



Media Release

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Nov. 16, 2010

Groundbreaking for new medical center set for Dec. 6

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CRDAMC Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas – Groundbreaking for Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center's new hospital is scheduled for Dec. 6, signaling the start of a \$534 million project that will consolidate services and enhance access to medical care for thousands of Fort Hood Soldiers, family members and retirees.

Construction of the 947,000 square-foot facility is slated to begin in April just south of the current medical center on the site of the old Fort Hood stadium. It is expected to be open for patients in late summer 2015.

“We’re excited to see the project begin as it brings us one step closer to providing increased access to care and more health care services in line with the 21st century warfighter,” said Col. (Dr.) Steven Braverman, CRDAMC commander.

The original Darnall hospital opened in 1965 to serve 17,000 Soldiers, with an addition in 1984 added to serve 39,000 troops. Today, the hospital serves roughly 45,000 Soldiers, as well as nearly 125,000 family members and retirees within a 40-mile radius.

At 600,000 square feet, the current facility is undersized for the amount of services it provides, said Braverman. Each day Darnall averages 4,622 outpatient encounters, 202 emergency room visits, 26 surgeries, 26 admissions, seven births and 4,500 prescriptions filled.

The new medical center will be nearly 60 percent larger than the current facility and will include a six-story hospital, three out-patient clinic buildings and three parking garages.

“We have worked hand-in-hand with the architects and designers from Balfour Beatty/McCarthy-HKS/Wingler & Sharp to create a modern campus that is both capable of meeting today’s health care needs and is a comfortable place for patients to receive medical

care,” said Lt. Col. Michael C. Williams, project manager, U.S. Army Health Facility Planning Agency.

As patients enter the new facility, they will be welcomed by bright, natural light that engulfs the lobby through two-and-a-half story windowpanes. The natural light continues along a central concourse that makes navigating the hospital much simpler than the current design.

“In a facility this size, people can get lost very easily,” said Williams. “This hospital is organized very simply with multiple entrances and a clear, circulation pattern.”

On one side of the concourse, patients will check in through the designated reception areas, and on the opposite side, waiting areas overlook a courtyard and outdoor gardens. The natural concept continues throughout the medical center all the way to the upper levels.

From the third, fourth and fifth floors, patients have a view of rooftop gardens, bringing nature up to the patient level.

An important feature of the new hospital is the approximately 100,000 square feet dedicated for behavioral health services, said Braverman, which will enable the hospital to provide additional mental and physical care for Soldiers suffering from visible and invisible wounds of war.

This area on the third floor will include an outpatient component, a Resilience and Restoration Center, Department of Social Work and Hospital and Administrative Psychiatry. It will be connected through the concourse to the in-patient component of the psychiatric unit, which will also feature an exterior basketball court.

Since the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began, military hospitals have seen an increase in the number of Soldiers needing treatment for physical injuries, traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. More than 4,200 wounded and ill Soldiers evacuated from Iraq and Afghanistan have been treated at Darnall.

“Right now our behavioral health services are spread out amongst many locations. The new hospital will allow us to centralize services to make getting care easier and more convenient for our patients,” said Braverman. “Numerous Soldiers deploy from Fort Hood, and we want to ensure we can handle the medical needs of each and every one of them and their family members.”

The fourth floor of the new medical center will be devoted to women’s services. It will include nine labor- delivery-recovery rooms, two C-section units, a 12-bed neo-natal intensive care unit and a 28-bed mother baby unit.

Up one level, the pediatric unit will have 10 beds and the medical-surgery unit is designed to accommodate 30 beds.

Darnall will continue to provide additional services throughout the facility, such as emergency medicine, physical therapy, family medicine, internal medicine, and more.

Departmental staff are currently reviewing the design plans and offering feedback to the Health Facility Planning Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers to ensure the current layout accommodates provider and patient needs.

“This facility was designed with flexibility in mind,” said Williams. “As health care needs change, so can Darnall. The design allows flexibility to accommodate the changing needs of clinics and departments and, in the future, there is room for lateral growth and an additional bed tower, if needed.”

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded the \$534 million contract to Balfour Beatty | McCarthy Joint Venture of Dallas, Texas, in September. The project is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for 3 p.m. Dec. 6 at the new medical center site. The event is open to the public, and visitors should enter Fort Hood using the Santa Fe gate. Parking is available at 65th Street and Railhead Drive.

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Cutlines

Aerial

An aerial view shows the new 947,000 square-foot Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center that will be built on Fort Hood beginning in spring of 2011. The new facility is nearly 60 percent larger than the current Vietnam-war era hospital and will include a six-story hospital, three out-patient clinic buildings and three parking garages.

Lobby

The lobby of the new Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, shown in an artist rendering, will serve as the hub for the modern hospital designed to consolidate services and enhance access to medical care for thousands of Fort Hood Soldiers, family members and retirees. Construction of the 947,000 square-foot facility is slated to begin in April 2011 and is expected to be open for patients in late summer 2015.

Concourse

An artist’s rendering depicts the concourse concept of the new hospital, which consists of a main corridor running straight through the hospital, with reception areas and waiting areas for the different departments set on either side. The idea is to keep traffic flowing in a simple pattern, so visitors can easily get to be where they need to be.