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Two Hospitals

BY WENDY PLUMP

There is a simple way to look at the two new hospitals opening in Mercer County—Capital Health Medical Center/Hopewell and the University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro—in order to discern the differences between them.

Both, after all, are impressive, multi-million dollar complexes with state-of-the-art equipment, brilliant surgeons and physicians and amenities reaching far beyond the hospitals of yesterday. There are private rooms and concierge services and air filtration systems and technology that would knock George Jetson back on his heels. There are waterfalls and gardens and fitness centers and café food that patients and their families will actually enjoy eating.

So where do they diverge?

Imagine there is a nuclear family with two healthy, driven siblings. Both have done well in that family. Both are striving for continued success. To do so they have to take on different personalities in much the way the oldest child becomes sober-minded, direct and responsible while the younger is edgier, funnier and more inclined to stay out all night. This is how siblings who spring from the same source make their way through the dynamic of family life: by adopting a personality that hasn't been taken yet and maximizing it.

That's how the family of regional hospitals looks from the horizon. Capital Health, which has completed the first phase of its construction and will open its doors in Hopewell to the public in November, and Princeton, which is slated to open in Plainsboro next May, acknowledge the luck of area residents in having two stellar hospitals to choose from. But like ambitious siblings, they have adopted contrary philosophies that run through every design decision made.

Princeton is doing it with one, focused site that capitalizes on the general, acute care the hospital can deliver best; Capital Health is doing it through a sprawling complex of hospitals in several locations, attempting to meet every medical need within its own system. Princeton wants a smaller slice of the pie

done to perfection; Capital wants the whole pie. The wisdom of these guiding decisions will no doubt emerge over the coming years. For the meantime, one thing is certain: Both of them are courting you.

The University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro

Simply put, Princeton's original hospital building on Witherspoon Street in the Borough was made obsolete by technology. Health care is being delivered in such a radically new way these days that the old building could not

accommodate the approach, according to Princeton's maverick President and CEO, Barry Rabner. So the hospital administration decided to start from the ground up at a new site. It did so with one overarching design philosophy, something the plainspoken Rabner refers to as, "No dabbling."

"Apart from all the fancy words we could use, that's really what is guiding us. We have to be able to show with hard evidence that the services we choose to perform we can provide better than anyone else," says Rabner. "In Central Jersey, we all have access to some of the most sophisticated providers in the world, and there's simply no need to reproduce those very special services.



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"Johns Hopkins, Sloan Kettering, Columbia, Penn—are you going to duplicate the specialties those hospitals provide, the transplants and burn care and open-heart surgeries and pediatric care that people fly in for from all over the world? You can't. You simply can't. Everyone can't be great at everything.

"But what we can do," he adds, "is take care of what 85 percent of our community's health needs are. And with discipline, we'll be able to do those things better than absolutely anybody else. Or we won't do them. We'll be able to offer this



The new University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro will feature 231 single-patient rooms and be built on a 171-acre campus. Renderings by HOK/RMJM Hillier.

very broad continuum of care that relates to that 85 percent of your needs, because we're defining your needs as keeping you healthy as well as helping you when you have a medical problem.

"And the new building enables us to meet that goal."

While the hospital will maintain a small facility in the Borough, almost all of its services will be concentrated at what administrators like to call "the new health campus." The 171-acre campus off Route 1 in Plainsboro will feature an acute-care hospital with 231 single-patient rooms including designated care

centers in cancer, surgery, testing and treatment, neuroscience, cardiac and pulmonary care, eating disorders and a full-care maternal health unit including 24 post-partum single rooms.

There will be a contemporary Emergency Department with 34 single-patient rooms that doubles the size of Princeton's current ER, with six beds specifically assigned for geriatric patients. Assisted living, adult and child daycare and a community fitness center will also be a part of the new campus.

The Bristol-Myers Squibb Community Health Care Center

will offer clinical services to uninsured and underinsured residents (which reflects part of the state's mandate for the new hospital), including mental health services. Free transportation from Princeton will be available to those without other means of transport.

The comprehensive pediatric care unit will feature 12 inpatient beds and special emergency department facilities reflecting the hospital's partnership with The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Technology will inform the services delivered in every room, from 100 percent fresh air throughout the hospital, to the True-Beam Linear Accelerator delivering radiation treatments up to six times faster than previous machines, to voice-command features in the operatory suites. So that when surgeons want the room brighter or warmer, they have only to say so aloud.

All the materials in the room have bacteria-resistant surfaces. You can register for an inpatient or outpatient procedure from your laptop at home. And the hospital beds communicate to the nursing stations—all of which are decentralized for better service—when the patients are trying to get up and out of bed.

The soft-focus colors in the room, the single-patient mentality, the on-site fitness center, the 32-acre park along the Millstone River...all these seem like luxurious gestures towards Princeton's patients, and they are. But that's not why these features were incorporated into the new hospital.

"Creating a clinical environment that reduces stress is essential," says Rabner. "What we do in a hospital is stressful. Everyone is under stress, the patients particularly. So anything

we can do to reduce that for our patients and our employees and our physicians is important. It reduces recovery time.

"While designing our project we examined 1,200 pieces of research on hospital design and we toured about 15 hospitals in the United States. We incorporated all of that research that seemed valid. It really guided us in how we would achieve the goals we set for ourselves.

"At the end of the day," Rabner concludes, "we'll have taken care of this wide breadth of needs that people have. That's our goal. To get that right. And we'll have it all at this state-of-the-art campus."

Capital Health Medical Center/Hopewell

When Capital Health's precursor hospital opened in Trenton some 100 years ago the city was the fulcrum of Mercer County, with a population of some 300,000 people. Today there are closer to 85,000 residents—not enough to support a couple of hospitals in-city. Trenton does not have the population base to sustain them or the growth in technology driving the medical industry. So Capital Health made the decision to move its flagship building to Hopewell.

The \$530 million result opens in November.

Part of the premise behind it is the notion that outpatient services will increase, serving a larger portion of those who come to Capital Health. Medical technology enables procedures to be much less invasive than they previously were. As a result, both the surgery and the recovery times are shorter and can be spread among the several hospitals that make up Capital Health's brand.

The new \$530 million Capital Health Medical Center in Hopewell opens in November. Photograph supplied by Don MacNeill.





Capital Health Medical Center's patient room. Photograph supplied by Don MacNeill.

Those who will actually be hospitalized, says Capital Health President and CEO Al Maghazehe, will consequently be sicker, more acute. Capital's new hospital was designed with this reality in mind.

"If you're really good as a hospital you can do the majority of your work on an outpatient basis and minimize exposure to hospitals," says Maghazehe. "So as we move into the future the acuity levels are going to increase for our patients. You need to create an environment specifically for them and that's what we have done.

"At Hopewell, all the rooms are identical, which cuts down on mistakes. It's a curve-shaped, patient-friendly building. The design makes sure every patient receives the same amount of sunshine. Patients in the cancer center are going to look out their windows and see this gorgeous garden, this beautiful setting, which is very comforting to the patient.

"All the bathrooms and showers are next to the bed and on the right-side of the bed, so there is more protection for the patient when getting out. It's an expensive and difficult design because it changes the structure of the room. But you want to do that because it's safer. Most people just think it's a nice thing to do but in reality there is a clinical basis for all our decisions."

The Hopewell location will serve as an acute-care hospital with 237 beds and an attached medical office building for doctors and staff on a 165-acre campus just off Interstate 95 at Scotch Road. It will feature CyberKnife radiosurgery, daVinci robotic surgery, a cancer center, a 266 Cat Scanner, reconstructive surgery, neuroscience and digestive health institutes, adult emergency services and specialized pediatric emergency care, a maternity service (including a Level II nursery), dialysis, cardiology and a primary stroke center.

"Take for example that 266 Cat


Scanner—that doesn't exist anywhere in this region," says Maghazehe. "Why are we so involved in technology? Because it takes you a fraction of the time to do a sophisticated Cat Scan for someone having an aneurysm. It is fast, it is precise. We want to be the leader in technology."

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Capital Health's Level II Trauma Center will remain headquartered at the Regional Medical Center on Brunswick Avenue in Trenton, the only such facility in the region.

These features encompass Phase I of Capital Health's planned campus. A second phase will include a second medical office tower with an additional 144 beds. After the completion of that phase, a third phase will bring the total single-patient beds at Hopewell up to 500. Capital Health's market surveys show this size hospital is sustainable in the region assuming a 30 percent share of patients coming from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, says Maghazehe.

"This is not a single hospital, it's a system that includes hospitals, surgery centers, outpatient and private care," says Maghazehe. "We're spreading this out throughout the region.

"We have finally put together a system that's capable of keeping New Jersey patients in New Jersey. We're capable of covering the entire state with this network," says Maghazehe. "I don't know anyone else who has done that. This new system is the first one." 

Capital Health Medical Center's main lobby. Photograph supplied by Don MacNeill.

