

Press Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wisconsin's Only School for Nurse Anesthesia Chooses Sauk Prairie Hospital for Unique Clinical Training

Franciscan Skemp Healthcare School of Nurse Anesthesia chose Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital & Clinics (SPMHC) as the only clinical training facility in south central Wisconsin. This unique opportunity for nurse anesthesia began in June 2008 after a stringent accreditation process.

The school is a joint program between University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and Franciscan Skemp, which is part of a health care network serving an 11-county area in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Students are awarded a master's degree in biology after completing a rigorous curriculum.

Nurses typically have significant experience in critical care settings prior to acceptance into the anesthesia program at Franciscan Skemp.

In Wisconsin, a certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA) is qualified to provide anesthesia services to patients as an independent practitioner and may do so without supervision by an anesthesiologist. Anesthetists are licensed and must pass a national certification exam.

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“Sauk Prairie offers students substantial exposure to pain management that they don’t receive elsewhere. They gain experience as independent practitioners in a highly professional and skilled environment — this is critical for patients,” says Barb Jochman, program director of the School of Nurse Anesthesia in La Crosse.

A large number of facilities only have CRNAs that work under a physician’s supervision. At SPMHC, nurse anesthetists work as independent medical professionals; a higher level of expertise is required. This makes Sauk Prairie ideal for training.

Seven independent CRNAs work as a team to provide intensive clinical experiences at Sauk Prairie for one to two weeks per student. Additional clinical rotations are provided closer to La Crosse.

The new clinical rotation at SPMHC increases the number of qualified, self-directed anesthesia professionals in communities across the state.

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