

Rockdale Citizen

Rockdale Medical names new CEO

By Jay Jones
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Bryan Dearing

CONYERS - Rockdale Medical Center has named a former executive with the Hospital Corporation of America as the local hospital's new CEO.

Bryan K. Dearing, the former CEO of Summit Medical Center in Hermitage, Tenn., near Nashville, will take the helm at RMC on June 8, according to a statement released Wednesday by the hospital.

Dearing will be the first CEO hired since the local hospital was sold to LifePoint Hospitals Inc. in February. Dearing will replace former CEO Mike Potter, who resigned in March.

Deborah Armstrong, RMC chief operating officer and vice president for operations, served as interim CEO after Potter's departure. She will resume her former duties when Dearing takes over the CEO job, according to RMC spokeswoman Marsha Terry.

Dearing has worked in various administrative positions at HCA hospitals for 20 years. His longest tenure was at Summit, where he served as CEO from 1995 to 2003. He has also worked as a CEO at Volunteer General Hospital in Martin, Tenn., Dominion Hospital in Falls Church, Va., Northern Virginia Community Hospital in Arlington, Va., and two other hospitals in northern Virginia.

Recently, Dearing has worked for Erickson Retirement Communities as associate executive director for the startup of a retirement community in Ashburn, Va.

A search committee comprised of RMC employees, physicians and local residents made the final selection of Dearing.

"Our search committee was impressed with Bryan's strong background in hospital operations as well as his passion for excellence, both of which will be assets for Rockdale," said Rick Simons, chairman of RMC's board of trustees, in the released statement.

Dearing should be familiar with LifePoint Hospitals from his experience with HCA. The company was spun off from HCA in 1999. Also, LifePoint President and CEO William Carpenter was HCA's general counsel from November 1998 to May 1999.

Dearing said in RMC's statement that he was "excited about the possibilities that await me at Rockdale," and wanted to provide leadership to build on a strong foundation at the hospital.

Potter served more in a caretaker role during his 11 months at RMC than as a typical hospital executive. He was brought in by Signature Hospital Corp. as a loaned executive during sales negotiations.

When Signature's deal to purchase the local hospital fell through, Potter agreed to stay on as CEO while the Hospital Authority of Rockdale County sought a new candidate to purchase the 55-year-old public hospital.