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South Street Landing to House RI Nursing Education Center

PROVIDENCE – Governor Lincoln D. Chafee, Senator Jack Reed, Mayor Angel Taveras, Brown University President Christina Paxson, Rhode Island College President Nancy Carriuolo and University of Rhode Island President David M. Dooley joined developer Richard Galvin, Governor-elect Gina Raimondo, Mayor-elect Jorge Elorza and other officials on December 15, 2014 for a ceremonial groundbreaking of the South Street Landing Project.

The multi-million dollar project will house the Rhode Island Nursing Education Center, Brown University offices, graduate student housing and a parking garage. More than 200 guests joined the elected leaders in celebrating the project as it moves closer to actual construction, which is expected to start in early 2015.

“The Nursing Education Center will allow public and private institutions of higher learning to partner and forge a path to advance Rhode Island as a regional leader in nursing education,” Gov. Chafee said.

The Center used by RIC’s and URI’s nursing programs is expected to advance Rhode Island’s role as a regional leader in healthcare and nursing education. “This day is a testament to the dedication and commitment of RIC, Brown University and URI, state and city leaders, Dick Galvin and his team, and other members of the Rhode Island community,” said URI President Dooley.

Rhode Island College President Dr. Nancy Carriuolo said, “South Street Landing, and in particular the Rhode Island Nursing Education Center, will help our state grow the educated workforce it needs to meet the changing needs of its number-one industry sector: health care.”

“South Street Station represents a true public-private partnership, bringing together three universities, the state, the city of Providence, a private developer, and National Grid to transform an old power station into a critical asset for Providence’s growing meds and eds economy. Together with the Brown University’s medical school, Johnson & Wales University’s physician assistant school, and our surrounding hospitals this new joint nursing school will help to further solidify Providence as a center for health, education and research,” said outgoing Providence Mayor Angel Taveras.
Southcoast Breaks Ground on Heart and Vascular Center at Charlton

FALL RIVER, MASS. – Southcoast Health recently held a groundbreaking ceremony for the Harold and Virginia Lash Heart and Vascular Center at Charlton Memorial Hospital. The new venue will house Southcoast Health’s expanding Cardiovascular Services, including a state-of-the-art hybrid operating room.

“Over the years, Southcoast Health has transformed itself from a system of community hospitals serving the basic needs of its patients to a front-line provider of some of the most innovative medicine available,” said Keith Hovan, President & CEO of Southcoast Health.

The hybrid OR is a cardiovascular surgical theatre equipped with advanced medical imaging devices to enable minimally-invasive surgery while bringing together doctors of different disciplines in the same operating room. The hybrid OR will support Southcoast Health’s structural heart procedures, vascular surgery and endovascular medicine.

With this hybrid OR, we’ll be able to offer minimally invasive therapies rather than open surgical procedures, and our ability to offer unique therapies to treat individual patient problems will be expanded with this new venue,” said Adam Saltzman, MD, Medical Director of the Structural Heart Program.

Studies also suggest that the hybrid OR will increase patient satisfaction and reduce overall costs. This cost reduction will be achieved by reducing length of stay, ICU usage and surgical infections. The dual achievements of reduced inpatient stays and fewer surgeries increases patient satisfaction.

This new operating room will be used exclusively for inpatients and is designed for a range of cardiovascular procedure applications, including Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) technology. TAVR is a highly-specialized valve replacement surgery that eliminates the need for open-heart surgery and gives new hope and relief from pain to high-risk patients with heart valve disease. Due to the complexity of these inpatient cases, Southcoast anticipates 40 to 50 TAVR and 124 open complex vascular surgical cases in 2015.

The Harold and Virginia Lash Heart and Vascular Center will cost approximately $9.5 million to complete. The construction was made possible in large part by a donation from the Harold and Virginia Lash Trust and other major commitments from the Auxiliary of Charlton Memorial Hospital and the Oliver S. and Jennie R. Donaldson Charitable Trust.

The multi-level, heart and vascular 6,700 square-foot center is expected to open in the fall of this year.

CMM Picks RI for $20M Healthcare Payment/Service Delivery ‘Model Test’ Award

PROVIDENCE – Rhode Island has been selected for a $20 million Model Test Award under the second round of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services State Innovation Models initiative. The grant period begins on February 1, 2015, and continues over a 48-month project period.

The State Innovation Model initiative provides financial and technical support to states to design or test innovative, multi-payer health care payment and service delivery models that will improve health system performance, increase quality of care, and decrease costs for Medicare, Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program beneficiaries. Rhode Island is one of 11 states to receive a test grant this round – 21 states received a design grant.

“This is an incredible opportunity for strategic federal investments that will ensure Rhode Islanders receive the highest quality care with better health outcomes in the years to come. I look forward to working in a unique public-private partnership with the Healthy Rhode Island steering committee to make this opportunity a reality,” said Lt. Gov. Elizabeth Roberts.
IN THE NEWS

Providence VA Expands Services in Renovated Outpatient Clinic in New Bedford

NEW BEDFORD, MASS – The New Bedford mayor cut the ribbon for the Providence VA Medical Center’s newly-renovated Community-Based Outpatient Clinic here during an event Monday, December 22, 2014.

Located at 175 Elm Street, the clinic provides a local primary health care option for Veterans in southeastern Massachusetts and nearby areas of Rhode Island.

“The improvements here are excellent examples of the VA’s commitment to provide high-quality, accessible health care to Veterans in our community,” said DR. SUSAN MACKENZIE, director of the Providence VA Medical Center.

The facility was renovated beginning in September 2013 to expand services and improve patient access. Improvements to the facility included adding a physical therapy clinic, women’s health exam rooms, additional exam rooms and restrooms, renovated space for home-based primary care support, and an enhanced reception area where customer service can assist up to four Veterans at once. Climate control and security systems were also upgraded, as were information technology services, enhancing telemedicine capabilities. In all, the $3.5 million project added 2,000 square feet to the building, for a new total of 11,965 square feet.

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell cuts the ribbon to the new physical therapy wing of the New Bedford VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic Monday, Dec. 22, 2014, with Providence VA Medical Center Director Dr. Susan MacKenzie, New Bedford Veterans’ Services Director Christopher Gomes, and on the far right Michael Keegan, Chief of the Civil, International and Interagency Support Project Management Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New England District. The facility was renovated to expand services and improve patient access.

HEALTH Accepting Applications for Health Professional Loan Repayment Program

PROVIDENCE – The Rhode Island Department of Health [HEALTH] has announced that the 2015 Rhode Island Health Professional Loan Repayment Program application cycle is open through February 13, 2015. The program offers health education loan repayments to eligible health professionals who serve in a variety of disciplines, including primary care, dentistry, and mental health, that have made a commitment to practice in under-served communities in Rhode Island.

The Health Professional Loan Repayment Board will review and evaluate all applications received from healthcare professionals and sites to determine program eligibility based on regulations and the availability of funding. A total of $350,000 has been allocated to the State of Rhode Island for eight to 10 awards, which are expected to be announced by the end of April 2015.

“This program is designed to address health disparities by improving access to care in under-served communities,” said JANE A. HAYWARD, president and CEO of the Rhode Island Health Center Association.

Information about how to apply for loan repayment assistance, individual and site eligibility requirements, and designations of under-served areas (as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration) can be found at http://www.health.ri.gov/grants/healthprofessionalloanrepayment.

From left, Dr. Heather Mackey-Fowler, Dr. Mark Zullo, Dr. Gloria Sun, and Dr. Hana Hagos participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the South County Primary Care Family and Internal Medicine office at South County Hospital in November. The facility was officially opened in September.