

P O P E  C O U N T Y

TRIBUNE

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Erin Dahlke, M.D. joins Glacial Ridge Health System

By **Deb Mercier**
News Editor

When looking for a place to call home after completing the long road of residency, Glacial Ridge Health System seemed like a good fit for Erin Dahlke and her husband, Chris.

Originally from Alexandria, Dr. Dahlke received her Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Olaf College and went on to the University of Minnesota Medical School. She completed her residency training at Sioux Falls Family Medicine Residency program last June and recently joined GRHS, seeing her first patients Sept. 10.

"I had spent a few weeks back here [at GRHS] in medical school doing an internship experience with Dr. Brown," said Dr. Dahlke. "I enjoyed the practice a lot—that's why we initially started exploring the option of coming back here."

Add to that the fact that Dr. Dahlke has family in the area, and the move made sense. She said her parents still live in Alexandria, and her siblings are always coming and going. "I think I've seen family more in the last six months than I have in the last five years combined—it's been nice," she said.

Dr. Dahlke said at her first interview visit to GRHS, she was impressed by how well the staff seemed to work together. "There's such a long-standing history of people working here—they really seem committed to patient care, quality care,"



Dr. Erin Dahlke and her husband, Chris Dahlke.

said Dr. Dahlke. "They're very compassionate about what they're doing. That really sparked our interest."

Plus, she added, she and Chris really enjoy the lakes area and all the recreational activities that come with it.

When asked why she decided to delve into medicine, Dr. Dahlke said with a laugh, "I tried to avoid it." Her father was a family medicine physician in Alexandria.

"I always enjoyed science," said Dr. Dahlke. "I was going to do research. But I found I missed working with people." It was partly Dr. Dahlke's experience of

watching her father develop relationships with his patients that inspired her to set aside pure research and become a family medicine physician herself.

As she's started developing her medical practice at GRHS, Dahlke said she's been impressed with the services offered so close to home. "I'm surprised almost every day what resources we have here at the clinic and medical system," she said. "For being a smaller town it has an amazing array of surgical procedures—different procedures that they do and consulting physicians that come to the area. That's such a great resource for the community."

While Dr. Dahlke has a special interest in women's health and obstetrics, she said she's excited to get to know whole families. "Coming from a family medicine background, I really like the whole picture of care—comprehensive care. I enjoy getting to know and caring for the entire family," she said.

More than anything, Dr. Dahlke enjoys continuous learning and is always up for a new challenge. "It's amazing how much there always is to learn," she said. "I'm always impressed that every day I come to work and always learn something new—I like that so much about the medical field."

For more information about Dr. Dahlke and other GRHS physicians and services, visit www.glacialridge.org or call 320-624-5157.