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**Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital, Virginia Mason Health System
Enter Formal Affiliation Discussions**

YAKIMA – Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital and Virginia Mason Health System announced their intent Wednesday to pursue a formal affiliation that would transform health care in the Yakima Valley, increase access to health care and improve the patient experience and value of care.

The boards of both hospitals have voted to sign a letter of intent, which is the next step in the affiliation process. The signing of the letter of intent enables the two organizations to conduct detailed discussions and perform necessary due diligence on the specific details of an affiliation whereby Memorial would become a part of the Virginia Mason Health System.

Memorial and Virginia Mason share similar values and cultures, as well as a commitment to innovation, and view a potential relationship as an opportunity to create a broader network of care that better serves both organizations' communities.

"We are excited to work with Virginia Mason and look forward to continuing our discussions to build a partnership that serves our community," Memorial CEO Russ Myers said. "Virginia Mason is a distinguished organization with strong leadership and excellent physicians."

"In Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital we have found an organization with a shared vision for health care, focused on innovation, high quality and appropriate patient care at the lowest cost possible," Virginia Mason Health System Chairman and CEO Gary S. Kaplan, MD, said.

Partnerships in health care are occurring across the country as a way to improve service, lower costs and respond to health care reform. Ultimately, these collaborations benefit the patients and communities they serve.

The Memorial Board of Trustees views a strategic partnership as an opportunity for Memorial – and Yakima – to maintain access to high-quality healthcare, improve access to specialty care, advance physician recruitment and expand our financial, clinical and information systems resources. Such a partnership also ensures that state-of-the-art medicine continues in this community.

Memorial and Virginia Mason, both not-for-profit health care providers, share a commitment to maintaining comprehensive health care in Yakima. Due diligence, a legal step in the affiliation process, is expected to take four to six months.

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About Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital

Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital is a 226-bed, acute-care, not-for-profit, community hospital serving Central Washington's Yakima Valley. Memorial Family of Services includes primary care practices and specialty care services, including high-quality cardiac care, a continuum of cancer care, hospice care and advanced services for children with special health care needs. Visit Memorial online at www.yakimamemorial.org or on Facebook (www.facebook.com/yakimavalleymemorialhospital), Twitter ([www.twitter.com/Yakima Memorial](https://www.twitter.com/Yakima_Memorial)) or Pinterest (www.pinterest.com/yvmh). In addition, The Memorial Foundation has raised and distributed \$45 million toward innovative health care programs in the Yakima Valley (www.memfound.org).

About Virginia Mason

Virginia Mason, founded in 1920, is a nonprofit regional health care system in Seattle that serves the Pacific Northwest. Virginia Mason employs 6,000 people and includes a 336-bed acute-care hospital; a primary and specialty care group practice of more than 460 physicians; regional medical centers throughout the Puget Sound area; and Bailey-Boushay House, the first skilled-nursing and outpatient chronic care management program in the U.S. designed and built specifically to meet the needs of people with HIV/AIDS. Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason is internationally recognized for its breakthrough autoimmune disease research. Virginia Mason was the first health system to apply lean manufacturing principles to health care delivery to eliminate waste, lower cost, and improve quality and patient safety. Virginia Mason website: www.VirginiaMason.org.

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