

For Immediate Release

Date: February 26th, 2026

Subject: **Two Washington Community Health Centers Merge to Better Serve Patients and Washington County**

The governing Boards of Directors of **Eastport Health Care (EHC)** and **St. Croix Regional Family Health Center (SCRFHC)** are pleased to share important news regarding the future of community health care in Washington County. Both organizations have entered into a formal merger agreement, uniting two trusted and longstanding organizations with a shared mission to improve access to high-quality, comprehensive health care for the communities we serve.

This merger brings together two iconic community health centers with deep local roots, complementary strengths, and a mutual commitment to patient-centered care. By combining our organizations, we are expanding access, strengthening service lines, and enhancing care coordination, in order to ensure that patients across Washington County can receive the right care, at the right time, close to home.

The primary driver of this merger is to strengthen our ability to advocate for and serve the residents of Washington County in the face of changing external forces impacting health care delivery now and into the future.

Michael Farrell, DC, MBA, CEO of St. Croix Regional Family Health Center since 2024, will be employed by the new, merged governing Board of Directors as the

organization's CEO. He brings experience, leadership skills, and commitment to the role. Ellen Krajewski, MPH, will step back from her CEO role with EHC and be a resource and support to the new entity.

Together, Eastport Health Care and St. Croix Regional Family Health Center will be better positioned to:

- Expand access to primary care, behavioral health, dental, optometry, chiropractic and other specialty, and supportive services, including new sites in Eastport and Calais
- Advocate for and compete for funding for our patients, partners, and communities
- Strengthen recruitment and retention of providers and staff
- Improve care coordination across locations and service lines
- Invest in facilities, technology, and infrastructure for long-term sustainability
- Preserve community-based governance while enhancing operational stability

Most importantly, this merger builds upon what already works. Patients can expect the same compassionate care from familiar providers and staff with expanded capabilities.

What Stays the Same

- Patients will continue to receive care from the same trusted providers and staff
- No jobs will be eliminated as a result of this transition
 - Clinic locations and existing access points will remain open and operational
 - Our shared commitment to community-based, patient-centered care remains unchanged
 - Local presence and community relationships will continue to be honored and

strengthened

- Care delivery will remain aligned with our long standing values and standards

What Improves

- Expanded access to a broader range of clinical and supportive service lines
- Stronger recruitment and retention of providers and staff across the region
- Enhanced care coordination and referral pathways between services and locations
- Greater ability to invest in facilities, technology, and innovative care models

“At its core, this merger is about people—our patients, our staff, and the communities we serve. By uniting two trusted organizations, we are creating new opportunities to expand access across the full complement of service lines while reducing barriers to care throughout the region.” Michael Farrell, DC, MBA, CEO, St. Croix Regional Family Health Center

"This partnership comes from a shared desire to do what’s best for our patients and our community. Both organizations care deeply about access to care, high quality services, and the long-term health of the people we serve. By coming together, we’re strengthening local, patient-centered care and making sure it remains adaptable and available for many years to come.” Scott Chesebrough, Board Chair, St. Croix Regional Family Health Center.

“This merger gives us a much stronger voice to advocate for our patients’ health care needs. In the current shake-up of resources and power, we won’t be left behind to scramble for survival. Our voice will be louder at the state and national levels and our impact on health and communities bigger. We’re locking in good, locally accessible care for patients into the future.” Ellen Krajewski, MPH, Chief Executive Officer, Eastport Health

Care.

“EHC is expanding and joining forces to create a bigger, stronger organization with a wider range of health care services. We remain committed to the same vision and mission of providing the best quality care for all patients. This merger will bring many facets of health care under one roof. The collaboration and coordination of both organizations working as one will provide sustainable stability because there is strength in a shared vision and in numbers. Ellen has been an exceptional CEO. Under her leadership, EHC has grown and increased both access to care and quality. Her hard work and vision have been the engine that opened possibilities, and we are extremely grateful to her. The EHC Board of Directors is proud of the work we’ve all done to reach this point and honored to facilitate this expansion.” Deb Pigeon, Board Chair, Eastport Health Care.

Over the coming months, we will work closely with staff, patients, partners, and community stakeholders to ensure smooth and thoughtful integration. Continuity of care and patient experience will remain at the forefront of this work. Our staff are the foundation of the care we provide. This merger is about investing in our people, not reducing them and no jobs will be eliminated as a result of this transition.

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