

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT



**Mark Howerter,
MD**

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
COLUMBUS COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

When a former Columbus Community Hospital leader asked Mark Howerter, MD, to be emergency room director here more than two decades ago, Howerter said no. He rejected the position three more times before finally saying yes ... and the rest is history. **“I am quite happy I did say yes,”** said Howerter.

Howerter has been at CCH for 21 years, spending most of that time as emergency room director, and the last year as the hospital’s chief medical officer. When he first started, emergency medicine as a specialty was relatively new. **“In emergency department medicine,”** he said, **“you essentially have two hours to diagnose and stabilize whatever comes in your doors. As medicine has evolved, a number of ‘front-of-the-line cases’ require diagnosis and a decision for treatment in the first 15 minutes or less.”**

He is still getting used to his new role as the top medical administrator at the hospital, but says he enjoys developing better ways of helping doctors care for their patients.

As a child, Howerter was quite interested in science. He received a chemistry set in early elementary school and almost set his house on fire with an alcohol burner. **“I always knew I would do something connected to science if my parents allowed me to live,”** he said.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Howerter was on the other side of the doctor-patient relationship when he spent 25 days in the hospital with the disease. He was on oxygen for six months after he left the hospital. **“I am grateful to have survived,”** he said. **“It was a great lesson in what it feels like to be a patient and an invalid.”**

Howerter is married to Deanna, who owns Terrace Books in Columbus. Between them, they have eight children and nine grandchildren. When he’s not at the hospital, Howerter enjoys building contraptions outside, include retaining walls and solar-paneled chicken coops, and tackling smaller woodworking projects, too.

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