

News Release

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Sidebar

Work Underway to Implement Preliminary System Design for St. Peter's Health Partners

ALBANY, NY – October 3, 2011 – With the final merger of Seton Health, St. Peter's Health Care Services and Northeast Health, significant work at the institutions will now focus on integration of the new health system – St. Peter's Health Partners – a process that could take as long as three years.

The overall goal of the planning and integration process is to implement a preliminary “blueprint” of the new health care system that was developed in 2010. A key aspect of the plan is the estimated investment of more than \$55 million in facilities and information technology upgrades. Nearly \$6 million in information technology improvements and nearly \$50 million in facility upgrades are slated for the two Troy hospitals and Albany Memorial Hospital. Troy will also benefit from the availability of more sophisticated cardiac services and a new outpatient cancer treatment center.

The proposed design of the new health care system includes the reconfiguration and merging of certain services, particularly in the four acute care hospitals which will make up the new system.

All four acute care hospitals will continue to operate under the proposed plan, as will Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital in Schenectady. It may take as many as three years for the new health care system to complete many of the changes and to be fully integrated.

Design for System and New Configuration for Hospitals

The three systems currently provide a wide array of services to thousands of people each day. These services include: St. Peter's Hospital's state-of-the-art, tertiary care services, its Community Hospice, addiction recovery center, and two skilled nursing facilities; and Northeast's Albany Memorial and Samaritan hospitals, and Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital. It also includes The Eddy's renowned eldercare services including skilled nursing, Alzheimer's care, adult day services, home care and community services, and retirement and assisted living. Seton Health adds St. Mary's Hospital, a skilled nursing facility, 16 physician office locations and an array of specialty services.

Under the draft system design, reconfiguring care, programs and services will require significant investment in renovation and enhancements of the hospitals and other facilities. These include the construction of a new outpatient cancer treatment center at St. Mary's Hospital, as well as renovations and other investments at Albany Memorial, Samaritan and St. Mary's to support the merging and transfer of certain services. St. Peter's Hospital is nearing completion of its \$258 million, multi-year renovation and construction program scheduled to be finished in 2013. The St. Peter's Hospital's project renovated or replaced a number of areas of the hospital's main campus.

Other key aspects in hospital reconfiguration that will take place over time include:

- **Samaritan Hospital** will have one of the most significant reconfigurations. Samaritan Hospital will become the inpatient medical/surgical provider in Troy including medical, surgical and critical care beds. It will also have inpatient and outpatient surgery, emergency services, endoscopy, imaging, and other diagnostic, treatment and support services. Inpatient medical/surgical beds from St. Mary's will move to the Samaritan campus. Since Troy needs only one cardiac catheterization laboratory, that facility will be located at Samaritan and will have new capabilities to perform angioplasty (opening of heart arteries with a balloon or stent). The facility will be integrated with St. Peter's Cardiac and Vascular services.

Samaritan was selected as the medical/surgical location due to its larger overall bed capacity, larger OR suite, and larger and more flexible site plan. It also requires less immediate investment in capital improvements.

- **St. Mary's Hospital** becomes a focal point for the new system's behavioral health program, as well as a consolidated ambulatory center that will include a new cancer treatment facility for Rensselaer County. Behavioral health services currently at Samaritan and inpatient substance abuse beds currently at St. Peter's Hospital will move to St. Mary's Hospital. Emergency services, as well as diagnostic, treatment and various support functions, will also continue at St. Mary's.

The new outpatient cancer treatment center at St. Mary's will offer radiation therapy, infusion and psychosocial support services. In addition to the ambulatory center, St. Mary's will also provide select surgical services; endoscopy; imaging; cardiac rehab; outpatient physical and occupational therapy; sleep studies; as well as clinics and primary care. In its behavioral health programs, St. Mary's will provide adult psychiatric services. There will also be chemical and substance abuse services, including outpatient services, counseling and detox.

- **Albany Memorial Hospital** will continue as a community hospital with a specialty-focused, surgical program including inpatient medical, surgical, critical care and emergency services. It will also provide additional ambulatory and short-stay surgery (less-complex surgery that requires a shorter length of stay in the hospital).
- **St. Peter's Hospital** will be the system's provider of specialized (tertiary) care for all medical specialties in the new corporation, including complex inpatient care such as cardiovascular care, cancer care, women's & children's services (including NICU), neurosurgery, orthopedic, urology and gastroenterology, among others.

St. Peter's will also address the region's need for a recognized comprehensive cancer center. Some inpatient services at St. Peter's, such as physical medicine rehabilitation and substance abuse, will be transferred to other members of the new health system.

In addition to changes in the system's hospitals, all sub-acute and acute rehabilitation, long-term care, home care, retirement housing and hospice care will be organized under The Eddy. The institutions' respective charitable giving foundations will also continue as currently structured.