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For Immediate Release

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ST. VINCENT'S OPENS NEW AMBULATORY SURGERY CENTER

BRIDGEPORT, CT , March 9, 2009—St. Vincent's Medical Center will perform its first case in its new \$10.5 million, 13,500 square foot Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) on March 23. A formal dedication ceremony and reception for invited guests will be held on Wednesday, March 18 at 6pm. The new ASC replaces an earlier surgical suite, which also performed procedures not requiring a hospital admission or overnight stay.

"We are pleased to open a new center at St. Vincent's that incorporates the latest technology and design to create a truly state-of-the-art facility for same-day surgeries," said Douglas A. Ross, MD, FACS, chairperson of the department of surgery and clinical vice president of the surgical service line. "With its increased size and consolidation of pre and post-operative areas, the new facility will streamline the entire surgical process for patients and enhance their comfort."

The ASC, designed by Perkins Eastman Architects PC of New York City, and built by Gilbane Building Company of Providence, Rhode Island, is the next project completed in St. Vincent's overall master facilities plan, which includes the Campus Parking Garage opened in September 2008, and the Elizabeth M. Pfriem *SWIM* Center for Cancer Care set to open in January 2010. Van Zelm Heywood & Shadford, Inc. handled engineering for the ASC project.

Located on the main level of the Medical Center, the expansive new Ambulatory Surgery Center will include **four operating rooms**, a **recovery suite** that increases the number of Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) beds from seven to 12, one **cystoscopy room** for urological procedures, and a new feature, an expanded **procedure room** for minimally invasive procedures that don't require a surgical operating room. With an increase in space from 8,300 to 13,500 square feet, the new center will allow the hospital to increase same-day surgery capacity in a workspace that is designed to increase staff efficiency and safety, and improve patient flow, comfort and privacy.

"The new same-day surgery center has also been built to allow for flexibility in incorporating new technologies as they are developed, and future advances in clinical and patient support services," Dr. Ross said.

The new center will also feature a tracking system already in use in the main OR, which improves communication between staff and family members. The system employs both a scrolling scheduling board with a listing of procedures, times and physicians, and also beepers that provide freedom of movement in the hospital for family members waiting for patients to come out of surgery.

New and larger decontamination and sterilization rooms are also a part of the Ambulatory Surgery Center.

"Over the last twenty years, ambulatory surgery has risen at a tremendous rate, and procedures never thought possible on a same-day basis are being performed," said Dr. Ross. "With the new Ambulatory Surgery Center, our patients will be able to have ever more complex procedures in a modern, attractive unit and then recover in the comfort of their homes. This is the future."

New Ambulatory Surgery Center Features

According to Director of Surgical Services Brooke Karlsen, RN, MSN, the **four operating rooms** will contain no fixed furniture or cabinetry, allowing instrumentation to be set up quickly and efficiently for a widely varying range of surgical procedures solely through the use of “booms.” Booms are storage units that are off the floor and easily positioned via an overhead arm attached to the ceiling. The ORs also demonstrate an efficient use of space allowing supplies to be accessed from one side while maintaining a quiet, calming, nurturing atmosphere for patients on the other side.

Each OR will have LED surgical lighting providing surgeons the ability to select lighting conducive to each procedure, and generating less heat and using one half the energy consumption of traditional halogen surgical lights. The lights are also lighter in weight and thinner in profile.

At 2,500 square feet, the new **PACU recovery area** will increase patient capacity by 70% and provide a “healing and soothing environment” through soft natural color and a centralized patient monitoring system. The PACU also has an area with the flexibility to quickly convert to an isolation room if needed.

In the **cystoscopy room**, a 60% increase in space coupled with new technology that provides symmetrical unrestricted patient access will reduce urological procedure time by up to 30%, according to Karlsen.

The new **procedure room** will offer a more comfortable workspace and the flexibility to perform many minimally invasive procedures such as lithotripsy and some pain treatments. “Just as there has been a move to same-day surgery, there has been a similar evolution toward procedures with patients “awake” under conscious sedation or local anesthetics due to the potential for fewer side effects,” said Karlsen.

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