

Same Name, New Place

Medical center provides new level of care

Story by *Melanie Hill* • Photography by *Antony Boshier*

Health care just got a whole lot healthier in Rutherford County thanks to the new Middle Tennessee Medical Center. The 286-bed campus, located on Medical Center Parkway just off I-24 in Murfreesboro's Gateway Development, will welcome its first patient in October 2010. Situated on a 68-acre campus with scenic greenway access, the state-of-the-art facility is the result of more than a decade of planning.

"MTMC has been talking about building a new hospital since 1998," says Gordon Ferguson, president and CEO of Middle Tennessee Medical Center. "Our strategic planning process indicated we needed to expand, but expanding in our current location was not in our best interest as we looked at it over the next 20- to 50-plus years."

According to Ferguson, the \$267 million project was a true community initiative. Working with the design team of Gresham Smith & Partners, project leaders solicited input from MTMC department heads and front line staff members, while also visiting other facilities.

"The design allows for growth, both upward and outward," Ferguson says. "We created a design that could change based on the needs of Rutherford County."

More than 2.8 million man-hours helped make the modern, 550,000-square-foot medical center a reality. The new facility includes 1,606 parking spots, greenway access with more than 9,000 trees and shrubs, and more than \$30 million in medical equipment.

Measuring at a spacious 270 square feet, patient rooms in the new medical center nearly double those of the original hospital and were created to provide separate zones for the patient, family and caregiver. Visitors appreciate a family area with a convertible sofa bed and separate TV, while large windows with blackout shades

allow for maximum natural light. In the hallways, smaller central nurses' stations mean less noise, while nurse alcoves outside patient rooms allow caregivers faster, easier access to patients. Patient rooms also include windows with privacy blinds so staff can unobtrusively monitor patients.

"Overall, the hospital will be a much more quiet, efficient and healing environment," Ferguson says.

A member of the St. Thomas Health Services' regional health system, MTMC offers 60-plus service lines ranging from neurology and robotic surgery to women's health and emergency care. Electrophysiology and palliative care services also will be available at MTMC's new campus, while access to outpatient care is closer than ever with the DePaul Medical Office Building on site.

Plans still are under way for the original North Highland Avenue campus, which has welcomed patients since 1927. An advisory board of local business and community leaders has been tasked with identifying the most community-friendly use for the 13-acre site.

"Having a higher level of care provided here will prevent people from thinking they need to travel to Nashville for health care," Ferguson says. "Not only will it improve the overall quality of life for the community and bring in new physicians, but a larger hospital will encourage more businesses to move to and stay in Rutherford County." ■

MTMC CAMPUS

The new MTMC campus is in the heart of Murfreesboro's Gateway development, a 400-acre site that includes Class A office space, proximity to major retail development and access to the city's Stones River greenway system.

Right: The new Middle Tennessee Medical Center