

University of Utah breaks ground for South Jordan health center

Daybreak facility set to open in 2011 with 300 employees

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SOUTH JORDAN — University of Utah Health Care is bringing a new facility to the outskirts of the Daybreak planned community at the foot of the Oquirrh Mountains.

With the Bingham Canyon copper mine looming above, officials broke ground Tuesday for the 208,000-square-foot primary, specialty and emergency health center, which will include outpatient examination rooms, four operating suites, a pharmacy and a 24-hour emergency room augmented by an AirMed helicopter landing pad.

Dr. Lorris Betz, the U.'s senior vice president for health sciences and CEO of UUHC, said the facility will employ 300 physicians and staff and serve a fast-growing community in and around Daybreak, which has 8,000 residents.

"The need for high-quality health care grows with every new home that is built," he said.

The health center is the first phase of a larger project on 60 acres donated by Rio Tinto's Kennecott Land at 5200 West Daybreak Parkway (11400 South). Phase two will be an inpatient community hospital five to seven years down the road.

The site is served by TRAX and will be adjacent to the future Mountain View Corridor freeway, which officials said should be done by the time the health center opens in November 2011. An 8,000-square-foot temporary facility will open next month in Daybreak's SoDa Row mixed-use commercial section.

Dr. Susan Terry, medical director of the new health center, said UUHC's 10 community clinics, now stretching from Stansbury Park to Park City and from Centerville to Orem, serve as direct links to specialists throughout the U.'s health system.

"This (facility) has been a dream of ours for the last four years," she said. "It establishes services for this part of the valley whose growth is so explosive."

Betz said the clinics also give medical students a chance for training at a community level that might not be available at University Hospital as it becomes more of an intensive-care facility.

South Jordan Councilwoman Leona Winger welcomed the U. to the city, recalling her own bout with throat cancer and saying University Hospital and the new health center will be "bookends of hope" for the Salt Lake Valley.

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