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Keralty buys Westchester General Hospital in Miami

*By Brian Bandell
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Westchester General Hospital in Miami-Dade County was sold to Keralty, an international health care firm based in Colombia.

The 125-bed hospital at 2500 S.W. 75th Ave. was sold by the family of **Gregory Fox**. The deal includes the 78,000-square-foot hospital building and 5.7 acres of parking lots and undeveloped land. Keralty said it would retain the hospital's 570 employees and appoint **Juan Carlos Echandia** as chairman. Echandia was previously the South American region president for Keralty.

The price wasn't disclosed.

Westchester General was one of the few stand-alone for-profit hospitals remaining in South Florida.

Keralty operates Sanitas Medical Centers in Florida and three others states in partnership with Florida Blue. It also operates hospitals in Latin America and offers insurance products. The company moved its global division headquarters to Miami in 2019.

"On behalf of the nearly 20,000 Keralty employees worldwide, we welcome Westchester to our family of companies," said **Sergio Martinez**, CEO of Keralty Global. "This addition provides a new opportunity to expand our presence in the U.S. and to advance our journey to establish a better model of care and

support for our patients and health plan partners."

Keralty said it plans to "re-engineer" Westchester General to expand its behavioral health, advanced palliative care, and complex care for individuals with multi-chronic conditions.

According to the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration, Westchester General had a bed occupancy rate of 53.4% in 2019, which was below the county average. It lost \$5.9 million on revenue of \$39.3 million in 2019, a year when most South Florida hospital saw earnings growth.

Most South Florida hospitals have suffered financially during the Covid-19 pandemic this year, so having an owner with deep pockets should be beneficial for Westchester General.

"Our vision is to reimagine the services provided by the hospital and to coordinate with Sanitas Medical Centers, other healthcare providers, community organizations, and insurance companies, to establish a patient-centered health program supporting the local community and designed to keep patients healthy, rather than treating someone who is sick," Echandia said.

Greenberg Traurig was legal advisor to Keralty in the purchase. The sellers worked with law firm McDermott Will & Emery and investment banking firm Cassel Salpeter & Co.

"When Westchester General Hospital and the Fox family who owned it approached us to help them find a buyer for their hospital, they were adamant that they were only looking for a buyer who would continue putting patients first and would provide the same quality of care that had long been the family's legacy," said **James Cassel**, chairman of Cassel Salpeter. "Keralty and their Sanitas Medical Centers checked off all those boxes. We then worked closely with both parties on behalf of the seller to secure this successful outcome."