



Press Release

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DATE: May 19, 2011

Board Approves Stopgap Measure to Expand Emergency Department *Modular buildings are a necessary interim step until the new ED is built*

Fremont, Calif. – The Washington Township Health Care District Board of Directors has taken action to approve and fund a stopgap measure to ensure that Washington Hospital can continue to meet the emergent medical needs of the District’s residents. The Board approved the purchase of three modular buildings, which will expand the capacity of the emergency department and is an important, critical measure needed now until the new, much larger, emergency department is built in 2013.

“With the continuing economic downturn, there are an increased number of the District’s residents without health insurance and the emergency room is often the only source of care for the uninsured,” said Patricia Danielson, RHIT, president of the Washington Township Health Care District Board of Directors. “The result of this trend is a steady increase in patient volume, so the new modular buildings will serve as a prudent, temporary solution until the new permanent facility is constructed.”

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Washington Hospital is also designated as a Cardiac Receiving Center as well as a Primary Stroke Center, which adds to the already high volume of patients resulting in the Hospital housing the second busiest emergency department in Alameda County. Only the County's Highland General Hospital in Oakland exceeds Washington Hospital's emergency patient load.

"Our emergency department consistently operates near capacity," said Nancy Farber, chief executive officer of Washington Hospital Healthcare System. "As the volume of patients continues to grow, we must take every step to ensure that we can meet this increasing demand until the new, permanent emergency department is available when the Morris Hyman Critical Care Pavilion is built."

The temporary expansion consists of three modern and spacious modular units which will expand and enhance the registration, triage and waiting room areas, allowing needed space to be reclaimed for direct patient care in the current emergency department.

With the expanded space, emergency department staff will be able to separate individuals who may be contagious with colds or the flu from others who do not have respiratory issues. It also means that registration will be expanded and triage times shortened while providing improved privacy and security for those waiting to be treated. The temporary, new facilities will be open to emergency patients by October of this year.

Washington Township Health Care District is governed by an elected board and includes Washington Hospital Healthcare System. Unlike a municipal or county hospital, Washington Hospital's operating expenses, research, community programs, and employee salaries are funded by revenues generated through providing patient and other health care services.

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Washington Hospital Healthcare System includes a 359-bed acute-care hospital; the Taylor McAdam Bell Neuroscience Institute; The Gamma Knife® Center; Washington Radiation Oncology Center; Washington Outpatient Surgery Center; Washington Outpatient Rehabilitation Center; Washington Outpatient Catheterization Laboratory; Washington Center for Joint Replacement; the Institute for Minimally Invasive and Robotic Surgery; and Washington West, a complex which houses Washington Women's Center, Outpatient Imaging Center and additional outpatient hospital services and administrative facilities.

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***(For more information or to set up an interview, please contact Christopher Brown,
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