
Renaissance in the OR: Confluence Health Unveils Latest Da Vinci 5 Surgical Robot in Ongoing Work to Bring Latest Medical Technology to North Central Washington Patients

Wenatchee, WA: Though it uses surgical tools rather than paintbrushes, there is something inherently artistic and elegant about the latest medical device that arrived this past week at Confluence Health and is already being used by surgeons to provide the latest and greatest in healthcare to the residents of North Central Washington.

Joining the [da Vinci Xi surgical robot](#) already at Confluence Health, which [celebrated its 2000th robotic surgery last year in an event open to the public](#), Confluence Health began using the new [da Vinci 5 surgical system](#) at the Confluence Health Hospital Central Campus this week. The most advanced robotic platform to date, this new machine represents an even greater leap forward for local surgeons in the tools available to ensure excellent surgical outcomes for those in need of care.

“Confluence Health is one of the first to begin using the new da Vinci 5 robotic platform in its surgeries, reinforcing our commitment to being at the forefront of healthcare technology to give better outcomes to our patients, right here in North Central Washington,” commented Dr. Catherine Straub, general surgeon at Confluence Health. “In 2024, Confluence Health performed 553 robotic surgery procedures, and this amount has been increasing each year since we began collecting data on this in 2019. We are also one of the only facilities that has 24/7 access to our robotic surgical platforms, allowing our surgeons to use this technology not only on scheduled procedures, but also emergent surgeries. On average, we have been performing about 20 surgeries weekly when we have full utilization with the previous da Vinci Xi tool. This latest surgical platform, with its new technology and capabilities, will help us to perform even more crucial care here in our region.”

The new features are varied and major advancements abound with the da Vinci 5, though the new platform also allows for backward compatibility of the instruments used in the previous da Vinci Xi. This interchangeability allows for surgeon familiarity and extended uses for the tools from the older model while also accommodating the latest in instrument tech. Specifically, the next-generation instruments exclusively for the da Vinci 5 include the groundbreaking Force Feedback feature, allowing surgeons to feel the pressure they apply in real time which enhances precision and reduces tissue trauma. In preclinical trials, [Intuitive, the company that produces the da Vinci line](#), states that this new tech saw surgeons delivering up to 43% less force on tissue.

With the most realistic 3D vision system ever developed by Intuitive and an ergonomically optimized console, the da Vinci 5 supports not only surgical excellence but surgeon well-being. As part of Confluence Health’s commitment to local, high-quality care, this investment ensures patients benefit from the latest in surgical innovation, while also helping to support the providers who make the care possible.

“This new system console is much easier for a surgeon to sit at for longer periods of time, reducing fatigue and, in the long run, also helping extend a surgeon’s career by taking less of a toll on their bodies through the ergonomic design,” explained Dr. Straub. “The surgeon and robot working together can also do more portions of a surgery, allowing us to take on more complex cases, along with safety measures built in that remove a lot of the difficulty in exchanging instruments to help staff feel more confident. I also love that we will soon be able to move the table the patient is resting on along with the robot, making mid-surgery adjustments much easier.”

Along with 10,000 times the computing power of the da Vinci Xi, one particularly important new feature is the integrated telepresence capabilities which allows for surgeons to enable real-time collaboration. A doctor in the OR could use this technology to share their view with a colleague at another institution half a world away while in surgery, letting them see what they see as it is happening, to ask for advice or help with difficult determinations, making the minutes count and eliminating unnecessary time on the table for the patient while the surgeons consult with others.

With the new da Vinci 5 now available and working at Central Campus, Confluence Health now can see even more patients with the less invasive surgeries this new tool permits. Additionally, the previous da Vinci Xi surgical robot is not being retired from use but instead will initially continue to be used at Confluence Health Hospital Central Campus for other surgeries, with the anticipated goal of moving the robot to be used in more outpatient-oriented surgeries at the Mares Campus facility in the coming year.

With 15 surgeons currently operating at Confluence Health trained on the previous robot, and those now training to also use the new tool, many opportunities exist with the expanded capacity. Despite only being installed the previous week, the new da Vinci 5 had its first actual surgery on Monday, July 28th: a radical prostatectomy performed by urologist Dr. Travis Clark.

“In addition to showing the efforts of our administration, providers, and staff to advocate for the best tools for those we serve, the most important takeaway for me in the introduction of the da Vinci 5 is that this is representative of Confluence Health’s ongoing commitment to providing the best in healthcare to our community here at home,” concluded Dr. Straub. “Care close to your support network matters and, with this new addition, Confluence Health is using technology rivaling that of places like Seattle and Spokane. It is fantastic to know that – as a part of our mission to be local care by and for our community – our patients can get such world-class care right in their own backyards.”

About Confluence Health

Confluence Health serves the largest geographic region of any healthcare system in Washington State, covering over 12,000 square miles of Okanogan, Grant, Douglas, and Chelan counties. Confluence Health is one of only two locally-lead healthcare systems in the state with the purpose of maintaining availability and access to high-quality, cost-effective healthcare services for North Central Washington. The Confluence Health Board of Directors provides governance for Confluence Health and includes nine community board members and six physician board members.

For More Information

Adam MacDonald, *Corporate Communications Program Manager*

adam.macdonald@ConfluenceHealth.org

###