



THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI
MEDICAL CENTER

OCH Regional Medical Center/ University of Mississippi Medical Center Affiliation

This is an exciting time for our community as **OCH Regional Medical Center** joins hands with **University of Mississippi Medical Center** to enhance healthcare in OCH's primary and secondary service areas.

We understand the community has questions, and we are here to answer them.

Below is a list of frequently asked questions we hope you will find helpful:

1. Why is OCH Regional Medical Center affiliating with University of Mississippi Medical Center?

Affiliation with UMMC allows OCH to remain under local control while expanding resources and bringing super-specialties to Starkville that are not sustainable on a full-time basis. This is NOT a merger or an acquisition. Hospitals and health systems nationwide are collaborating in order to be successful in the current and future health care environment.

Now that the OCH Board of Trustees has voted to affiliate with UMMC, discussions between OCH's and UMMC's administrative team will take place to decide on specifics of the agreement. Some of the key areas of discussion will include the following:

- Access to replacement of an electronic health record system for OCH
- Volume-based purchasing to reduce supply and equipment costs
- Assistance in providing access to specialists in Starkville to allow patients better access to healthcare locally, including telemedicine.

2. Will the affiliation begin immediately, and how long will it last?

OCH and UMMC will work together over the next four months to outline an implementation plan and develop a timeline for each agreed upon service. OCH is currently developing a five-year contract with options for renewals. The contract will also have options for either party to terminate the agreement before the end of the contract.

3. What does an affiliation mean for OCH employees?

OCH's policy & procedures and benefits package will not change as a result of this affiliation. OCH will remain a county-owned facility with the decision-making process remaining under local control.

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4. What does an affiliation with UMMC mean for the community and OCH patients?

OCH's main goal in the affiliation process is to provide the highest level of care possible to the people in this area, and we will remain focused on patient-first care. The affiliation helps OCH strengthen its ability to serve patients locally by giving them easier access to the expanded specialty care and expertise available from UMMC. Patients who receive care from OCH will continue to receive a bill from OCH.

5. Will UMMC physicians travel to Starkville to provide care?

It is hopeful that there will be an onsite presence, and some specialties may be offered through telemedicine. This is an option that will be explored in order to bring more specialties to the Starkville area that cannot be supported on a full-time basis. This affiliation will allow OCH physicians to better connect with UMMC physicians when they wish to make a referral or partner on a patient's care.

6. Will OCH physicians be required to send their patients to UMMC for care?

No, this affiliation does not require referrals to UMMC physicians and clinics. The physicians – along with their patients – determine the best plan of care. This affiliation is designed to create better access to care for patients locally by potentially bringing some of UMMC's specialties to Starkville that cannot be sustained on a full-time basis.

7. Will UMMC medical students or residents train at OCH?

The affiliation will give UMMC the opportunity to expand educational training programs for Mississippi practitioners by placing medical residents and fellows at OCH, where they will deliver patient care in concert with the hospital's medical staff.

8. What kind of dollars are changing hands?

In this affiliation arrangement, OCH is not paying UMMC to enter into a master services agreement.

9. What are the benefits for UMMC in affiliating with OCH?

UMMC is a resource for the entire state of Mississippi, and this affiliation allows UMMC to better serve the population that resides in the OCH service area. As UMMC provides additional specialty services to residents in this area, it can gain efficiencies in their delivery. The affiliation also furthers UMMC's mission of supporting viable, vibrant medical communities across the state as part of its commitment to creating a healthier Mississippi.

10. Will insurance negotiations between Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi and UMMC affect patients at OCH?

No. This affiliation will have no effect on OCH's current relationship with BCBSMS, even if UMMC goes out of network with Blue Cross. The two hospitals have separate contracts with BCBSMS.

Currently, BCBSMS and UMMC are undergoing mediation to work toward an agreement.