

St. Luke's Hospital starts construction on a new, \$14 million Intensive Care Unit

Mayor Jon Mitchell joined Southcoast Health President & CEO Keith Hovan on a tour of the future site of a new, \$14 million intensive care unit under construction at St. Luke's Hospital. The leaders are shown here looking over design plans.

Southcoast Health is investing \$14 million in a new intensive care unit (ICU) at St. Luke's Hospital that will more than double the size of the current ICU. This state-of-the-art unit also aligns with Southcoast's pursuit of establishing a Level II trauma center at St. Luke's Hospital in 2020.

"Our investment in advanced intensive care will provide our patients with greater access to clinical excellence, close to home," said Keith Hovan, president and CEO of Southcoast Health. "The residents of southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island deserve the very best healthcare. We are excited to be investing in this new Intensive Care Unit as part of our ongoing commitment to delivering exceptional care and service to our patients and communities."

"I commend Southcoast Health for continuing to invest in this community and delivering the highest quality care to the people of New Bedford and beyond," said New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, who toured the site of the new unit Wednesday. "Needing the services of critical care can be an emotional and trying experience for patients and families. This new unit will have the space, technology and skilled care team that will make all the difference during someone's time of need."

The new unit is being constructed on the 4th floor of St. Luke's. It will be 16,000 square feet, as compared to the current 7,300-square-foot unit, and will be equipped with the

latest technology. The 16 spacious, 440-square-foot rooms will accommodate medical equipment and enable family and staff to be comfortably at the patient's bedside. A conference room will be dedicated for physician meetings with families and a quiet and comfortable lounge area, complete with refreshments, TV and showers, will be available to families staying long hours.

Maria Tassoni, RN, manager of the intensive care unit, commended staff for their meaningful contributions, suggestions and ideas for the unit's design and features. "I am excited about the opportunity for our nurses, physicians and staff to work within a new state-of-the-art unit that is designed to provide an optimal experience for patients, families and providers," said Tassoni, who has been working for Southcoast for 31 years. "When a great care team has a great facility, the patients and community benefit."

The new unit will also play an integral role in the hospital's efforts to achieve designation as a Level II trauma center, meaning that St. Luke's Hospital would be able to treat more serious injuries for people in the community.

This is the latest in a series of significant investments made in St. Luke's over the past five years. In 2014, the hospital cut the ribbon on the Stoico/FIRSTFED Maternity Center, following an almost \$14 million renovation to support a family-centered model of care that included 16 new rooms and a state-of-the-art Level II nursery. A \$4 million Rapid Assessment Zone was opened in 2017 to reduce the time for patients to be seen in our Emergency Department, providing patients with more timely care.

Southcoast Health employs 2,453 people at its New Bedford locations, and employs 1,581 city residents who work at Southcoast.

"As the region's only not-for-profit health system, we know

the importance of continually investing in our system to ensure all the residents of this region have access to the highest possible quality of care,” said Hovan. “And as the region’s largest employer, we want to provide our staff with the best facilities and equipment to treat and serve our patients, their families, and the larger community.”

About Southcoast Health

Southcoast Health is a not-for-profit, charitable organization and the largest provider of primary and specialty care in the region, serving communities in Rhode Island and across Southeastern Massachusetts. Southcoast Health was named to Newsweek’s World’s Best Hospitals 2019 inaugural list. Out of the 2,743 considered hospitals in the US, only 250 earned this recognition. Southcoast Hospitals Group ranked 162.

With a network of more than 600 physicians, hospitalists and mid-level practitioners, Southcoast Health is comprised of three acute care hospitals – Charlton Memorial Hospital in Fall River, St. Luke’s Hospital in New Bedford, and Tobey Hospital in Wareham, and also provides behavioral health services in partnership with Acadia at Southcoast Behavioral Health in Dartmouth.

Southcoast Health’s seven Urgent Care Centers, two Centers for Cancer Care, visiting nurse association and numerous additional ambulatory facilities offer convenience and access to services for more than 724,000 residents in 33 communities covering over 900 square miles in Southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. With more than 7,500 employees, Southcoast Health is the largest employer in Southeastern Mass., and the 18th largest employer in the Commonwealth according to the Boston Business Journal.

Southcoast Health is proud of our mission of providing high-

quality affordable healthcare to our patients and proud of our tradition of eliminating the barriers that prevent access to care. More information is available online at www.southcoast.org. Connect to Southcoast Health through social media on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. Southcoast® is a registered trademark of Southcoast Health System.