

Allina Health announces consolidation of labor and delivery services in southern Minnesota, closure of Faribault Birth Center

Owatonna Hospital to serve as regional labor and delivery hub under new obstetric care model

FARIBAULT, Minn. (Nov. 6, 2025) – As part of a broader effort to strengthen and sustain rural health care services in southern Minnesota, Allina Health is announcing upcoming changes to labor and delivery, pediatric and surgical services at Faribault Medical Center.

These changes follow Mayo Clinic Health System’s decision to end its agreement to provide on-call labor and delivery coverage at Owatonna Hospital, effective November 17. In response, Allina Health is transitioning to a regional obstetric care model that leverages the strengths of both Faribault Medical Center and Owatonna Hospital. This model provides a more sustainable way for our OB provider group to serve a broader region. After careful evaluation, it’s clear that a small team cannot realistically support two birth centers long-term. As a result, labor and delivery services will be consolidated at Owatonna Hospital, and the Faribault Birth Center will close.

As part of this model, outpatient services—including prenatal, postpartum, gynecologic, newborn and pediatric care—will continue in Faribault and will also be offered in Owatonna beginning in early December, ensuring continued access to essential care across both communities.

“Maintaining rural labor and delivery programs is increasingly challenging due to provider shortages, long recruitment timelines, declining birth volumes and low reimbursement rates,” said Whitney Johnson, president, Faribault Medical Center and Owatonna Hospital. “We understand that service changes can be difficult for the community. We want to assure our patients, care team members and the larger community, that we’ve carefully evaluated our options. This service integration allows us to prioritize safe, high-quality and sustainable care while ensuring continued access to these vital obstetric services for our region.”

To support this new, regional obstetric care model:

- Labor and Delivery services will be consolidated at Owatonna Hospital, and the Faribault Birth Center will close on December 1, 2025.
- Outpatient services, including prenatal, postpartum, gynecologic, newborn and pediatric care, will continue in Faribault and will also be offered in Owatonna beginning in early December.
- These changes will require additional shifts in services including:
 - Effective May 7, 2026, Faribault Medical Center will no longer admit pediatric patients, due to low volumes. Pediatric patients will continue to be admitted at Owatonna Hospital.
 - Effective December 1, 2025, Faribault Medical Center will no longer provide emergency surgical coverage during evenings and weekends due to limited availability of anesthesia services. Surgeons will remain on-call, and to ensure patients receive timely and safe care, individuals requiring emergency surgery during these times will be transferred to Owatonna Hospital or one of Allina Health's metro locations.

Allina Health is committed to working with impacted patients and care team members through this transition and is working closely with the Minnesota Department of Health, including scheduling a public hearing.