



# How Teamwork and Collaboration Provide Exceptional Care to Southwest Louisiana



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If you drive by West Calcasieu Cameron Hospital (WCCH) in Sulphur, Louisiana, you'll see eight healthcare offices. Inside are 13 physicians and their care teams, providing primary care, obstetrics, gynecology, and pediatric care to the families in Calcasieu and Cameron parishes, the hospital's service area.

Some of the doctors have been in this community for over 60 years, establishing relationships as they care for generations of families. Throughout the decades, teamwork between the hospital, the primary care physicians (PCPs) who work for the hospital, and the surrounding independent primary care practices has been a constant. As Anne Billeaudeau, WCCH's Director of Business Relations and Physician Development, said, "the independence of the practices is just as important as our collaboration."

At Aledade, our vision is a health care system based on value with independent, primary care practices at the center. WCCH proves that we're not the only ones who share this guiding principle.

WCCH is working with the Aledade Louisiana ACO to improve the continuity of care, resulting in patients receiving a timelier follow-up and supporting care across the community. This effort started in March of last year, when WCCH's IT department helped the hospital join an Admission Discharge Transfer (ADT) network. The ADT connects with the Aledade App, practices can find out in a timely way when

their patients are in the ED and hospital. When patients are discharged, a case manager faxes practices if a patient isn't discharged to their home.

Before, practices struggled to follow up if patients had been to the ED or hospital because notification was cumbersome and completely manual. When providers know about a hospitalization they are able to follow up in a timely way. A patient being discharged from the hospital with several new medications and changes in their daily care, can become overwhelmed navigating those changes alone. With the improved communication from the work between WCCH

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and Aledade PCPs can support their patients and help them better manage recovery.

WCCH wants to help prevent avoidable readmissions and keep patients healthier with the appropriate level of care. Because WCCH joined the ADT, many patients in Sulphur have visited their PCP after discharge and have been able

to get the follow up care or education they need to stay healthy and out of the hospital.

Collaboration with the Aledade Louisiana ACO has been good for the hospital, the independent physicians, and most importantly, the patients. I asked a few of the key leaders from the hospital, as well as the independent primary care doctors, to talk about successes to date:

**Kathy Doty, Director of Quality Assurance at WCCH**

*Our outcome-driven journey into quality started more than 10 years ago, with a CMS/JC project. We discussed sharing data with our partner physicians in a meaningful way on a regular basis. We learned how to use and apply this data, alongside*

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*our physicians. It led to a few uncomfortable talks, but we all knew this data could help drive improvements in care for our patients.*

*As care managers, we're trained to avoid the rain clouds, which motivated us to embrace the shift to value-based care. We warned folks that if we missed the boat on value-based care not only would there be future financial penalties, we'd be left behind. We discussed both sides with our clinical team and chose to embrace the new system and implement at our own pace.*

**Janie Fruge, Chief Executive Officer at WCCH**

*We always focused on meaningful ways to share our data and be confident in the data we receive. Through effective communication and actionable plans, we've improved care in our surgical initiatives, reduced central line infections, and decreased pneumonia diagnoses.*

*Our physicians and clinicians formed a virtual medical community home; the experience was mixed. Some primary care providers joined in, some didn't commit right away. For the doctors who did participate, they found success and started speaking in favor of it. They encouraged the others to join, then Aledade helped everyone get on the same page. Now, the people who were the most skeptical are the biggest fans.*

*For us, and the physicians around WCCH, joining Aledade was a natural extension of our quality work. Our early efforts showed us how data could promote quality care. Aledade brought the tools, and helped us share ideas in a complete plan that we can all execute, together.*

**Dr. Maureen Lannan, Cypress Clinic**

*As we enter agreements aimed at lowering costs and improving care for a defined group of patients, the hospital/PCP relationship is critical, especially when it comes to the discharge process of patients. Better communication between the hospital medical team, patients, caregivers, and the outpatient medical team is vital, so that patients do as well as possible after they return home.*

In conclusion, value-based care is good for our patients, and Aledade has helped improve our systems. At the center is a durable partnership between the hospital and the independent primary care practices in the community. We look forward to seeing what the coming years bring, and continuing to turn our data insights into quality initiatives to better serve the community we've served together for over half a century.