

MTMC staying ahead of growth

One side effect of Middle Tennessee Medical Center's move to its new location: more patients.

Since relocating near Interstate 24 from Highland Avenue on Oct. 2, the average number of daily patients at the hospital's emergency department has jumped from 170 to 181. Over the course of a month, that's more than 330 additional visits.

While the hospital's new location is much more convenient and accessible to many because of its proximity to the interstate, the new building is also better prepared to handle higher numbers of patients with 265 staffed beds now versus 180 at the old hospital.

The population in Rutherford County has been steadily rising for years and MTMC deserves credit for getting out ahead of the growth. In fact, it is planning to eventually have 286 staffed beds.

The rise in patients had begun well before the move. The number of emergency department visitors this year is already at 67,400 while 63,100 visited in 2009, according to statistics from the hospital. The number of inpatients also rose from 56,550 in 2009 to 62,100 this year.

The growth at MTMC has been carefully calculated and seamlessly executed. The hospital has taken steps to decrease the amount of steps between nurses and patients. It has developed a "fast track" component to the emergency department which segregates less critical patients from seriously ill ones so that everyone can get treated and released as quickly as possible.

With construction of a second medical office building is under way on the new campus, MTMC continues to stay ahead of the county's growth and our residents' needs.