Patients will benefit from renovations and new technology at North Naples Hospital

By Kelly Merritt

The NCH North Naples hospital has experienced a rebirth due to extensive renovations recently completed. Patients are taking notice of the beautiful new rooms, facilities and spacious waiting areas—and the staff couldn’t be happier.

Originally named the Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging, the now-updated center was established through a donation from the Brookdale Foundation.

“The rehabilitation unit within the NCH Healthcare System is actually a rehab hospital; and the opportunity we had to move our unit from the Downtown Campus to the Brookdale Center gave us many benefits,” said Heather Baker, NCH Administrative Director of Rehabilitation Services. “It has afforded us an opportunity to upgrade the facility and become more accessible to patients and their families.”

Before renovations began, Baker hosted an event for a group of former patients from the downtown campus. After the tour, she requested their feedback.

“They were overjoyed with the prospect of coming to this venue. When we finalized the plans, we incorporated a lot of their suggestions,” she said.

The project included renovations to patient rooms to accommodate specific regulations, adding 7,000 square feet to the original footprint, which now tops out at just under 22,000 square feet.

Therapy gyms, speech language treatment areas and a private exam room were added, along with expanded dining areas, administrative support areas and consultation rooms for patients and their families.

“We also have a specialty accreditation in stroke rehabilitation through the Commission on Accreditation for Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), which sets quality standards of practice for rehab providers,” Baker said. “We moved in September 29, 2011 and anticipate serving 1,000 patients this year,” she added.

Renovations also took place within the orthopedic units on the 5th and 6th floors of North Naples Hospital. The 5th floor orthopedic treatment unit now includes a combination of both elective surgeries and emergent traumas.

“The combination allowed us to expand the orthopedics department. Now we have space for 32 patients and a therapy room,” said Gina Teegarden, Director of Medical/Surgical Services at the North Naples Campus, who revealed that the 6th floor will house the VIP Gulf-view suite rooms and vascular services. “This renovation will be better for patients because all the rooms on these floors are private—there are no semi-private rooms. It will also decrease wait time in the ER to get a bed. Plus, it will meet the growth from the north end of the county.”

Major changes have taken place on the surgical side of North Naples Hospital, as well. Bill Diamond, NCH Director of Surgical Services, is excited about the new state-of-the-art operating rooms for patients and surgeons.

“We started building this past summer,” he said. “A lot of planning and staging went into renovating, which included complex timing and integration. The northern part of town is up 30 percent in capacity. Since these are the oldest facilities, we needed to upgrade and expand.”

The new surgical services “Suites” feature fully integrated operating rooms with video and information technology for minimally invasive surgeries. Integration technology provides a myriad of features.

“For example, if during surgery, a surgeon needs to view a patient’s x-ray or CT Scan, it can be sent to any one of 3 large screen monitors in the room. Video from the surgery can be viewed on monitors in the room or remotely. Additionally, the surgeon can request any information from the medical record to be pulled up and displayed on any monitor,” Diamond said. “These rooms are much larger than our previous rooms. One in particular will serve as the home for our robotic surgeries.”

A larger footprint, expanded spaces and the latest equipment: they all add up to a better patient outcome.

For more information on the Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging and Rehabilitation call (239) 552-7235.