

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

UMMC RESPONDS TO CITY WATER CRISIS, CONTINUES PATIENT CARE

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JACKSON, Miss. – Water line breaks caused by recent freezing temperatures disrupted water pressure throughout Jackson last week, prompting closure of several University of Mississippi Medical Center off-campus clinics and movement of outpatient dialysis operations from the Renal Clinic at the Jackson Medical Mall Thad Cochran Center to an emergency, on-campus location.

Throughout the water crisis, Medical Center administrators, faculty and staff moved quickly to accommodate patients, continue care and assist other local hospitals with operations including laundry and surgical instrument sterilization.

The Medical Center is fed by a well system so the main campus maintained water service throughout the crisis. Five off-campus clinical locations and one office building, which use city water service, were forced to curtail operations on Monday January 11, those being:

- University Physicians Northeast Jackson at Select Specialty Hospital
- Pediatrics services at the North Clinic and the Pediatric Specialty Clinic near Veterans Memorial stadium
- West Jackson Family Medical Center
- Lakeland Family Medicine Center
- Medical Mall offices: Ambulatory Care Clinics, Cancer Institute clinics, Department of Radiation Oncology and the outpatient dialysis center
- Medical Towers on Woodrow Wilson Ave.

On Monday morning, staffers at the outpatient renal dialysis clinic discovered there was not enough water pressure to run the dialysis equipment, said Pat Brunson, director of dialysis services.

The clinic treats 70 patients a day on average, and uses approximately 6,000 gallons of water per day to operate the kidney dialysis machines.

After relocating the patients to the Acute Dialysis Unit at University Hospital on Monday and Tuesday, a location that usually treats only 12 patients a day, administrators decided Tuesday afternoon to move the outpatient renal dialysis operations into a temporary, emergency location in University Hospital near the Acute Dialysis Unit.

With help from Assistant Director of Facilities Larry Lineberry, clinic staff worked through Tuesday night transforming a dormant occupational therapy room into an emergency outpatient dialysis unit. Dialysis chairs and machines were moved from the Medical Mall to University Hospital, and by 10 a.m. Wednesday, the first group of patients began treatment.

Throughout the week, all of the clinic's regular patients were serviced at the emergency clinic along with several patients from Baptist Health Systems. The Medical Center sterilized surgical instruments for Baptist, and UMMC's laundry facilities processed loads for both Baptist and St. Dominic's Hospital.

Before city water service was fully restored, staff at the Lakeland Family Medicine Center returned to work mid week with the aid of portable restrooms and sanitization stations. As water pressure rose throughout Jackson, UMMC's other clinics reopened.

Brunson said the outpatient dialysis equipment was moved back to the Medical Mall on Tuesday afternoon, and the clinic resumed normal operations on Wednesday, January 20.

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Please forward this message to colleagues who might be interested. If you wish to be removed from this list or know of a colleague to add, send an e-mail message to: LAGriffin@pubaffairs.umsmed.edu.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. University of Mississippi Health Care represents the clinical programs of the Medical Center and includes University Hospitals and Health System and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's citizens. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at 601-984-1100 or visit us on the Web at <http://info.umc.edu/>.