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# SNEAK PEEK: VA's Charlotte health-care center on target for April opening (PHOTOS)

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**Jennifer Thomas**

Staff Writer  
*Charlotte Business Journal*



Department of Veterans Affairs says its 295,000-square-foot outpatient health-care center in Charlotte will open in April.

That roughly \$104 million, six-story building is being constructed on a 35-acre parcel at West Tyvola Road and Cascade Pointe Boulevard.



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Childress Klein Properties of Charlotte teamed up with Cambridge Development Group of Virginia on the project. Together, they have formed Childress Klein-Cambridge Healthcare Solutions to design, build and provide facility management.

The VA has a 20-year, \$13 million annual lease for that facility, which is expected to offer enhanced outpatient primary care and specialty services for more than 35,000 annually.

“Demand for care for veterans is growing nationwide – and especially in Charlotte,” says Kenneth Mortimer, director of the VA Charlotte Health Care Center. “We’re driving forward to get this up and running for our veterans.”

The center is part of the Salisbury VA Health Care System, which includes the W.G. (Bill) Hefner VA Medical Center and community-based outpatient clinics in Charlotte’s University area, Hickory and Winston-Salem.

Those facilities served 92,000 veterans in fiscal 2014.

This medical complex brings state-of-the-art medical care closer to home and expands upon the types of health-care services veterans can receive, Mortimer says.

The health center will offer out-patient primary care and specialty services such as cardiology, neurology, dental and oncology.

“We’ll be able to bring care close to the veterans here,” Mortimer says. “It helps us take care of them the best we can.”

That facility is more than four times the size of the current 65,000-square-foot Charlotte Community-Based Outpatient Clinic, located in the University area.

The University facility will remain open, but plans call for the bulk of its 250 full- and part-time employees to transfer to the new site.

Just 43 will remain at the University clinic.

There’s potential for nearly 700 people total to be employed at the new health-care center in the future, Mortimer says.

Jobs and health-care services will be added to meet patient demand, he adds.

“We don’t want to build something our patient demand doesn’t support,” Mortimer says.

The health-care complex is nearly six years in the making.

The Charlotte center is one of seven approved for construction in 2010, including three in North Carolina.

J.E. Dunn Construction Co. is the general contractor. RPA Design of Charlotte is the architect of record.

J.E. Dunn expects to turn the building over to the VA for final upfit in the winter. Work on that building is on target, says Ken Cornell, general supervisor.

"It's certainly a balancing act," he says.

He showcased the building's different features and construction progress during a tour of the facility on Thursday.

On the first floor, the imaging suite is getting ready for the first of two MRI's to be installed. It also will have x-ray, CT, PET and nuclear medicine. It also will be home to dialysis services, a canteen and a pharmacy.

The second, third and fourth floors will be dedicated to primary care and services such as mental health, dental and audiology.

Four surgery suites as well as endoscopy and related services are on the fifth floor.

The building was designed to put the patient front-and-center, Mortimer says.

Its L-shape made it possible to group services and related diagnostic testing. Exam rooms are grouped around a central area, with desks shared by a team of doctors and other medical professionals.

"There's no office for the doctor," Mortimer adds.

*Jennifer Thomas covers retail, health care and education for the Charlotte Business Journal.*

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