

University Health jettisons 'system' as it rebrands district name

By **Laura Garcia**

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You might not notice the change for a while yet, but University Health System has started to streamline its brand by dropping "system" from its name.

Bexar County Hospital District, which has done business as University Health System since the mid-1990s and has seen dramatic growth in the past decade, will eventually transition to "University Health."

"Dropping the word 'sys-

tem' is a trend happening across the country as health organizations strive to be clear, concise and consistent in how they present themselves," said Leni Kirkman, executive vice president and chief communications officer.

The hospital district requested proposals from ad firms last year and contracted with Denver-based Monigle, but declined to share the brand consulting agency's report.

Monigle has worked to rebrand other major health

systems in North Carolina and New Orleans, as well as executing national brand strategies for Bank of America, GE, Enterprise and the Denver Broncos.

Kirkman says the patient experience is not limited to a visit to the clinic or hospital, but every touch point, whether it be signs, websites or social media.

"It should be easy for our patients to know that they are in a University Health location so consistency is key as we move forward. In practical terms, one less

word on an external sign makes it easier to read. That may help first-time patients find the location easier," she said. "It also helps people easily recognize that a University Health location is in their neighborhood."

University Hospital, a 700-bed Level I trauma center and teaching hospital in the South Texas Medical Center, works closely with UT Health San Antonio and operates more than 23 outpatient clinics, four dialysis centers, a nonprofit health maintenance organization

and physician practice.

A \$500 million hospital for women and children on its main campus is expected to open in 2023.

Consumer data collected by NRC Health Market Insights show that University Hospital is the "most preferred" hospital in San Antonio, beating Methodist Hospital, which is under a 50-50 co-ownership agreement between nonprofit Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas and for-profit operator HCA Healthcare of Nashville,

Tenn.

Kirkman says she's seen a major shift in how the public system is viewed by consumers in the market. "We know our strong reputation isn't about new buildings or a logo but about the expertise and compassion of our team," she said. "We are truly honored by the confidence of this community and the trust our patients place in us."

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