

Cardiologists Announce Expanded Cardiology Care

Beginning March 30, 2009, Patients First cardiologists will be scheduling all cardiac catheterizations for patients at the new SSM St. Clare Hospital in Fenton. The change allows the cardiologists to elevate the level of service provided to patients requiring interventional heart care beyond heart catheterization. The move also allows Patients First to make a significant difference in coronary care for patients in Franklin and surrounding counties.

“There are some patients that require additional procedures beyond a heart catheterization,” explained Dr. John Mohart, cardiologist with Patients First Health Care. “During a heart catheterization we are evaluating how the patient’s heart works and we’re looking for possible artery blockages. When we identify severe blockage it’s important to have an interventional cardiologist (a surgeon) available on-site to assess the situation and then perform an artery stent placement or perform heart by-pass surgery. This is the level of care all of our patients deserve, and SSM St. Clare Hospital is the closest facility that offers this expanded and efficient care,” Mohart said.

Patients First cardiologists started offering heart catheterization locally in 2005, with the opening of the Cardiac Catheterization Lab at St. John’s Mercy Hospital, Washington. Dr. Dilip Banerjee (now retired) and Dr. John Mohart were the first cardiologists to utilize the diagnostic unit. Since that time Dr. Brian Seeck and Dr. Michael Beardslee have joined the expanded cardiology division at Patients First and are also on staff at St. John’s Mercy Hospital.

Currently, any patient identified as needing surgical intervention during a cardiac catheterization must be transferred by ambulance 45 miles from Washington to St. John's Mercy Medical Center in St. Louis. The transfer is dangerous for the patient and can result in lost heart muscle and more.

When asked to comment on this change, Joseph Gubbels, Patients First CEO, stated, "The Patients First cardiologists and St. John's Mercy Hospital administration have worked together since 2005 to expand cardiac services locally. St. John's current corporate policy, however, is to maintain cardiac service levels as they are in Washington. In today's healthcare arena, we feel that our patients deserve the same level of care as patients residing in St. Louis."

"Our cardiology practice remains in Washington, and we're available to our patients on a 24/7 basis," Dr. Mohart said. "We live and work in Washington, and we're available when our patients need us. We're happy to be on staff at St. John's Mercy Hospital, and we'll continue to admit cardiology patients locally. Our more advanced care will simply be provided somewhere else. The bottom line is that as physicians, we want to provide the very best outcome for our patients," Mohart concluded.

SSM St. Clare Health System, Fenton, will open March 30, 2009. SSM St. Clare is located at Hwy 141 and Bowles Avenue, just 25 minutes from Washington.