

# PeaceHealth Oregon Emergency Department physician management transition Fact Sheet

*As of March 3, 2026*

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## Overview

PeaceHealth is transitioning ED physician management services from Eugene Emergency Physicians (EEP) to ApolloMD across our three Lane County medical centers to strengthen patient access, throughput and quality. The transition will begin on June 1, 2026, at PeaceHealth Peace Harbor and Cottage Grove Community Medical Centers, and on July 1, 2026, at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend.

## Challenges Driving the Change

The emergency department at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend has experienced a sharp, sustained rise in patient volume, increasing from [roughly 55,000 visits in fiscal year 2024 to more than 80,000 projected this year](#). This rapid growth reflects both community-level and regional system pressures, including the closure of the University District emergency department, an aging population and the continued loss of primary care access across Lane County. Together, these factors have led to a surge in patients seeking emergency care, many of whom present with **higher acuity and more complex medical needs, and a growing reliance on ambulance transport**. With the rise in patient volume, the RiverBend emergency department's physical layout has become **too small since the facility opened in 2008**, forcing care teams to rely on temporary and non-traditional spaces, to safely manage the surge in high-acuity patients. [Emergency departments across Oregon are experiencing significant strain, with lengthy average visit times and high, variable and often crowded conditions.](#)

## Why ApolloMD

PeaceHealth selected ApolloMD after completing a comprehensive and competitive review process that included proposals from multiple physician groups, including Eugene Emergency Physicians. The review focused on Lane County's future emergency medicine needs and the type of resource required to meet increasingly high patient volumes and clinical complexity. ApolloMD was chosen because it brings depth of experience, operational infrastructure, and demonstrated outcomes that align with PeaceHealth's long-term goals for access and quality.

ApolloMD has extensive experience operating **high-volume, high-acuity emergency departments**, including as a service provider to several departments with more than **80,000** annual visits and two

with more than 150,000. As patient complexity, ambulance traffic and community demand increase, PeaceHealth requires a partner with a proven ability to stabilize operations in rapidly growing emergency settings. **ApolloMD's record of managing high-volume environments distinguishes the organization as one capable of meeting today's challenges and planning for the future.**

### **ApolloMD Is Not Private Equity Owned (and Never Has Been)**

**ApolloMD operates as a physician-owned, physician-led organization, meaning it does not answer to private equity firms or other outside investors.** This structure reinforces PeaceHealth's emphasis on medical leadership, operational transparency and patient-focused decision-making. Because ApolloMD's leaders are practicing emergency physicians who work directly in clinical settings, they understand frontline realities and bring a level of accountability, responsiveness and clinical insight that aligns with PeaceHealth's Mission and Values. This model stood out during the evaluation process because it supports consistency across emergency departments while ensuring decisions remain rooted in patient care rather than investor interests.

ApolloMD is not, and has never been, owned, controlled or backed by private equity. The organization has been **privately held since its founding and has never pursued or accepted private equity investment.** Its prior ownership entity, ValorBridge, which included founders and active physician leaders, has also never been associated with private equity or outside stakeholders.

### **ApolloMD is Already a Proven PeaceHealth Partner**

PeaceHealth's confidence in ApolloMD is strengthened by **firsthand experience at PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center.** When that emergency department experienced an abrupt service disruption, ApolloMD partnered with local leaders to stabilize operations, attract and retain physicians, **and improve patient experience scores.** This successful partnership demonstrated ApolloMD's ability to respond quickly, embed durable improvements and support both patient care and clinician well-being during challenging transitions. That record of performance was an important consideration for Lane County's emergency departments, which are navigating rapid growth.

PeaceHealth appreciates EEP physicians' decades of service to the community and continues to value their commitment and expertise. The decision **reflects the changing demands** placed on the emergency system and the **need for a partner equipped with national resources, large-scale operational experience** and a proven ability to enhance access and flow while supporting local physicians. **ApolloMD's ability to combine national best practices with local engagement** is central to PeaceHealth's belief that the organization is the right choice for Lane County's emergency departments.

### **This Is Not a Cost-Cutting Decision**

The transition to ApolloMD is **not** a cost-reduction strategy but part of a broader effort to expand capacity, improve patient flow and strengthen emergency care across Lane County. The organization has made **substantial financial investments in recent years** to meet rising demand, including adding

**23 new beds, 20 new care spaces** in the emergency department, **27 new nursing positions** and **205 additional caregiver hours per day** to support emergency operations. These enhancements reflect a commitment to reinforcing frontline staffing and expanding the space needed to manage sustained increases in high-acuity patients.

PeaceHealth has invested more than **\$25 million** over the past two years to expand access and clinical capacity, including a **\$6 million renovation of the RiverBend emergency department**, now underway. This project will further increase clinical care space, improve flow and help reduce bottlenecks as patient volume continues to rise. These capital improvements are paired with systemwide operational work and design changes intended to enhance reliability and reduce waiting during surges.

In addition to these investments, our goal is to grow emergency medicine services, unify care across Lane County and strengthen the long-term stability of its emergency departments. PeaceHealth and ApolloMD also share a commitment to maintaining well-staffed departments, emphasizing that competitive compensation is essential to attracting and retaining high-quality clinicians. This decision is **not about reducing physician compensation or lowering operating costs**. PeaceHealth continues to **invest in space, staffing and systems because strengthening the emergency care infrastructure is critical to ensuring patients can receive timely, reliable and safe care both now and in the future**.

### Clarifying Our Commitment to Local Emergency Physicians

We understand that the transition to ApolloMD has raised concern among clinicians and community members, and we are working to address several recurring misconceptions directly. One of the most significant clarifications is that **PeaceHealth is not replacing its emergency physicians with locums or physician assistants**. Both PeaceHealth and ApolloMD believe in the importance of physicians who live in and understand the communities they serve. ApolloMD has a strong track record of **recruiting and retaining emergency physicians**, and the emergency departments in Lane County will continue to operate under a **physician-led model**.

### What Patients & Community Can Expect

We will continue providing **uninterrupted emergency care** throughout this transition, and our teams remain focused on delivering safe, reliable service every day. Our emergency departments will continue to be staffed by **clinicians who care for this community**, supported by ApolloMD's national expertise. This approach reflects our commitment to clinical leadership and community-rooted care.

We are also continuing to **invest in improvements that reduce wait times and strengthen patient flow**, addressing the growing demands on our emergency departments. Above all, we remain grounded in our **Mission and Values**, ensuring every decision we make supports compassionate, high-quality care for the people we serve.

### PeaceHealth Conducted a Rigorous RFP

PeaceHealth carried out a thorough request-for-proposals (RFP) process to select a partner. The RFP process was initiated because EEP's contract was set to expire. **Six organizations were invited, with four submitting proposals.** One withdrew due to the demanding process, and another could not meet Oregon Senate Bill 951 requirements related to corporate structure. Proposals covered qualifications, experience, ability to recruit and retain quality staff, management platform sophistication, quality improvement programs and metrics, financial stability, transition planning, potential for collaboration, performance on operational and clinical indicators (including sample quality dashboards) and patient satisfaction results.

**A diverse group of seven PeaceHealth Oregon leaders, led by an experienced senior system leader, served on the RFP committee.** Participants included Drs. McGovern and Ruscher, along with leaders from nursing, finance and emergency departments.

**The committee adhered to best practices for RFP evaluation,** reviewing proposals on their individual merits. Each proposing organization participated in two interview rounds: the first to present themselves and ask questions about PeaceHealth and the RiverBend ED, and the second for committee members to seek clarification on the submitted proposal. The committee then evaluated each participant based on a scorecard of established criteria, held a deliberation session, and made a recommendation. Throughout, a non-voting system leader served as the sole point of contact, ensuring consistent and transparent communication, and the PeaceHealth legal team provided advice and oversight.

After careful scoring and deliberation, **the committee recommended awarding the contract to ApolloMD as the proposal best aligned with PeaceHealth Oregon's current and future needs.** PeaceHealth system leadership approved this recommendation. As a courtesy, Dr. McGovern informed EEP verbally of their non-selection before sending official notification letters to each participating organization.

The RFP process identified significant opportunities to enhance quality, access and clinician support by transitioning to a new organization, ApolloMD, including:

- **Proven success in process improvement:** ApolloMD provided detailed case studies demonstrating strong, hands-on support for process improvement initiatives that directly impact access and patient flow.
- **Strong clinical excellence infrastructure:** ApolloMD described mature programs for benchmarking, monitoring and supporting adherence to clinical quality metrics, ensuring consistent, evidence-based care across sites.
- **Robust commitment to patient satisfaction:** ApolloMD uses sophisticated patient satisfaction tracking and training tools with clear accountability at the clinician level.
- **Comprehensive clinician support:** ApolloMD has demonstrated success in recruitment and retention, formal leadership development and mentoring programs, and clinician wellness programs. This provides stability and support for our care teams.

- **Deep community integration:** ApolloMD has a strong record of retaining local clinicians and deploying regional leadership as “boots on the ground” workers to ensure true understanding of community needs and ensure care reflects those needs.
- **Physician focus:** ApolloMD is a physician-owned and physician-led medical group, not a staffing company. They are financially stable and are not backed by any private equity funds.

### **ApolloMD’s Practice Will Comply with Oregon’s Senate Bill 951**

ApolloMD will serve as the management services organization for Lane Emergency Physicians, a physician-owned practice. ApolloMD and Lane Emergency Physicians are committed to full compliance with Oregon’s SB 951 and will meet all requirements in advance of the transition dates.