

Contact

Joel Condon, 763-383-4162, jcondon@nweyeclinic.com

Robin Scherrer, 612-238-3007, robin@linnihanfoy.com

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local ophthalmology practices announce divisional merger *Twin Cities Eye Consultants to form out of three separate practices*

MINNEAPOLIS, February 21, 2017 — Three metro-area ophthalmology practices are collaborating to become Twin Cities Eye Consultants (TCEC). The divisional merger includes Northwest Eye Clinic, North Suburban Eye Specialists, and Edina Eye Physicians & Surgeons.

“After months of carefully considering the needs of our patients, employees and partners, the divisional merger will facilitate growth for each of the participating practices, improve efficiencies and deliver higher quality care to our patients,” said Timothy J. Ehlen M.D., president at Northwest Eye Clinic.

Forming TCEC aims to improve communication, cooperation, and co-management with local eye care providers, primary care providers, and other referring providers. By collaborating together, these three groups will additionally provide increased benefits to patients, referring doctors, health plans, care systems, employer groups, employees and physician owners.

“We’re looking forward to maximizing our potential for clinical advancements and opportunities for new service lines and technologies that directly benefit our patients,” said Mark C. Lobanoff, M.D., senior partner at North Suburban Eye Specialists. “The merger brings greater opportunities for bringing advanced technology, providing higher quality care to patients across the Twin Cities, which may not have been as accessible before the merger. TCEC will remain a physician-owned enterprise because of the strong belief that physician ownership results in a better decision-making process in the interest of the patient. As a doctor-owned practice, our patients are at the center of every decision we make.”

Each division of TCEC will continue to provide services at its respective locations. The individual practices each have their own physician owners, board and management team which will be responsible for day-to-day operations and management decisions of that division. The merger will create a TCEC board of directors that will consist of representatives from each division. The TCEC board will be responsible for corporate-wide decisions, such as third-party payer contracting, large capital expenditures, and other matters affecting the corporation as a whole.

“By structuring the merger with a corporate board overseeing the entire organization, each division will continue to handle the daily operations of their practice, just as they have in the past,” said Scott T. Schaefer, M.D., partner with Edina Eye Physicians & Surgeons. “This means patients and employees will experience a seamless transition with no disruption to day-to-day operations.”

Health plans can expect additional benefits to working with TCEC, as contracting with a larger ophthalmology group that covers a larger portion of the Twin Cities, can help increase member access and save on costs. Health plans can assure their members of higher quality care by partnering with TCEC, because the clinical integration will be focused on improving quality of care and services.

“The divisional merger makes TCEC a better partner to health systems and third-party payers,” said Joen Condon, Executive Director of Northwest Eye Clinic. “With a corporate entity overseeing the operations, TCEC will be better equipped to participate in quality improvement programs and initiatives and access to improved clinical care.”

TCEC does not anticipate any layoffs occurring as a result of the merger, because each division will continue to provide services within their current settings and operate with the same management structure. While job duties may change for some individuals as new technologies and treatments become available, these changes will be addressed on a divisional level.

Current patients at each of the three practices can continue to see their doctor. Physician staffing at each of the divisions and their locations will not change with the merger.

About TCEC

Twin Cities Eye Consultants is the collaboration formed by Northwest Eye Clinic, North Suburban Eye Specialists, and Edina Eye Physicians & Surgeons. Northwest Eye Clinic operates clinics in Elk River, Golden Valley, Maple Grove, Minnetonka, Robbinsdale, St. Anthony and Wayzata. North Suburban Eye Specialists operates clinics in Coon Rapids, Blaine, and White Bear Lake, Minn. and St. Croix Falls, Wis. Edina Eye Physicians & Surgeons operates clinics in Burnsville, Chaska, Edina, Elk River, New Prague, Princeton, Shakopee and Waconia. Together, TCEC brings patients 39 doctors at 19 locations within the Twin Cities and surrounding communities.

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