebration acknowledging the end of slavery. It commemorates June 19, 1865, the day that Union Major General Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Texas, and told enslaved people of their emancipation from slavery.



[WATCH: Juneteenth: All your questions, answered by Encyclopedia Britannica](#)



What does Juneteenth mean to Trinity Health colleagues?

Trinity Health colleagues took time out of their busy schedules to share what Juneteenth means to them. Hear from Shayne Downton, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, KiShanna Ector, Senior Secretary, Loyola University Medical Center, Latorya Greene, Director, Community Health and Well-Being, Saint Joseph Health System, Angie Stewart, Regional Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Trinity Health, and Darius Williams, Supervisor, Security, Saint Alphonsus Health System, in this [three-minute video recording](#).

Want to learn more?

Juneteenth SharePoint

Check out the [Juneteenth SharePoint](#) site to learn more about Juneteenth and how you can celebrate.

Watch:

- [Meet the 'Grandmother of Juneteenth' | Good Morning America \(GMA\)](#)
- [Honoring Galveston's Trailblazers: Juneteenth 1865-2021](#)
- [Why Do We Celebrate Juneteenth? Columbians Share the History and How They Observe the Day - YouTube](#) - Columbia University

Read:

- [On Juneteenth](#) by Annette Gordon-Reed
- [Envisioning Emancipation](#) by Deborah Willis and Barbara Krauthamer
- [Juneteenth, A Children's Story](#) by Opal Lee (Grades K-5)
- [My Pride is Black, My Juneteenth is Queer | Learning for Justice](#)
- [What is Juneteenth and why should Latinos celebrate it?](#)



Focused Storytelling

Focused storytelling is based on Our Core Values:

Reverence • Commitment to Those Who are Poor • Safety • Justice • Stewardship • Integrity

Integrity



This is what integrity looks like:

For the second year in a row, RestorixHealth, a leader in the development and management of comprehensive wound healing and Amputation Prevention Center facilities, recognized MercyOne Clinton Wound Care and Hyperbaric Center for its exceptional success in multiple wound healing benchmarks.

This is what Integrity looks like:

MercyOne Siouxland Wound Center is one of 33 wound centers to be awarded the prestigious President's Circle Award from Healogics. Healogics is the nation's provider of advanced wound care services.

"Receiving the President's Circle award means so much," said wound center director Kelly Kneifl. "It's incredible for our colleagues to be recognized for the great, high-quality care we provide to the Siouxland community. Wound care can be tricky and difficult, but our amazing team is able to provide quality clinical outcomes that are at the top of the company!" [Learn more.](#)



MercyOne Clinton Wound Care and Hyperbaric Center

was awarded with the Wound Center of Excellence Award for the center's dedication to healing wounds, saving limbs and optimizing patient outcomes. The center also received this award in 2022. [Learn more here.](#)

Commitment to Those Experiencing Poverty



Diapers are an essential but expensive need, costing about \$100 per month per child. As part of Mercy Week festivities, many MercyOne locations across the state held Diaper Drives for those in need. Diapers were collected throughout the week and then delivered to local nonprofits for distribution.

"Not being able to afford diapers can negatively impact a family's ability to work. Daycares typically require parents to supply diapers and if parents are unable to, they may not be able to access childcare," said **Heidi Witt**, **MercyOne senior community benefit coordinator.**

Reverence



This is what Reverence looks like:

MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center, in partnership with University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, recently established a breast milk dispensary at MercyOne Dubuque birth center. The new dispensary means that local moms who need to supplement their breast milk supply now can purchase donated milk at a Dubuque hospital instead of travelling to Iowa City. [Read the article here.](#)

This is what Reverence looks like:

MercyOne Northeast Iowa paramedics **Amy Clark** and **Mike Bonser** received praise for City of Cedar Falls' Director of Public Safety Craig Berte after they assisted on the scene of a "significant" residential fire.

Of their work, Craig had this to say:

Their assistance at this fire scene for was phenomenal. I observed them helping in any way they could. Throughout the entire event, they continued to check on firefighters and police officers assisting in and around the entire scene. They ensured staff stayed hydrated and rested when necessary. Their decades of experience is invaluable to our team.

We greatly value our decades-old partnership with Mercy One and it is because of the great employees on your staff like Amy and Mike.

Stewardship

This is what Stewardship looks like:

National Hospital Week provides an opportunity for caregivers at **Van Diest Medical Center (VDMC)** in Webster City to give back to the communities the hospital serves. With Family Health Clinics located in Webster City, Jewell, Stratford and Fort Dodge, a group of volunteers provided clean-up of sticks and garbage in each of the communities, in city parks or other areas as determined by the community. Nearly 30 individuals from across the organization, including a couple of family members, volunteered their time to beautify and give back to area communities.



Safety

This is what Safety looks like:

MercyOne Siouxland Heart and Vascular Center has received the American College of Cardiology's NCDR Chest Pain – MI Registry Platinum Performance Achievement Award for 2023. This award recognizes commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care for heart attack patients.

This recognition also celebrates MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center reaching an aggressive goal of treating these patients to standard levels of care outlined by the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association clinical guidelines and recommendations. MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center is one of only 262 hospitals nationwide to receive this honor. [Read more.](#)



This is what Safety looks like:

MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center and **West Des Moines Medical Center** were recognized by the National Safe Sleep Hospital Certification Program as "Bronze Level" certification for their commitment to best practices and education on infant safe sleep. [Read more.](#)

Justice



This is what Justice looks like to me:

MercyOne physicians teamed up with Des Moines University students and officials to celebrate National Latino/a Physician Day on October 1. Latino/a physicians represent 6% of the physician workforce and recognize the critical shortage of Latino/a physicians compared to the U.S. Latino/a population (19%).

This is what Justice looks like to me:

Congratulations **Bridget Saffold, RN!**

Saffold was recently named to Iowa Department of Human Right's Iowa Women's Hall of Fame for her health equity work. Each year the state recognizes four women into the Hall of Fame to highlight women's heritage and recognize their contributions. Bridget is a Clinic Administrator at MercyOne Northeast Iowa.



Protect MercyOne by ensuring medical necessity

Medical necessity documentation, or lack of it, is one of the most common reasons for claims denials in simple terms, for insurers to not pay us for our services when we've billed them. Obviously, MercyOne wants to be paid for services rendered, so how do we avoid these denials?

First, we should understand what "medical necessity" is. For a service to be considered medically necessary, it must be reasonable and necessary to diagnosis or treat a patient's medical condition. For example, if a patient came in with an earache and was diagnosed with an ear infection, and the provider billed for a chest X-ray, insurance would not pay for it. This is because it is not medically necessary to perform a chest X-ray on a patient who is not having any breathing or chest related symptoms or problems.

It is important to note that a

diagnosis code should never be altered to match one of the diagnosis codes listed in a coverage policy as supporting medical necessity. The diagnosis code submitted must be supported and reflected in the medical documentation. Reporting a diagnosis that the patient does not have solely for the purpose of obtaining reimbursement for a service is construed as fraud and will most likely result in fines/penalties and, in some cases, even criminal prosecution.

MercyOne's coding and billing leadership monitor and train staff to ensure that medical necessity is properly documented in the medical records. Trinity Health's Integrity and Audit Services team helps ensure that medical necessity is properly documented by conducting medical records audits and educating coders and billers.

Medical necessity documentation, or lack of it, is one of the most common reasons for claims denials in simple terms, for insurers to not pay us for our services when we've billed them.

If you think we are billing for a service that is not medically necessary or that we haven't shown the necessity in the medical record, speak up! Tell your supervisor or call the **Integrity and Compliance Line** at 866-477-4661.

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Have you tried the MercyOne Symptom Checker yet?



Visit [MercyOne.org](https://www.mercyone.org) to get started.

Is your email signature set up correctly?

Find out by downloading the email signature template on [SharePoint](#).