

Confidence and Trust

Dr. Steve Fletcher enjoys connecting with people, and earning their confidence and trust. While these skills are required of all physicians, they are perhaps even more important when taking a patient to surgery.

As a busy surgeon at Oroville Hospital, he must make this connection many times every day.

"I'm more of a nuts and bolts sort of person, rather than a theory person," Dr. Fletcher says. "As physicians, we have to be teachers first, and healers second. A good explanation helps a patient understand their illness, and the potential role of surgery. I like the definitive ability to cure one problem at a time. These are the things that influenced me to pursue a career in surgery."

Growing up in Ventura, California, Dr. Fletcher was one of five children of a pediatrician. He earned his medical degree at the University of Southern California and completed training programs at the University of Washington and Albany Medical College. He practiced in several hospitals in a busy urban setting in South Carolina for a decade before

coming to Oroville with his wife and family in 2005.

Oroville Hospital is small enough to provide the advantages—friendly and personable patient care, close working relationships among staff—but large enough to be able to care for people with challenging problems.

"As physicians, we have to be teachers first, and healers second."

One of Dr. Fletcher's areas of special interest is thoracic surgery. This includes surgical treatment of diseases of the chest other than the heart; primarily the lungs, esophagus, and space around the lungs. He was able to introduce minimally invasive video techniques for thoracic surgery to Oroville Hospital when he arrived.

"A majority of lung and chest-cavity procedures are done with VATS techniques (Video Assisted Thoroscopic Surgery). Small incisions allow a miniature video camera and instruments to be used. This avoids large incisions and prolonged recovery in most patients."

Dr. Fletcher and his surgical colleagues in Oroville are proof that a modern, high-tech

surgical practice can find a comfortable home in a smaller town. "We like our small-town environment. We shop the farmers' markets and support local businesses, and enjoy outdoor activities as a family.

"Professionally, we can offer state-of-the-art surgical care to our patients in a friendly, personal manner."

For Dr. Fletcher, Oroville provides the connection he and his family were looking for.



Oroville Hospital