



News Release

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Sarasota Memorial to Open New ER Wing and Unveil 30-Minute Service Guarantee

SARASOTA MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM – Sarasota Memorial will celebrate the opening of its state-of-the-art new Emergency Care Center wing with a special grand opening from 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Nov. 12. The event will include free refreshments, giveaways, tours of the expanded facility and the opportunity to meet ER physicians and staff. Families are welcome, as children will have the chance to climb aboard an ambulance and a fire truck. Attendees should park in the hospital's South Garage on U.S. 41 and Hillview Street. (Media representatives are invited to cover this event as well.)

The new wing will officially open to patients Tuesday, Nov. 15. The \$13 million, one-block-long expansion includes 25 new treatment rooms, all of which are private, have flat-screen TVs and a "smart nurse" call system that allows patients and caregivers to communicate more efficiently. Built in 1993 to accommodate about 45,000 patients, the ER now sees nearly double that number each year. In conjunction with the expansion, additional Board-Certified emergency physicians have been hired to provide patient care. With more doctors and more rooms, the hospital will announce a new 30-minute guarantee later in November, promising patients they will wait no more than 30 minutes before seeing a physician or physician assistant.

The expansion was made possible through the generous support of Sarasota Memorial Healthcare Foundation, Inc. The organization's ongoing "EMERGENCY CARE 24/7 *We're Always Here*" Campaign has granted \$5 million for the new wing. To date, 24 treatment/care rooms and staff areas have been named for campaign donors and more naming opportunities are available (Call 917-1286 for information about the campaign).

About Sarasota Memorial's Emergency Care Center:

- Originally built in 1993 to treat 45,000 patients a year, the Emergency Care Center now cares for nearly twice that number annually (200-250 a day). The center is one of the busiest on Florida's west coast. Construction on the expansion began about a year ago. The new wing includes 25 new treatment rooms, each with a flat screen TV. The new rooms also have advanced monitoring equipment mounted columns suspended from the ceiling for greater maneuverability. Among the new rooms are two isolation rooms for patients with infectious diseases, two resuscitation rooms, one gynecological

exam room and a treatment room specializing in ear, nose and throat care. The expanded facility also includes two new nurses' stations and staff work areas.

- Designed by The Ritchie Organization (TRO), the expansion has several touches typically not found in ERs, including hardwood floors in public areas and a comfortable waiting room with windows overlooking the street, to make the experience more pleasant for patients.
- The Emergency Care Center is staffed by 14 physicians, all board-certified and residency-trained in Emergency Medicine; additional physicians will come on board when the expanded facility opens. The ECC's nurses have special emergency care training and, along with the rest of the organization's nurses, received Magnet Nursing Services Recognition, the nation's highest honor for excellence in nursing.
- Despite its large number of patients, the Emergency Care Center has earned patient satisfaction scores in the 99th percentile compared to similarly sized Emergency Rooms around the country.
- On Nov. 20, the Emergency Care Center will kick off its 30-minute service promise. All patients will see a physician or physician assistant no more than 30 minutes after registering, or they will receive a letter of apology from CEO Gwen MacKenzie and free tickets to their choice of several Sarasota attractions.
- Sarasota Memorial's ECC staff have special training in the treatment of stroke and heart attack victims. Stroke patients who meet certain criteria typically must be given a special clot-busting drug, t-PA, within three hours of a stroke to help prevent or limit brain damage. In the past year, SMH has increased the percentage of patients given t-PA from .2 percent to 5 percent, well above the national average of 2 percent. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations recently awarded Sarasota Memorial "Primary Stroke Center" certification with distinction. Heart attack patients are treated with a rapid angioplasty protocol that has helped Sarasota Memorial become a nationally recognized hospital for cardiac care.

An 826-bed regional medical center, Sarasota Memorial was named by U.S. News among the best hospitals in the country in seven specialties: heart/heart surgery, orthopedics, cancer care, urology, geriatrics, digestive disorders and ear, nose and throat care.

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