



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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ST. LUKE'S INTENSIVIST PROGRAM USES CRITICAL CARE TRAINED PHYSICIANS TO IMPROVE PATIENT OUTCOMES

(Boise, ID) – The goal was to improve the outcomes of patients in critical care, and after completing one year, St. Luke's Intensivist Program has accomplished that goal, in addition to increasing patient, staff, and doctor satisfaction.

Patients in St. Luke's Regional Medical Center's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Coronary Care Unit (CCU) now have a critical-care trained doctor called an intensivist, who is not only physically present in the unit but supports other physicians caring for critically ill patients, coordinating care with nurses and other health care team members.

“As an intensivist, I'm present for a patient when they need me the most – immediately,” said Dr. Jim Souza, a pulmonologist for Idaho Pulmonary Associates and a St. Luke's intensivist. “This program provides me with opportunities to work with patients, educate staff, and improve communication between different teams of caregivers thus improving outcomes.”

Because of their presence in the units, intensivists are immediately available to intervene in emergencies and address urgent issues requiring immediate physician intervention such as, placement of critical IV lines, breathing tubes and administration of vital medications. This provides streamlined treatment for St. Luke's most fragile patients, helping to achieve the best clinical outcomes and save lives.

Since the inception of this program, significant clinical advances have been made – St. Luke's patients are getting off ventilators sooner and are experiencing fewer complications. Prior to the program, these patients depended on ventilators (breathing machines) for an average of 2.7 days, which has now been decreased to an average of 2 days. The average of our peers, on a national level, is 4.7 days. Decreasing time on the ventilator is important because it decreases risk of infection and time spent in the hospital.

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Beyond the important positive clinical outcomes, patient and staff satisfaction is also on the rise. High marks have been given to the program from patients and family members, St. Luke's physicians/staff reported nearly 100% satisfaction with all areas of the intensivist program.

St. Luke's Intensivist Program has standardized a high level of quality care for every patient. "We provide a high level of care that provides our patients with the best possible chance at having a better quality of life after leaving the ICU or CCU," added Souza.

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