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Carney Hospital in Dorchester names new president

By D.C. Denison and Globe Staff

Steward Health Care System, parent company of Carney Hospital in Dorchester, named a new president for the hospital Tuesday: Andrew Davis, the former chief executive of the Davis Regional Medical Center in Statesville, N.C. Davis will start at Carney on May 7.

Bill Walczak, Carney’s previous president, abruptly left the 186-bed hospital less than two weeks ago after 14 months on the job. Carney has been losing money for years amid cuts in government insurance payments for low income patients. Walczak denied Steward’s statement that he had resigned, but declined to elaborate on his departure.

As a “safety net” hospital with a majority of its patients covered by Medicaid and Medicare - the government health insurance programs for low-income and older residents - Carney has struggled for survival since at least the 1950s. There have been several threats to shutter the hospital, most recently by executives at Caritas Christi, Steward’s predecessor as the hospital’s owner. Caritas told labor representatives in September 2010 they would have to close Carney and St. Elizabeth’s if they could not complete a proposed sale of Caritas to Cerberus Capital Management. The private equity firm ultimately purchased Carney and five other Catholic hospitals from Caritas, then created Steward, a for-profit company, to manage the hospitals.

Davis has also acted as chief executive of Sandhills Regional Medical Center in Hamlet, N.C. He holds a B.S. in accounting and an MBA from Troy University, and is a Certified Public Accountant.

“I am thrilled to have the opportunity to join the talented and dedicated staff at Carney Hospital,” Davis said in a statement. “I am looking forward to working with them to make Carney the hospital of choice for residents of Dorchester.”

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