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Inspira Health Network affiliates with Jefferson

By **Kevin Post**, Business Editor

Inspira Health Network is affiliating with Thomas Jefferson University and Health System of Philadelphia to bring its physicians and clinical expertise to Inspira's facilities throughout Cumberland, Salem and Gloucester counties, including its medical center and cancer pavilion in Vineland.

John DiAngelo, president and CEO of Inspira, said a major component of the affiliation announced Tuesday was a collaboration to build a new \$30 million, jointly owned and staffed ambulatory care center in Gloucester County.

DiAngelo said the basic aim of the affiliation is to provide a more complex level of care in Inspira's communities so patients don't need to travel elsewhere to get such benefits.

"We're bringing more of the resources of Jefferson into South Jersey," he said. "The goal is to provide services that normally people would be going over into Philadelphia for, and now they'll be able to achieve that here."

Inspira and Jefferson said the affiliation will initially focus on three key clinical areas – cancer, neuroscience and gastroenterology.

In cancer care, where Inspira already has the strong Scarpa Regional Cancer Pavilion in Vineland, oncologists will collaborate with Jefferson's Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center to provide clients with access to advanced clinical trials and subspecialty services such as genetic counseling and oncological surgery.

The Kimmel Cancer Center is one of 68 National Cancer Institute-designated cancer centers at the forefront of research activities and with access to the latest technologies and treatments.

Jefferson Hospital for Neuroscience is



the only one of its kind in the Philadelphia region, where it said it was the first to offer stereotactic radiotherapy, shaped-beam surgery and minimally invasive neurosurgery with robotically controlled microscopes.

The affiliates said Jefferson's gastroenterology and hepatology division, as well as its Digestive Disease Institute, will provide advanced diagnostic services through Inspira's recently completed gastroenterology center in Woodbury.

DiAngelo said Inspira had wanted to grow its outpatient services, so that goal is advanced by the ambulatory care facility – which he called "the biggest piece of the affiliation." He said he expects the health system's clients outside of Gloucester County to take advantage of services there that will include treatment of movement disorders, Parkinson's disease, chronic headaches and epilepsy.

No reduction in staffing at Inspira is envisioned as a result of the affiliation. DiAngelo said he expects to be adding jobs overall as a result of the new ambulatory center and "programs we're either expanding or don't do right now."

He also said he thinks health insurance

that currently covers Inspira facilities as in-network will likewise consider the Jefferson/Inspira elements of care in-network. "We think it will work the same way," he said.

The affiliation is the first for Inspira with Jefferson, DiAngelo said. "Our Woodbury facility had an affiliation with Jefferson when it was Underwood Hospital, but that ended when they merged with us."

Inspira Health Network was formed in 2012 by the merger of South Jersey Healthcare and Underwood Memorial Hospital. It has three hospitals, four health centers and more than 60 locations.