On May 24 Inspira Health Network broke ground on new hospital in Mullica Hill. We are confident this new medical center will provide area residents with even higher levels of clinical quality and customer service. Through innovative design, the latest in medical and communication technology, and input from staff, physicians and our community we believe Inspira Medical Center Mullica Hill will usher in a new era of health care in Gloucester County. Yet with all of these benefits, deciding to build a new hospital remains a difficult decision.

The approval process for a new hospital is arduous, usually taking a year or longer. The cost of building and equipping a new hospital is very expensive–hundreds of millions of dollars. And to top it off, more and more patient care is provided in an outpatient setting. With this information in hand, you might wonder why Inspira leadership decided that building a new hospital was the best option moving forward.

There are several reasons, which when viewed together, provide strong support for our decision. It’s also important to understand that a number of other municipal and state agencies had to agree with our decision. We needed numerous approvals, including that of the New Jersey Commissioner of Health Cathleen Bennett.

The short answer to the question, “Why are we building a new hospital?” is this: a new hospital will enable us to provide Gloucester County residents with the best possible care in the years, and decades to come. At its core, our decision was based on what is best for the people of Gloucester County as we work to foster healthier families and communities. What follows is a more detailed explanation.

New Construction vs. Renovation

As one part of an exhaustive master facilities plan we conducted in 2015/2016, we explored the options of new construction on a green site compared with extensive renovation at our existing Woodbury site. New construction proved to be the better option on several fronts, including cost (renovation would have cost an additional $50 million), patient care and experience, and opportunities for future development.

Commissioner Bennett commented in her letter of approval that the new replacement hospital, “…will improve infection control, patient safety and quality of care.” Patient safety and quality of care are foundational elements of the Inspira culture, which will be further strengthened when we move into our new hospital in late 2019.

Opportunities for Growth and Collaboration

A final reason for choosing to build a new facility, adjacent to Rowan University’s West Campus, are the many opportunities it provides for the future and partnering with Rowan University. Our Woodbury campus is landlocked, while our new site in Mullica Hill has 100 acres, which provide ample space for new services and partnerships to develop on site. A medical office building is already planned. Preliminary talks are underway for creating educational as well as joint efforts in technology and business with Rowan University. The proximity of the campuses creates exciting possibilities that both organizations are eager to explore.

Staying Current with Trends in Health Care

With the rapid changes in how health services are provided, it is essential to be both flexible and responsive to the needs of our communities and to the changing preferences of our patients and families. Easy access, shorter wait times, more holistic services, and accommodations for family caregivers and the use of personal technology are all possible in a state-of-the-art hospital designed for how care is provided in the 21st century. In a building whose oldest sections date back the middle of the 20th century, it becomes more and more difficult, at times impossible, to keep up with the rapid changes in health care.

Keep Up with Latest Developments of this Exciting Project

I encourage you to keep up with the construction process by visiting the New Hospital section of our website. There you will find the latest updates, artist renderings, and images from our construction cam. Just visit InspiraHealthNetwork.org/MullicaHill to monitor the progress of this exciting project.