Hospital Hires Architects, Construction Managers

Munson Medical Center’s Board of Trustees has hired the Grand Rapids architectural firm URS and Southfield construction management firm Barton Malow to look at the feasibility of a new patient tower and cancer center north of Sixth Street on the hospital campus.

Architects from URS have designed many healthcare projects in Michigan and are ranked as one of the top 25 healthcare design firms in the nation. Barton Malow worked on the Emergency Department project and several prominent health care projects in Michigan.

Munson Healthcare and Munson Medical Center President and CEO Ed Ness said hiring the firms is a preliminary step toward possible construction and flows out of the hospital’s updated master facility plan. Munson Medical Center uses a master facility plan to guide campus development. This is a “big picture document” that is updated from time-to-time. The plan looks five to 10 years into the future and was developed to sensibly plan for the facilities, technology, physicians, and staff that will be needed to accommodate growth and ensure Munson Medical Center remains a top quality hospital.

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Mandatory Flu Vaccine Takes Effect This Fall

MEC supports decision to implement policy

Effective this September with the 2011-12 flu season, Munson Medical Center will require all providers, employees, volunteers, and students to receive flu vaccinations.

This will be a condition of employment, volunteer service, clinical rotations, and medical privileges at the hospital.

This decision has been supported by hospital leadership and the Medical Executive Committee.

This change in policy was made following extensive see Flu, page 2

Physician’s Corner: Endocrinologist Jill Vollbrecht, MD

Part of the mission of the Northern Michigan Diabetes Initiative (NMDI) is to improve and standardize care of the diabetic patient within its 11-county region.

As part of this mission, I had the opportunity over the past five months to see diabetic patients with nine primary care providers in the pilot Educational Outreach Visit (EOV) program, designed to review current American Diabetes Association guidelines for management of diabetes.

What we thought was going to be a good experience turned out to be amazing. Not only did the participants provide glowing feedback on the program, I also reaped immeasurable benefits, as well. It was truly an eye-opener for me to fight diabetes “on the front lines,” experiencing firsthand what challenges primary care providers face managing diabetes that I am usually spared due to the subspecialty nature of my practice. I believe that it is helping me improve my ability as a consultant.

The EOV program has been approved and funded for 10 sessions during this fiscal year. If physicians or their staff are interested in participating in this program, please contact Christi Tipsword, NMDI coordinator at (231) 935-9227.

Insulin Therapy CME Accessible from Home

Interested in earning one free CME from the comfort of home? Now available on HealthStream is a program authored by Endocrinologist Jill Vollbrecht, MD, “Insulin Therapy for Diabetic Management.” To access this program please go to mymunson.org, click on Education/Tutorials, then login to HealthStream. Go to the catalog and search “Insulin.” Click on Insulin Therapy for Diabetic Management to begin the course. There will be an additional course on the American Diabetes Association Clinical Practice Guidelines coming soon.

Jill Vollbrecht, MD
consideration of patient safety needs and the consistent research that proves the benefit of flu vaccinations.

“Annual influenza vaccination is the most effective method for preventing influenza virus infection and its complications which affect the patients here at Munson,” said Karen Speirs, DO, Medical Director for Infection Prevention at Munson Medical Center.

Modeling studies that examine influenza risk when 100 percent of health care staff is vaccinated in the acute care setting found a 43 percent reduction in flu risk for hospitalized patients.

Hospitals including Munson Medical Center have supported mandatory immunization or testing for conditions such as Rubella, TB, and others.

Flu vaccination has been shown to reduce influenza infection in providers by 88 percent.

The Michigan Department of Community Health reports health care workers not vaccinated are a key cause of influenza outbreaks in a healthcare setting.

One study showed a high proportion of healthcare workers who develop influenza-like illness continued to work, undoubtedly shedding viruses and exposing colleagues and patients. The reasons cited were they needed to perform important tasks, a sense of irreplaceability, a desire not to impose their work on colleagues and not being sick enough to stay home.

CDC strongly encourages healthcare employers to provide influenza vaccine to their workers to maximize vaccination rates. Annually, influenza vaccine coverage of healthcare workers nationwide is 40 percent.

Research also shows that an infected individual may pass along the flu virus 24 hours before the development of clinical symptoms. Infected healthcare workers in contact with patients place them at high risk of respiratory complications and potentially death due to the flu.

Under the new policy, free flu vaccine will be provided in Employee Health to all hospital physicians/providers, employees, and volunteers.

The vaccine will be offered annually, generally from September through December. Flu vaccines provided through physician offices will be accepted with documentation. Employee health will continue to offer the vaccine after Dec. 31 for those on leave or new hires.

Exemptions will be made for:
- Egg hypersensitivity, validated by physician/provider or skin test
- History of Guillain-Barre within six weeks of receiving prior influenza vaccine
- Religious exemption validated by written support from church hierarchy – personal/philosophical exemptions will not be acceptable.
- Exceptions and extensions will be allowed for an approved leave of absence.

Failure to comply with the policy by Dec. 31 will result in:
- Suspension of privileges for physicians/providers
- Clinical rotations closed for students
- Loss of employment for employees

“With this change in policy Munson Medical Center is joining a number of hospitals nationally and in Michigan that have made the flu vaccine mandatory,” said Kathleen McManus, Executive Vice President and COO. “These include Northern Michigan Hospital in Petoskey, Bronson in Kalamazoo, as well as places such as John Hopkins Medical Center.”

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“The Board agrees that there will be a need for new beds in the future as we continue to grow at a projected 1 percent per year,” he said. “We already are experiencing times in the Emergency Department when patients need to be admitted and are forced to wait because of a lack of available beds.”

The preliminary design phase will provide the Board and hospital leadership with projected costs for the project and certify the feasibility of the location. “It will allow us to get a handle around any challenges or changes to understanding what will be required to do this type of project,” Ness said.

The hospital has acquired options to purchase some properties north of the hospital required for a bed tower project to be feasible. City zoning and the City Master Plan require any expansion to move in this direction.

Vice President of Facilities Steve Tongue said he has been in touch with neighborhood associations regarding their concerns about any potential growth of the campus. Concern mentioned by neighbors include traffic and flooding.

The Kid’s Creek Restoration Project that recently was completed will allow for greater capacity of water runoff and will assist with some flood control. Tongue said that any future development on the north part of the campus would include incorporating lessons learned by the creek restoration on the south side of Sixth Street.

“Munson wants to remain a good neighbor to nearby residents and seeks early neighborhood input as it looks to address hospital needs,” he said. “We want to listen to concerns and as much as possible address any neighborhood issues through thoughtful project design.”

Ness emphasized the preliminary step of hiring the firms does not mean the project will happen. “Any project we undertake will be contingent on the availability of financial resources and other factors,” he said.
Asthma patients at Munson Family Practice Center are benefiting from national research that could change the way physicians and other clinicians provide asthma care.

David Klee, MD, FAAFP, said the Munson Family Practice Center joined 20 other family medicine practices nationally to launch a large national study on asthma care. Asthma affects as many as 25 percent of U.S. children by age 18, and 5 percent of adults, with another 5 percent reporting exercise induced asthma.

“We saw our first patient in February and recently were recognized as an exemplary clinic in the national newsletter related to this study,” Klee said. “We are the first group in the study to incorporate our electronic medical record into the study.”

The four-year study is funded by the Agency for HealthCare Research and Quality, a part of the Department of Health and Human Services. It involves a nationally designed procedure to treat asthma patients through medications while taking into account other risk factors the patient may have that are associated with the disease. Patients who participate in the study receive five questionnaires over a two-year period of time. Each questionnaire can be completed in about 15 minutes.

Assisting locally with the research are Munson Family Practice residents Roshani Jadia, M.D., and Behzod Rostam, M.D., and nurse Sheila Schwabe, LPN.

“Clinical research is an exciting part of medicine, but is not often incorporated into a busy practitioner’s practice,” Dr. Klee said. “It encourages physicians to incorporate better ways of managing problems. We are encouraging our residents to have a questioning mind that can spur on other clinical advancements.”

In addition to the asthma study, Munson Family Practice Center also is involved in a local study on circumcision quality indicators, one on the use of simulation technology for evaluating resident competency and the SEARCH Study with Michigan State University on screening for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Munson Named Among ‘Most Wired’ Hospitals

Munson Medical Center along with Munson Healthcare affiliate hospitals Mercy Hospital Cadillac, and Otsego Memorial Hospital recently were recognized by the American Hospital Association journal, Hospitals and Health Networks, as “Most Wired” hospitals.

A report by the magazine details how “Most Wired” hospitals and health systems are leading the way in automating and integrating clinical, patient safety, and administrative functions.

Munson Medical Center Director of Emergency Services Kevin Omilusik, MD, said the move away from paper to electronic physician orders promotes greater patient safety at the hospital.
Hospital, Surgeons Recognized for Quality of Bariatric Care

Munson Medical Center and surgeons from Grand Traverse Surgery, PC, recently received renewal designation as a Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence*.

Surgeons recognized include Roche J. Featherstone, MD; David Kam, MD; Michael A. Nizzi, DO; and Steven Slikkers, MD. The designation from the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery follows a thorough review of the hospital’s program and physician practices.

“Renewal of our Center of Excellence confirms the quality of care our patients receive in the program,” said Nizzi, medical director for the program. “Surgeons at Grand Traverse Surgery and Munson Medical Center are committed to providing high quality bariatric services on the same level as the most respected programs in the country. Our patients should remain confident that they are receiving the most advanced care possible.”

Medical research continues to find evidence that bariatric surgery provides effective treatment for type 2 diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and obstructive sleep apnea.

First achieving Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence recognition in 2008, Munson Medical Center and the surgeons continue to meet the qualifying standards examined through a rigorous evaluation process. Hospitals and surgeons must demonstrate and document through short- and long-term outcomes that they have a comprehensive program and meet the established program requirements for providing safe bariatric surgical care.

Comprehensive after care is a cornerstone of Munson Medical Center’s bariatric program with extensive followup by surgeons and patient support groups.

Grand Traverse Surgery surgeons perform three types of bariatric surgeries: the Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass, the LAP-BAND® procedure, and the Vertical Sleeve Gastrectomy.

For more information on Grand Traverse Surgery’s Bariatric Center of Excellence, call (231) 346-4014.