

The Paris News

PRMC has new CEO

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Christopher Dux, who has served as top administrator at River Park Hospital in McMinnville, Tenn., is the new chief executive officer at Paris Regional Medical Center.

Essent Healthcare officials made the announcement Saturday.

“Chris combines the strong leadership, effective communication and operational know-how we're looking for,” said W. Hudson Connery Jr., Essent's president and chief executive officer. “He has proven himself in a variety of situations, and we're glad to have him join our team.”

Dux, who has worked in hospital administration since 1977, plans to be in Paris May 14.

In a statement Essent released Saturday, Dux was described as a "proven hospital operator."

Essent officials also announced Richard E. Salerno, who has been interim chief executive officer at Paris Regional since January, rejoins the company's corporate leadership team as senior vice president of operations. Salerno plans to stay in Paris to assist with Dux's transition, according to the statement.

“I'm excited to join Essent and look forward to working with the talented and dedicated staff at Paris Regional,” Dux said. “I see a bright future for the hospital, and I am eager to continue the excellent work Richard Salerno and his team have been doing in Paris.”

Dux comes to the 300-bed medical center from a 127-bed facility, but his career in hospital administration has taken him from Virginia to Tennessee and Arizona. His background includes serving as interim chief executive officer at two community hospitals along the Texas coast — Aransas Pass and Center.

A graduate of Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina and the Duke Endowment/Charlotte Memorial Hospital and Medical Center, Dux began his career at hospitals in North Carolina — Charlotte, Sylva, Mocksville and Statesville. In 1992, he became chief executive officer of HealthTrust's Pulaski Community Hospital in Pulaski, Va. He also has led hospitals owned by HCA Inc. and Vanguard Health Systems, according to the statement Essent released.

According to his personal Web site — www.chrisdux.com — other places where Dux has worked as a hospital administrator include Chattanooga, Tenn.; Adel, Ga.; Picayune, Miss.; Wentzville, Mo.; Davenport, Iowa; Lander, Wyo.; Phoenix, Ariz.; and Morgan City, La.

"My experience includes both not-for-profit and for-profit facilities, bed sizes from 64 beds to over 500, from single site stand alone hospitals to multi-campus facilities," Dux states on his Web site.

"Regardless of the size or ownership of the hospital, the common value in their success has been the dedicated, competent, caring and compassionate physicians and employees who, every day, try to make a positive difference in the lives of the patients they serve," he states.

"I've been honored and privileged to assist each of these facilities' physicians and employees achieve higher levels of patient, physician and employee satisfaction through service delivery improvements and continuous quality improvements," Dux said.

As senior vice president of operations, Salerno will be responsible for Paris Regional as well as Merrimack Valley Hospital in Massachusetts. He also will focus on the company's quality improvement efforts and other corporate initiatives, Essent officials said.

"Richard has done a fine job in the short time he's been in Paris," Connery said. "His leadership skills will be very valuable at the corporate level as we continue to build Essent into a premier hospital operator."

Salerno has more than two decades of healthcare operations experience. He served for 12 years as a hospital chief executive officer in the HCA/HealthTrust/Columbia system in Austin and Charlotte, N.C., before joining Essent in 1999. He rejoined the company last year after a stint at FTI Cambio Health Solutions, a hospital turnaround company.

Founded in 1999, Essent owns and operates community hospitals. Essent properties are in Haverhill and Ayer, Mass.; and Waynesburg, Penn.; and Sharon, Conn., in addition to Paris.

Paris Regional offers acute-care services as well as women's health, rehabilitation, outpatient surgery, gero-psychiatric services and pediatric services, providing care to Northeast Texas and Southeast Oklahoma.

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