Nemours Children's Hospital expanding by 30 new beds to meet growing demand for high quality pediatric care

$29m expansion offers more integrated care

Orlando, Fla. (December 23, 2019) – In order to continue to offer children in need the most advanced care possible and to keep up with growing demand, Nemours Children's Hospital will phase in 30 new beds by early 2020. This $29 million expansion of the inpatient hospital capacity will serve both cardiac and noncardiac patients, and will include an additional operating room and catherization lab, scheduled to open in January.

Building out the shell space on the top floor of the 630,000 square-foot, 100-bed hospital, which just marked its seventh year, was always part of the plan, explains Nemours Children's Hospital Chief Operating Officer Randy Hartley.

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"The additional 40,000 square feet of working space allows Nemours to add critical-care capable beds and enable the hospital to handle more cardiac and other critical-care patients," Hartley said. "A cardiac care delivery system can now be offered in one location that is comprehensive from admission to discharge, and includes the newest technology to improve the care we deliver."

"This consolidation and coalescence of cardiac services offers a more seamless and enhanced experience for our cardiac patients," said Dr. Peter D. Wearden, MD, PhD, cardiothoracic surgeon and Director of the Nemours Cardiac Center, Florida.

To bring the project to fruition, medical staff, patients and families were engaged over several months in an integrated facility design (IFD) process to create the most ergonomic and patient-friendly space, with most up to date technology and state-of-the-art equipment.

"This integration and expansion project was a great opportunity for collaboration as part of our commitment to excellence in patient and family-centered care," said Hartley. As the project was being planned, participation was sought by not only doctors and hospital staff, but also of families, via the Family Advisory Council, whose children had hospital stays. "Nemours Children's Hospital was from its inception designed with the input of our families, who understand their needs when a family member is treated in the hospital. This expansion project presented another opportunity for them to share their insights."

"When families are on the sixth floor, they will find a space that was designed with input of families who are sensitive to their needs from experience having loved ones in the hospital," said Tanielle Randall, co-chair of the Family Advisory Committee.

One was Samuelle Henry, whose son Nasir spent his first four months of life in the hospital. "We've spent a lot of time there, and the simple fact that management wanted to accommodate the patient's family in their designs means so much to me," said Henry.

Staff and families met over the course of several months using IFD to design opportunities that would lead to improved quality, delivery, and patient satisfaction. They tested detailed scenarios repeatedly to improve processes

The new space on the sixth floor of Nemours Children's Hospital saw its first patients in early December. The cardiac operating room and catherization laboratory are scheduled to open in January, and another section is scheduled to be available in late January.

Editor's Note: Video interviews and photographs are available

About Nemours Children's Health System

Nemours is an internationally recognized children's health system that owns and operates the two free-standing children's hospitals: the Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Del., and Nemours Children's Hospital in Orlando, Fla., along with outpatient facilities in five states, delivering pediatric primary, specialty and urgent care. Nemours also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, KidsHealth.org, and offers on-demand, online video patient visits through Nemours CareConnect. Nemours ReadingBrightstart.org is a program dedicated to preventing reading failure in young children, grounded in Nemours' understanding that child health and learning are inextricably linked, and that reading level is a strong predictor of adult health.

Established as The Nemours Foundation through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, Nemours provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy and prevention programs to families in the communities it serves.

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