

Grays Harbor Community Hospital Names Interim CEO

Local News

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Aberdeen, WA – Grays Harbor Community Hospital announced today it has appointed Michael R. Fraser of Lake Oswego, OR as its Interim-CEO. Fraser will temporarily step in for the vacating John Mitchell who announced in September he’d be leaving at year’s end. Fraser will begin his duties at GHCH in mid-December as Mitchell transitions out.

“It was a very sad day for our hospital when John told us he was leaving” said Mike Melville, GHCH Board Chairman. Mitchell cited family obligations as the reason for his departure. “We completely support John’s desire to put his family first. In the same regard, we are putting our hospital first in terms of looking for the right permanent replacement. We owe it to this hospital, and to the community to spend the time necessary to find the best person that fits our organizational culture, and who has the demonstrated ability to keep us moving forward.”

Bringing in an Interim-CEO gives the professional recruiter and the hospital’s Board of Directors time to identify Mitchell’s replacement. “Michael Fraser has more than 20 years of experience in running hospitals. More importantly”, said Melville, “he spent many of those years in hospitals that follow the same cultural philosophy as ours.”

It could take several months to identify and install the new CEO. “We have used internal Administrators as Interim-CEOs in the past”, said Melville. “But frankly, it adds excessively to their work load. We are very much focused on maintaining our quality and service improvements; we don’t want any backsliding. So having someone whose sole responsibility is to keep the hospital on track during this time period makes sense for us.”

After having spent 27 years in hospital administrative roles, Fraser is now a consultant specializing in services for hospitals, health systems and medical groups. One of those services is interim management. He most recently served as Interim-CEO at Kittitas Valley Hospital in Ellensburg. “I enjoy working in this role for hospitals”, shares Fraser. “I treat the position as if I’ll be here 10 years; but I come into the situation knowing my job is to keep the organization growing and to help them get through the transition to a new CEO.”

Melville indicated the process to find the new CEO will be similar to the last one. “The good news is that our hospital is in a significantly different position than it was the last time we went looking for a CEO. By every measure, be it quality or service excellence – we have improved. This is a hospital people want to work for; so we suspect we’ll have a number of exceptional candidates that rise to the top.” Melville indicated the Board of Directors plan to involve the medical staff, employees and the community in having the opportunity to meet the finalists, once they’ve been identified, and weigh in on their thoughts as to the best one for the job.

“Mike Fraser’s range of experience and his commitment to our cultural values gives us great confidence as we seek John’s replacement”, summed up Melville. “This is the next step in our journey, and we’re very excited about the days ahead.”