



SOUTHCOAST
HOSPITALS GROUP

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ER physicians make \$1 million pledge to New St. Luke's

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*— John B. Day
President & CEO
Southcoast Health System*

NEW BEDFORD, Mass. — The physicians who work on the front lines of emergency medicine in New Bedford today stepped to the forefront of efforts to improve patient care by pledging \$1 million to The Campaign for a New St. Luke's.

Paul Bulat, MD, FACEP, the Medical Director of the St. Luke's ED and President of St. Luke's Emergency Associates PC, made the announcement at today's groundbreaking ceremony for the \$32 million expansion and renovation project that will address long waits in the Emergency Department and bring unprecedented health care services to the greater New Bedford region.

"We all felt a moral obligation to support the project in a major way," Dr. Bulat said. "The St. Luke's ED physicians understand the need for this renovation because we live the reality of the overcrowded ED every day. It is imperative that the ED has adequate facilities and the most up-to-date and forward-looking technology in order to provide high-quality care to our patients. We are proud to show our support for this critical project with our \$1 million commitment."

The physician members of St. Luke's Emergency Associates PC are Dr. Bulat, Daniel Shea, MD, Joanne Cameron, MD, David Fuerman, DO, Henry Gravel, MD, William Harding, MD, Mark Mahoney, MD, and John Stively, MD. The group is privately contracted by the hospital to provide emergency services.

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John B. Day, President & CEO of Southcoast Health System, thanked the physicians for their generous support, stating that the “commitment that you and your fellow Emergency Department physicians are showing toward this project is indeed heartening. Being on the front lines, our Emergency Department physicians know better than anyone what this project will mean to our patients and everyone who lives in this community. On behalf of everyone at Southcoast, I thank you for your generous pledge.”

The New St. Luke's

The New St. Luke's Hospital will dramatically expand and redesign the Emergency Department, add desperately needed beds to patient floors, add two additional operating suites and an amphitheatre for medical education.

“The St. Luke's project meets today's challenging demands while preparing for the needs of the future,” said Ronald B. Goodspeed, MD, MPH, FACP, FACPE, President of Southcoast Hospitals Group.

The \$32 million, three-year project will include 50,000 square feet of new construction and 40,000 square feet of renovations all within the hospitals current footprint. The cornerstone of the New St. Luke's is the new Emergency Department. The new ED will expand to 51 treatment bays — all of which are both private and loaded with the latest high-tech medical equipment.

The new Emergency Department will include:

- Floor space that will be 80 percent larger.
- Similar to Charlton, the ED will have a “fast lane” option, called ExpressCare 24 @ St. Luke's, to speed patients with minor complaints, such as flu, ear infection and suture removal, through the ED.
- Two new negative-pressure decontamination rooms will be available for the treatment of patients with contagious diseases.
- A new, specially dedicated area will allow families to meet in privacy.
- Criminal and drug-related admissions will be housed in secure facilities, with 24-hour policing, away from the general public.
- GPS-type tracking system for continuous pinpointing patients' locations.
- Wireless monitoring of patient conditions and vital signs.
- Staff are voice- and data-linked to each other, eliminating the need for an intercom.

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St. Luke's will also be adding 32 new hospital beds to help get patients treated more quickly.

Additional project highlights include:

- Floor space in the Memorial Building will triple.
- The new design will increase efficiency and improve patient flow.
- The addition of 32 spacious, bright rooms at 309 square feet including 14 new private rooms, 12 semi-private rooms, 6 amenity rooms (364 square feet) with features like high-speed Internet access.
- Private rooms will be added to every patient unit throughout the hospital to meet the increasing demand for such accommodation.
- St. Luke's total number of operating rooms will increase from 18 to 20. The two new operating theatres will feature the latest high-tech equipment.
- A second cardiac catheterization lab.

“The demand for surgery in our area is also steadily increasing — and with it the demand for top-quality surgeons,” Dr. Goodspeed said. “The two new Operating Rooms will help us make scheduling elective surgery more convenient for both surgeons and patients. The changes we are making to St. Luke's will serve the entire community. Our physicians and staff will have better facilities to work in. Our patients and their families will have faster service, more room and increased quality care. The New St. Luke's is a hospital everyone in our community will be proud of — the right balance of quality, experience, technology and compassion.”

Construction Timeline

Over the next three weeks the hospital will be creating the temporary area of the Emergency Department and sealing off the existing area. The demolition of the waiting room, security office and canopy area will take place through December followed by a six-week excavation period.

“If all goes well and, weather permitting, concrete will be poured before New Year's,” said Robert Gauthier, Vice President of Support Services for Southcoast Hospitals Group. “Snow will always be a problem and could cause delays, but the project began on time and we feel we have a good head start.”

The building will start to take shape in the spring with the erection of steel. By summer framing will be complete and the building will be closed off. The interior of the building will take approximately one year to complete due to the massive amount of detail required.

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“The interior portion of the project includes housing and installation of technical equipment, delicate electrical work, medical gases, plumbing and ventilation,” Gauthier said. “After this is completed, the Emergency Department entrance, which was moved on Oct. 25 to the back of the hospital on West Street, will be moved back to Page Street.”

There will be approximately eight months of renovations remaining after the Emergency Department entrance is relocated back to Page Street in spring 2006.

Details about the St. Luke's expansion project can be found online at www.southcoast.org/stlukes/. This site is updated frequently with news and information about the progress of the project. A St. Luke's construction community hotline has also been set up for comments and feedback at 508-961-5033.

Groundbreaking Speaking program

The groundbreaking ceremony on November 1, 2004, will feature remarks from the following individual. Remarks will be available on the Southcoast website.

- John B. Day, President & CEO of Southcoast Health System
- Ronald B. Goodspeed, MD, MPH, FACP, FACPE, President of Southcoast Hospitals Group
- R. William Blasdale, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Southcoast Health System
- Paul Bulat, MD, Medical Director of St. Luke's Hospital Emergency Services

Southcoast Health System, a not-for-profit charitable organization, is a community based health delivery system with multiple access points, offering an integrated continuum of health services throughout Southeastern Massachusetts and East Bay, Rhode Island. It includes Southcoast Hospitals Group, formed in 1996 from the merger of Charlton Memorial Hospital in Fall River, St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford and Tobey Hospital in Wareham.

Southcoast is one of three community hospitals approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to perform open heart surgery and elective coronary angioplasty. For more information visit www.southcoast.org.