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Huge EIRMC Building Project Announced
\$20 Million Women’s & Infants’ Expansion and Renovation
Project Set to Move Forward

Idaho Falls, Idaho. Area women and babies will soon find exquisite new accommodations in addition to the highly-specialized clinical care they’re already accustomed to receiving at Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center, when a new Women’s & Newborn Center, just approved for construction, is up and running.

The 20-month project is set to break ground in late spring of 2010, and will feature modern architecture, state-of-the-art clinical technology, beautiful furnishings, and a significantly expanded footprint.

“This expansion positions us to build our capacity and continue our regional leadership in this service line, not just from a clinical delivery perspective, but also as the preferred ‘go-to’ for area women in terms of aesthetics and amenities,” said CEO Doug Crabtree.

The project represents the maturation of a concept launched three years ago, with the recruitment to EIRMC’s Medical Staff of Neonatologists Shannon Jenkins, D.O., and Travis Anschutz, M.D. (Neonatologists are Pediatricians with additional years of subspecialty training in the care of Neonates, who work in the hospital full-time, focused exclusively on the care of the most fragile infants.) These recruitments, coupled with a \$2.4 million capital investment in specialized equipment, upgraded EIRMC’s NICU capabilities from Level II to a Level IIIb, the highest and most specialized designation afforded a non-University affiliated hospital.

The NICU's average daily census swiftly ballooned from six babies to 16, with surges as high as 26 infants at once, proving the theory that these services were needed locally, partially due to our area having higher-than-average birth rates.

Today's news and the hospital's next step — a \$20 million bricks and mortar expansion and renovation — has been green-lighted because of the significance of the hospital's women's and infants' services for the entire region, and because that the facility that has served so well is simply no longer adequate for today's demands.

EIRMC Expansion Project, by the Numbers

Total cost:	Nearly \$20 million
<i>New space, primarily NICU:</i>	24,000 square feet
<i>Renovated space, existing</i>	
Women's & Infants' Center:	18,000 square feet
Groundbreaking:	Late spring 2010
Completion:	2011
Current average daily NICU census:	16 babies per day

The project will feature a new 24,000-square-foot wing, to be located south of the existing EIRMC Women's Center. This new space will add 16 new Level III NICU beds, plus 10 beds for a CCN (Continuing Care Nursery), for a total of 26. It also will include a 4-bed antepartum testing area, triage suite and shell space for future expansion.

An additional 18,000 square feet of existing Women's Center space will be completely gutted and renovated, right down to the flooring, paint, wall coverings, light fixtures, furniture, beds, artwork, laminate and solid surface counters, casework/headwalls, nurse stations and labor and delivery rooms. This will encompass all patient rooms in the area, the Well Newborn Nursery, Labor & Delivery, hallways and common areas. The sparkling, well-designed environment will match our aesthetic appeal to our exceptional clinical capabilities.

Dr. Anschutz commented in part, "With these improved facilities, we can look towards expanding even further, with negative pressure rooms for neonatal surgeries, and stabilization of critically ill infants brought in through the ER. The 'facelift' part of the project will also greatly improve bedside space, allowing families to spend more time with their critically ill newborns. This is yet another example of EIRMC's devotion to improving patient care in Idaho Falls."

As an additional plus, this project will help create jobs (not only in the hospital, but in the construction trades and beyond) and serve as an important part of the regional economic recovery.

For now, work is being done on finalizing architectural plans and beginning the permitting process, with an eye toward starting construction in the spring.

Other factors that make this the right time to build and grow: improved capabilities for managing high-risk pregnancies with our Maternal-Fetal medicine specialists; Gynecologic Oncology surgical specialists to treat women's reproductive cancers; and highly-specialized maternal and neonatal transport capabilities through Air Idaho Rescue.

All of these factors combine to make EIRMC's expansion project the right move to enable women and babies to receive the finest care possible right here, close to home.

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