

Banner Health announces hospital leadership changes

Leaders assume new roles in Arizona, Colorado and Wyoming



Lance Porter

PHOENIX (Nov. 10, 2020) – As Banner Health continues expanding its reach and impact, we are able to provide new leadership opportunities for our team members. Leadership is an essential component of our success, and we identify the right people to inspire and innovate, leading our teams to deliver exceptional, safe patient care.

With the acquisition of [Wyoming Medical Center](#) in Casper, Wyoming on October 1, Banner has named a new chief executive officer (CEO) for that hospital. Lance Porter, currently the CEO at [Banner Payson Medical Center](#) in Arizona, has accepted that position.

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Porter joined Banner in 2015 when Banner acquired Banner Payson. This makes him uniquely qualified to lead Wyoming Medical Center. During his time as CEO in Payson, Porter led the hospital through a license change to become a critical access hospital and added new services including pediatrics, infusion and chemotherapy, wound care and cardiopulmonary rehabilitation. Prior to working in Payson, Porter held leadership roles at large and academic hospitals in Illinois and New York.

Wyoming Medical Center is Wyoming’s largest hospital with 249 beds on two campuses, more than 45 medical specialties and 14 primary, specialty and immediate care clinics. As a regional trauma and referral center, WMC serves 11 Wyoming counties with more than 250,000 people.

"We take great pride in Banner in developing and identifying our top talent to fill positions within the organization," said Margo Karsten, Banner’s Western Division president. "Lance is a great example of our ability to do just that."

Porter replaces interim CEO J.J. Bleicher, MD, who is also the Wyoming hospital’s chief clinical officer.

"I want to thank Dr. Bleicher for stepping up to the challenge of leading WMC during this interim period for the past month. His leadership and dedication provided continuity for the staff as they bravely battled the COVID-19 spread," Karsten said.

To fill the CEO position at Banner Payson, Banner has selected Hoyt Skabelund, currently CEO of Banner's Northern Colorado hospitals. Skabelund joined Banner in 2014 and has had an exceptional career with diverse experience in Banner’s Western Region. During his time with Banner, Skabelund has been CEO of hospitals in Fallon, Nevada, and Sterling, Colorado, and the Rural Division CEO for Banner.

"Hoyt has a special place in his heart for the close, tight-knit culture a rural hospital and its community provides, which is why he chose to make this change," Karsten said. "We are indebted to him for his amazing support and look forward to what he will bring to the Payson community."

Wendy Sparks, chief operating officer of Banner in Northern Colorado, will serve as interim CEO in Northern Colorado. The interim period will allow for smooth continuation of operations and for leader to focus on responding to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Sparks has been with Banner for more than 32 years in roles that include senior director of supply chain management, associate administrator and chief operating officer.

These changes are effective November 16.

About Banner Health

Headquartered in Arizona, Banner Health is one of the largest nonprofit health care systems in the country. The system owns and operates 30 acute-care hospitals, Banner Health Network, Banner – University Medicine, academic and employed physician groups, long-term care centers, outpatient surgery centers and an array of other services; including Banner Urgent Care, family clinics, home care and hospice services, pharmacies and a nursing registry. Banner Health is in six states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada and Wyoming. For more information, visit [bannerhealth.com](https://www.bannerhealth.com).

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 [**Lance Porter**](#)

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