

\$2M Wellness 101 center near completion

Construction of outpatient wing began in 2013

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CHARLOTTE — The machine that Jim Strader was working at allowed him to perform the same sorts of motions he uses in his job as a welder with the Lansing Board of Water & Light. Turning cranks. Pulling levers.

Only here, at Eaton County Health and Rehabilitation Services under the supervision of Outpatient Therapy Manager Dorlah Kraft-Guilfoyle, he was hooked in to sensors that measured the impact of those motions on the hand he broke in a car accident in May.

The vast room was nearly empty on Wednesday afternoon. The 46-year-old Olivet man was the only patient. By the end of January, though, it will be home to the facility's new outpatient services unit.

The \$2 million, 5,000-square-foot addition, Wellness 101, is the campus' third building expansion in 13 years.

Since 2003 the independent, nonprofit operation has invested \$18 million in facility construction, adding a 100-bed nursing home and a new short-term rehabilitation Healing and Recovery Center in 2010, all added at the Beech Street campus.

Construction of the new outpatient wing began in 2013. It will be completely operational by the end of January.

Half of the addition will be devoted to housing outpatient therapy services, including physical, occupational and massage.

The space will also feature a 1,000-square-foot greenhouse filled with art, lush plants and places where patients can garden or relax. A café with wi-fi where staff and patients can enjoy coffee salads and sandwiches, is also being added.

Growing operation

Rehabilitation Services is an independent nonprofit created by county statute but not paid for by the county.

Its 100-bed nursing home is at capacity and the Healing and Recovery Center now services 42 patients at a time, with an average stay of 28 days



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Wellness 101 is an addition to the Healing and Recovery Center in Charlotte.

each. Richard said an estimated 500 patients receive short-term care on campus each year.

The facility currently employs 325 people but CEO and Administrator Martha Richard said an additional 20 employees will likely be hired over the next year to accommodate the outpatient expansion.

"With our outpatient we're looking to hire therapists, physical therapy, occupational therapy, therapy assistants, billing and administrative staff," she said. "We'll hire the

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The 5,000-square-foot Wellness 101 center, located off Beech Street in Charlotte, is part of Eaton County Health and Rehabilitation Services.

Half of the addition will be devoted to housing outpatient therapy services, including physical, occupational and massage. Up to an additional 20 employees will be hired over the next year.

The space will also feature an expansive 1,000-square-foot greenhouse filled with art, lush plants and places where patients at the complex can garden or relax. A café with wi-fi, where staff and patients can enjoy coffee, salads and sandwiches, is also being added.

staff as the demands of our case loads increase."

Currently, the facility's outpatient program services about 175 patients

each year. Though the priority is to serve Eaton County residents, any adult patient can utilize the campus. About 90 per-

cent of the facility's patients are from Eaton County.

"We expect that outpatient's going to probably triple," Richard said. "It's already grown so much because people are seeing the expansion and we're starting to market what we're doing."

Meeting the need

Richard said patient feedback prompted the latest expansion.

"Patients were going home and asking us, 'Why can't we come back here for therapy?'" said Richard. "We were providing therapy at the time. We just didn't have a big enough space to provide as much therapy as was being requested."

Richard said this may be the last physical build-out of the Beech Street campus but it won't be the end of added services there.

"It's our job to ask the community, 'What do you need?' Not to just provide all these services but to ask them what they really need," she said. "We really feel as an organization that that's what we do. We listen to the needs of the community and then we respond."



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This is the new cafe shop.



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This is the new greenhouse area.



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This is the new area for therapy treatment, including fitness classes.