



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph E. Robach

Touring Unity Hospital's Expansion Project

JOSEPH E. ROBACH July 25, 2011

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Recently, Senator Robach was given a tour of the Unity Health System Modernization and Expansion Project in Greece. Construction began last year, and is expected to be complete in 2014. Here are more details regarding this project:

The expansion of the Hospital includes the construction of a fourth floor and will add 35 acute care medical/surgical beds. The construction also gives Unity the option of opening 50 additional beds if needed in the future. The plan was approved by the New York State Department of Health Project Review Committee last month and by the New York State Department of Health State Hospital Review and Planning Council last week.

The project also includes modernizing and expanding facilities for Unity Hospital's Joint Replacement Center, GI Unit, and Cardiology Unit; Unity Acute Rehabilitation & Physical Medicine, and Unity Dialysis Services in Greece. The forward-thinking design positions Unity Hospital for long-term growth to accommodate the existing and projected health care needs of the community, which government data indicates will increase. The largest capital project of Unity Hospital since it opened in 1975, the estimated cost is \$158 million. Strategically planned, the project is cost-effective, and will provide minimal disruptions to patients.

"We are able to move forward with our plans, thanks to the hard work of many Unity staff members and the support of our community partners," said Warren Hern, CEO of Unity Health System. "The modernization and expansion of Unity Hospital will allow us to serve the growing needs of our community and to continue to provide the high quality care that our patients deserve and that we are known for."

Modernization and Expansion Project Addresses Capacity Issues, Enhances Delivery of Care, and Improves Work Efficiencies

Since 2003, the average occupancy rate of Unity Hospital has been well above industry standards of 85 percent. In 2009, Unity's medical/surgical beds routinely operated above 100 percent. In addition, the Emergency Center is often in "code red" status because of high patient volumes and lack of medical/surgical beds. In spite of these challenges, the satisfaction ratings from Unity Hospital patients consistently remain above 98 percent.

"Our data shows that we deliver high quality care in a safe environment. We're proud of that," said Stewart Putnam, COO of Unity Hospital. "The renovated and expanded facilities will allow our staff to continue their outstanding work, provide high quality care, and the best patient experience."

Unity will remain the only hospital in Monroe County to have all private, single rooms. The renovated rooms will be larger, and are designed to accommodate state-of-the-art technologies and patient care modalities. The new layout and relocated services will enhance work efficiencies.

Centralized nurses' stations and upgrades to Unity's already advanced information systems will also improve efficiencies, as well as the addition of a centralized pharmacy, noted Putnam.

Utilization of the Former Park Ridge Living Center

In April, the Park Ridge Living Center will move to newly constructed “cottage style” homes, located in the southwest corner of the Unity Park Ridge Campus. The vacated space will be renovated and redesigned to house high demand outpatient services, including Unity Hospital's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, GI Unit, and Dialysis Services.

These services will have more spacious units in state-of-the-art facilities to accommodate the community's growing needs. The new locations will allow easier access and greater comfort for patients.

Reutilizing the former location of the Living Center represents a cost avoidance of \$17 million for the project.

A “Greener” Building, Cost Savings, and Visitor-Friendly Services

Renovations of the Hospital also include new HVAC units and new windows. These upgrades will make Unity Hospital “greener.” A cost reduction in heating and cooling is expected to occur because of these improvements.

The plan includes a fresh look to the facility's exterior shell, larger elevators, the renovation of the Hospital Main Lobby to include a coffee shop, concierge desk, and the construction of a modern, larger cafeteria for staff and visitors.

Over 600 parking spaces will be added to the Unity Park Ridge Campus. Parking for visitors, patients, and staff will continue to be free.

Modernization and Renovation Project to Create New Jobs

Unity Health System is Rochester's sixth largest private sector employer. An economic anchor of the Rochester community, the Hospital Modernization and Expansion Project will add both short-term and long-term job opportunities.

During the construction phase, the Project will support an estimated 300 construction jobs. This will include both direct construction jobs and indirect jobs that focus on the supply of materials and services.

The long-term economic impact of the Project will occur during and at its completion. The operation of the new beds will require additional clinical and support staff, including approximately 265 positions, including nurses, as well as physicians and support staff.