

Leadership Profiles



Melinda Clark
Chief Executive Officer

Melinda Clark joined HSHS in 2010 after serving as the president and CEO of the Texas Region of St. Joseph Health System in Orange, California. Prior to joining SJHS in 2007, she served for 12 years in the SSM Health Care System in various leadership positions, including president of DePaul Health Center, president of SSM Rehab, and vice president of operations, SSM Rehabilitation Institute. Melinda holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from Indiana University and a master's degree in public administration from Golden Gate University in California.



Loren Hughes, MD
President

Board certified in family medicine, Loren Hughes, MD, studied at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and completed his family medicine training at St. Mary's Hospital in Milwaukee, where he served as the chief resident. Before accepting the role of president at HSHS Medical Group, he directed emergency rooms in several HSHS hospitals, was the medical director for the Southern Illinois Division and practiced at HSHS Medical Group Family & Internal Medicine - Collinsville. He has a Certified Physician Executive designation from the American Association for Physician Leadership.



Tammy Lett, RN, MBHA
**Chief Program Integration Office (*Interim*)
& Director - Operations, Springfield, Central IL**

Tammy Lett, RN, MBHA, comes to HSHS Medical Group with 25 years of acute care hospital experience including roles as director of professional services and chief nursing officer. She has contributed to HSHS ministries for more than 20 years. Tammy is a registered nurse and earned her bachelor's degree in organizational leadership from Greenville University and her master's degree in business and health care administration from Regis University in Denver, Colorado.



Mary Embertson, CPA
Chief Financial Officer

Mary Embertson brings to HSHS Medical Group more than 25 years of experience in health care finance. Her experience includes auditing, consulting and over 15 years as a hospital or regional health care CFO. Mary is a CPA and earned her bachelor's degree in education from the University of Whitewater and her master's degree in accounting from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.



Penny McCarty, MHRIR, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Chief Human Resources Officer

Penny McCarty holds a master's degree in human resources and industrial relations from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign and is currently pursuing a doctorate in public administration. She is certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources by the HR Certification Institute. A member and past president of the Central Illinois Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management, Penny received their Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011.



Vince Noel, MHI

Vice President of Strategy & Business Development

Vince Noel, MHI, joined HSHS Medical Group in 2010 and brings more than 12 years of experience in leadership, strategy and development. Prior to joining HSHS Medical Group, Vince served as a specialty sales executive for Sanofi-Aventis Pharmaceuticals, and as vice-president of sales and investments for JP Morgan Chase in Springfield. He graduated from the University of Illinois with a bachelor's degree in business administration, and completed a master's degree in health care innovation (MHI) at Arizona State University. In his current role he is focused on strategy, development and the implementation of health care innovations for future needs.



Paige Toth, JD

Vice President, Associate General Counsel

Paige Toth, JD, received a Juris Doctor from St. Louis University School of Law in St. Louis, and is also a graduate of the Decatur Leadership Institute. In addition, she is certified by the American Association of Healthcare Risk Management (AAHRM). Before joining HSHS Medical Group, Paige served as the director of legal affairs and risk management at Decatur Memorial Hospital, heading up both programs for DMH. Prior to this position she practiced in the areas of real estate, civil defense litigation and worker's compensation defense.



Keith Griffeth

Director of Quality

Keith Griffeth earned his Master of Business Administration from William Woods University in Fulton, MO, and his Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Culver Stockton College in Canton, MO and Blessing Rieman College of Nursing in Quincy, IL. A member of the American Society for Quality, National Association for Healthcare Quality and the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Keith has nearly 20 years of experience in health care management. Before joining HSHS Medical Group, Keith served as director of quality for Hannibal Regional Healthcare System in Hannibal, MO.



Craig Brace, FACHE

Director of Marketing & Communications

Craig Brace brings more than 30 years of experience in health care management, strategic planning, business development and marketing communications to his current role. He earned a bachelor's degree from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, MO, and is board certified in health care management by the American College of Healthcare Executives. Craig is also a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.



Robert Farmer, MD

Medical Director, Southern IL

Robert Farmer, MD, graduated from the University of Illinois before attending Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. He completed a family practice residency at Deaconess Hospital in Evansville, Indiana. Prior to assuming the role of medical director in HSHS Medical Group's Southern Illinois Division, Dr. Farmer practiced family medicine in New Baden, IL.



Mandi Vehlow, MPA

Director - Operations, Southern IL

Mandi Vehlow, MPA, completed her bachelor's degree in health care administration from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She then continued on to complete her master's degree in public administration with a concentration in nonprofit organizations. Mandi joined HSHS Medical Group in 2011 and has served in several leadership roles before stepping into her current position as director of operations for the Southern Illinois Division.



Ashish Tokhi, MD

Medical Director of Inpatient Services, Central IL

Ashish Tokhi, MD, earned his medical degree from Agra University and completed an internal medicine residency at Mercy Catholic Medical Center in Darby, Pennsylvania. Dr. Tokhi also earned a Master of Science degree in molecular, cellular and systemic physiology from Southern Illinois University. Board Certified in internal medicine, Dr. Tokhi is a member of the American College of Physicians and the Society of Hospital Medicine. He is certified by the American Association for Physician Executives as a Certified Physician Executive.



James Bock, MD

Medical Director, Central IL

Board certified in family medicine, James Bock, MD, received his education and completed his residency at the University of Illinois College of Medicine, Rockford. Before stepping into this role, Dr. Bock served the health care needs of the Decatur area community since 1990 as a family medicine physician. He is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians.



Simone Wheeler, RN, MEd, MHRD, MSML

Director - Operations, Decatur, Central IL

Simone Wheeler joined HSHS Medical Group in 2015 with 20 years of health care operations and clinical leadership experience. Previously she served as a senior director physician practice at Touchette Regional Hospital in Centreville, Illinois. Simone holds bachelor's and master's degrees in workforce education & development from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and master's degrees in human resource development and leadership & management from Webster University, St. Louis. She is also a registered nurse with over 25 years of experience.

In her current role she provides leadership to practice managers and colleagues within the central Illinois Decatur region.