

Steve Wells, President of Los Alamos National Bank, has assumed the chairmanship of Los Alamos Medical Center's Board of Trustees, effective June 4. He succeeds Dr. A. Carolyn Linnebur whose second 3-year term expires in June. LAMC Chief Executive Officer Sandra C. Podley announced the transition following the June board meeting.

"We are so fortunate to have leaders of this caliber," Podley said. "We thank Dr. Linnebur for the excellent job she did in leading the board, and we welcome Steve Wells to the chair. We anticipate capitalizing on Steve's business and process improvement expertise and his community involvement as we move forward in our journey of excellence."

Wells said community and personal reasons spurred his desire to be involved with the board. "My interest in getting on the hospital advisory board initially was spurred just by getting older and understanding the importance of good health and getting more focused on things that make a community great.

"I believe three things are key and critical to a community – education ("I'm on the board of Los Alamos Public Schools Foundation."), health care ("I consider myself lucky not to have a lot of experience in this area.), and finance ("I've worked in it for 31 years in Los Alamos.").

"I haven't spent a lot of time in health care professionally, but it has touched my life personally like it has others; my father fought leukemia for 6 years and died when I was 19, and my brother later died of multiple myeloma at 51. I've learned that health and health care is a real critical aspect of life and the community where you live. I want it to be great in my community."

He has been on the LAMC Board for 3 years and in that time has seen "immense progress and improvements" at the facility. He believes more can be achieved and hopes his role as board chair will play an important part in continuing that progress.

"It's an old saying," Wells says. "If you're doing something you love, you'll never have to work a day in your life." Healthcare is very interesting to me and I want to be a part of improving it even more. I'm very excited about the staff that we have – Sandy (Podley, LAMC's Chief Executive Officer), Gayle (Hesser, Chief Nursing Officer), and Sara (Pasqualoni, MD, the current Chief of the Medical Staff) are world class. We have passionate people working very hard to make this a top medical center. My board involvement is a way I can assist their journey to deliver outstanding healthcare."

Wells said his first recollection of the hospital was at the age of 8 after his fall from the slide at Pinon Elementary School in White Rock. "I broke my arm, so they brought me to the emergency room, and I remember how really big the place looked." It was awe-inspiring at the time and his current task as board chair feels much the same.

“I might not have been as willing (to serve as chair) if it weren’t for (Podley),” Wells said. “One of the main reasons I’m glad to do it is because of my high regard for her level of expertise in the healthcare field. My area of expertise is in business, finance and organization; my contribution won’t be on the medical front but I hope to enhance our customer service focus and alignment with the needs of the community.”

LAMC’s parent corporation, LifePoint Hospitals, Inc., also found favor with Wells. “I’m impressed with LifePoint,” he said. “They allow hospitals in their communities to operate like small community hospitals should.” In considering recent progress, he added, “I guess I should say ‘like a regional hospital should operate, because that’s what we’re becoming – a strong, regional medical center.’”

He reiterated his pride in LAMC’s accomplishments thus far but emphasized his vision to continue getting better. “We’ve come a long way, but we can do more. I see the Advisory Board as the rudder; we’re not the propulsion, we’re not the ship. We’ll guide it in the right direction for the benefit of the community, for LifePoint, and for LAMC itself. We’ll make sure the hospital is positioned to meet the needs of the community and the region.”

Wells has been president of LANB since 1994. He began his banking career 31 years ago and has been with Los Alamos National Bank since 1985, where he also serves on the bank's board of directors. Wells received a BS in Business Administration from Eastern New Mexico University and is a graduate of the Western States School of Banking.

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