Chickasha, Okla. – As most of the community knows, the Operating Rooms at Grady Memorial Hospital were shut down in August by CMS (Center of Medicare/Medicaid Services). Since then residents of Grady County have had to travel out of the county to have surgeries of any kind performed. This also shut down all obstetrics (baby deliveries) at Grady Memorial due to the fact that emergency cesarean section surgical deliveries are not available.

Kean Spellman, CEO of Grady Memorial stated, “Our residents need to be aware that lifesaving surgery is currently not available at Grady Memorial Hospital. At this time anyone who needs surgery is transferred to a facility outside of the county with the closest being 30 minutes away. This is a huge concern because in a life threatening situation a patient may not survive the transfer.”

“Our EMS only has two fully staffed EMS crews on duty at any given time. Typically, we transfer out about 45 patients per month. In the past two months this number has doubled. This increase in transfers taxes our EMS staff, increases wear and tear on our ambulances, as well as reducing emergency coverage to the citizens in our community and surrounding areas.” Explained Cathy Groseclose, VP of Patient Care Services. “If both crews are out on calls patients will have to wait which could cost lives. What if that’s you having a heart attack?”

Dr. Christine Cooper, Obstetrician/Gynecologist explained, “Just days before the OR was closed at Grady Memorial, I delivered a baby via emergency Cesarean section surgical delivery. This baby had to be delivered immediately as its heart rate was dropping dangerously low. If this patient would have had to be transferred that baby would most likely not have survived. Right now, I don’t have the opportunity to do this anymore in Chickasha and this has been very difficult for the patients we serve in this county. Little babies, like the one in this story, need a place to be born, a safe place to be born right here in Chickasha.”

Dr. Amish Patel, General Surgeon at Grady Memorial said, “I’ve been here over 12 years and Dr. Presley (General Surgery) has been here over 10. Between us we have performed over 15,000 surgical procedures at Grady Memorial. We love taking care of our patients, love working here. When patients come here they’re not a number, they have a name. They are somebody’s mom, dad, brother, sister, husband, wife, child- They’re my neighbor and we take care of them.”

Dr. John Presley, General Surgeon added, “Our Operating Rooms were shut down by the government because this is an old building and our humidity is high. They said we might have a higher infection rate. We track our infection rate all the time and in fact our infection rate is lower than State and National averages. This is a testament to the quality of care that people get here.”
Dr. Orr, Pediatrician said, “I have been practicing pediatrics in Chickasha for 48 years and I cannot imagine our community not having a hospital with full surgical and obstetrical services. My fear is that lives could be lost.”

Grady County residents will have the opportunity to vote regarding the ¼ of a penny sales tax on February 9th, 2016.