

It's official: Columbia Medical Associates is becoming Kaiser Permanente on January 1

Exciting changes are coming to Spokane at the start of the new year. Columbia Medical Associates officially becomes Kaiser Permanente on January 1, 2019. All our patients in the area gain access to the high-quality, coordinated care and convenience we provide at our medical centers. And that's just the beginning.

What will change in 2019?

Medical office moves. Four medical offices are moving to Kaiser Permanente medical centers, and all current Columbia Medical Associates' providers are moving with us. Doctors, nurses, and other specialists all work together at our medical centers. Patients can see their doctor and get lab services and X-rays — all in one visit. And Kaiser Permanente members can also pick up prescriptions.

- **Associated Family Physicians** is moving to the Kaiser Permanente Veradale Medical Center, 14402 E. Sprague Ave., Spokane Valley (3.8 miles away).
- **Associated Family Physicians – Fairfield** is moving to the Kaiser Permanente Veradale Medical Center, 14402 E. Sprague Ave., Spokane Valley (22.2 miles away).
- **Endocrinology Services** is moving to the Kaiser Permanente Riverfront Medical Center, 322 W. North River Drive, Spokane (3.7 miles away).
- **Westview Family Medicine** is moving to the Kaiser Permanente Lidgerwood Medical Center, 6002 N. Lidgerwood St., Spokane (2.8 miles away).

The medical offices will close on Saturday, December 29, and we'll begin serving patients at the new locations on Wednesday, January 2.

Consolidating medical offices that are very close to each other will help us serve our patients more efficiently in spacious and modern facilities and reduce duplication of services. Moving Endocrinology Services to Riverfront Medical Center supports our strategy to build on the specialty services already offered at our largest and most centralized medical center in the area — and we're also adding rheumatology services at the facility.

Health plan changes. Like all provider groups, each year we evaluate which health plans we will accept based on those that provide the most value and best experience for our patients.

Established patients who are insured with one of our [2019 contracted health plans](#) may continue to see their current CMA provider.

Patients will be notified of any plan changes prior to their open enrollment periods so they can make well-informed coverage decisions.

Payment changes. We will accept personal checks and Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and American Express bank cards. As part of our ongoing efforts to reduce non-medical overhead costs, we will no longer accept cash payments.

Online access to health records. Our electronic health records (EHR) system allows adult patients — both members and non-members — to view their own medical record, including health conditions, lab results, after-visit summaries, and more. In addition, a record of patients' care at Kaiser Permanente facilities will be accessible to outside providers who use the same EHR. Providers will also be able to review a patient's full CMA medical record if needed.

[How are we communicating changes to patients?](#)

CMA patients are receiving several mailings this fall to make sure there are no surprises as changes take place.

- Letters were recently mailed to patients at CMA locations that provided an overview of the changes.
- A postcard explaining the medical office moves is being mailed to patients at those facilities in mid-November. We'll also have a variety of reminders about the moves in the medical offices, including banners and appointment cards that direct patients to the location of their next visit.
- A second self-mailer explaining changes that are taking place at the beginning of January will be sent in December.