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Saint Alphonsus to beef up its hospitals in Nampa

The company says it will invest \$33.5 million to serve patients who otherwise may go to Meridian or Boise.

A new emergency department will open in early fall at Saint Alphonsus Nampa Health Plaza at Garrity Boulevard and Interstate 84. About a year later, a new building adjacent to plaza will open to house a maternity center and a comprehensive heart-care center.

Saint Alphonsus executives say these improvements are part of Saint Al's plan to better serve patients in the growing Nampa area.



A new building (left) for the planned maternity and cardiac centers will sit between the Nampa Health Plaza and Interstate 84.

“It’s going to make access to services so much easier,” said Karl Keeler, the CEO Saint Alphonsus Medical Center Nampa.

“Hopefully, we’ll be able to keep people in their communities.”

Keeler said future residential growth and other expected development north of the interstate make the Nampa Health Plaza — the former Mercy North — the best location for Saint Al's expansion. Many Canyon County residents now find it more convenient to travel to Ada County for treatment, he said.

Mercy North was part of the Mercy Medical Center in south Nampa on 12th Avenue Road South. Mercy, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, was purchased by Saint Alphonsus Health System in 2010.

Saint Alphonsus will spend about \$30 million to renovate the Nampa Health Plaza and to build the maternity center, with 20 beds and two operating rooms for Caesarean sections; and the heart care center, with 10 critical-care inpatient beds, a catheterization lab, and 24/7 interventional/invasive cardiology.

The maternity center will be named for the late Dr. Fred Birkeland, who delivered more than 5,000 babies in his career as a Nampa obstetrician.

Keeler said the new specialty services complement services already offered at the Nampa Health Plaza, including an outpatient surgery center, comprehensive breast care, Saint Alphonsus Medical Group Family Medicine, urgent care, Mednow Pharmacy, lab and radiology.

About \$3.5 million in upgrades also are in the works for the Saint Alphonsus Medical Center Nampa. They include remodeling the laboratory, adding a new pharmacy system that ensures accurate medication distribution, and enhancing inpatient rooms and public areas.

“We’re trying to make this a project that will elevate the care in Canyon County,” Keeler said. “We already have great staff and doctors.”

In planning the projects, Saint Alphonsus has used the research, information, technology and practices applied to its renovations in Boise several years ago. Saint Alphonsus partnered with local emergency services when designing the emergency department.

“We’ve done all this design around lean principles,” which seek to create more value for customers with fewer resources, Keeler said.

Saint Alphonsus President and CEO Sally Jeffcoat appeared Tuesday with Gov. Butch Otter and Nampa Mayor Tom Dale. “The commitment of keeping care close to home is something Saint Alphonsus Health System will continue to support both financially and philosophically,” Jeffcoat said during a news conference at the Nampa Health Plaza. “Nampa Vision 2020 improves access to care, enhances quality and safety, promotes collaborating with physicians to coordinate care, and meets the health care needs of the communities we serve.”



Saint Al’s owns about 27 acres at the site. The construction is designed to make future expansion possible. The health system also owns 65 acres west of Midland Boulevard and Interstate 84, where Mercy Medical Center once planned to build a new hospital. Keeler said Saint Al’s will hold onto the land but has not plans for it.

St. Luke’s Health System and the Saltzer Medical Group are partners in a new health plaza, 9850 W. St. Lukes Drive, nearby at Midland Boulevard and Cherry Lane. Saltzer is moving its services from Saint Al’s Nampa Health Plaza to the new location and will begin opening departments Jan. 22.

Saltzer Medical Group in South Nampa will remain in its location.