



NEBRASKA

Rural Business & Cooperative Services • Rural Economic Development Loan Program

Advancing Healthcare and Improving Patient Safety in Rural Nebraska

Brown County Hospital, located in Ainsworth, Nebraska, is a 23 bed, critical access hospital that provides health services to residents located in Brown, Rock, Keya Paha, Cherry, and Blaine counties. They use e-emergency, with their primary service provider being Avera from Sioux Falls, SD, for the emergency room as well as generic connections to other facilities through the Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network, providing telemedicine services for patient visits.

The hospital was founded in 1970 and provides surgical, emergency, in-patient and out-patient services. In 2008, they underwent a renovation that created a new physical therapy department, laboratory, surgical suites, pre and post-operative rooms, medical records, business office, and handicap accessible restrooms. Brown County Hospital was utilizing a single-slice CT scanner that was housed on a portable trailer outside of the hospital, patients were exposed to the elements while being transported to the scanner. In 2011, Three River Telco, in Lynch, Nebraska, requested a Rural Economic Development Loan of \$740,000, at 0% interest for 10 years, to relend to Brown County Hospital at the same rates and terms, in order for them to purchase a new multi-slice CT scanner and construct an addition onto the hospital to house the scanner, a control room for the scanner, and a patient dressing room and emergency room waiting area. This program requires 20% of the requested loan amount in supplemental financing, in which \$50,000 was provided by Three River Telco for economic development purposes, and \$263,500 was provided by the hospital. Therefore, Brown County Hospital was able to receive a \$790,000 loan for 10 years at 0% interest in order to assist with the cash flow for this project. As the hospital pays back Three River Telco, Three River pays back the loan to USDA Rural Development.



The multi-slice CT scanner provides enhanced scans for the medical providers, both in-house as well as those from other facilities treating patients.

As a result of the 0% loan funds, Brown County Hospital was able to improve healthcare in their rural area by purchasing equipment with enhanced technology that allowed them to obtain better quality scans, provide a safer environment for the patients, be able to provide scans on a 24-hour basis, and has helped maintain their two full-time radiology staff. The additional space has allowed for more patient services efficiencies that were not obtainable before the project was complete.

Obligation Amount: \$740,000 Loan

Date of Obligation: 9/30/2011

Congressional District: Smith, NE03; Fischer, Sasse

Partners: Three River Telco (Intermediary) and Brown County Hospital (Ultimate Recipient)

Demographics: Brown County, Ainsworth NE, Population 1,728

Impact: Saved two full-time positions and enhanced medical technology for a rural hospital, improving healthcare for rural residents in multiple counties.