



Newport Hospital & Health Services

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Hospital District #1 Breaks Ground on Innovative Assisted Living Facility

NEWPORT – After a spring filled with site preparations for River Mountain Village Advanced Care (RMVAC), Newport Hospital and Health Services (NHHS) will celebrate the official construction on Tuesday, June 12 at 2:00 PM at the building site (corner of 1st Street and Spokane Avenue). The public is invited to attend, hear a brief word about the project and share in the momentous occasion that was supported with a favorable bond approval in April 2016.

Excavation and site preparation began in earlier this spring with Kilgore Construction, Inc. The Spokane-based contractor was awarded the approximately \$8.3 million bid in December 2017 after new designs were released. The new designs followed after initial bids in 2017 came back well-over the project's anticipated budget, necessitating development of a more viable advanced-care residential solution for the community.

The NHHS design team reviewed alternatives and received feedback from current and past residents, their family members, and caregivers from existing residential care facilities. They also sought input on the functional plan with Washington State Dept. of Health and Dept. of Social and Health Services staff. After much thoughtful effort, the NHHS design team created a more functional, flexible, and affordable assisted living facility. The expected date of completion is summer 2019.

Initially, the approximately 54,000 square foot facility will accommodate 54 residents, with an additional neighborhood of 18-beds roughed in for later expansion. NHHS anticipates the growing need for residential care and wanted the ability to

expand. The same services will be offered “in-home” for residents needing advanced levels of care. The addition of memory care will be added to the list of services, as the design of this facility allows for a memory care neighborhood. Residents requiring skilled nursing services will be able to receive those in the hospital and then return to their room at the new facility.

As early as 2014, NHHS started the conversation about building a new building to replace the current nursing home (long term care). The nursing home opened in 1967 and though NHHS has maintained it well for nearly 50 years, it no longer meets community needs. Technically, there is nothing wrong with the current facility; however, existing building would not meet new building codes for nursing home or assisted living facilities. So, NHHS looked at an entirely new model of care for those residents with greater daily needs (than those in more independent assisted living).

The reasons for building an advanced care assisted living facility as opposed to a new nursing home are: 1) over the last 15 years, there has been a shift in demand from nursing home to assisted living care; and 2) nursing home services cost more than assisted living care. Assisted living facilities now offer similar care to nursing homes of thirty years ago, at a lower cost. It is one of the reasons why the number of nursing home beds in the State has decreased over the past fifteen years: 70 closures, reducing total beds from 29,000 to less than 21,000 from 1998 to 2012.

The cost difference between these two models solidified the decision for Public Hospital District #1. The monthly service fee range for Assisted Living is between \$2,100 and \$4,000. Monthly service fee range for Nursing Home is between \$5,500 and \$8,500. It's a more affordable service line in a more dignified environment.

For more information and updates regarding the progress, please visit www.NewportHospitalAndHealth.org.