



Construction of the \$292 million University of Iowa Children's Hospital is bringing about 600 to 700 new jobs to the Iowa City, Iowa area.

Children's officials estimate that new jobs will total about 220 for the hospital, according to Scott Turner, chief operating officer, and about 400 to 500 project jobs, according to Jay Goodin, director of project management.

"We will have 280 to 300 craft workers onsite during peak construction," says Goodin. "Through March we have about 500,000 man hours in the project."

Construction on the 14-story hospital (with two stories below ground) started three years ago and is scheduled to be completed next summer. It will have 134 single patient rooms, be 507,000-square-feet in new construction plus 56,250-square-feet of renovated existing space. The \$292 million cost is funded through bonds, patient revenues, and private donations. No tax dollars were used.

Children and their families have been involved in the project's groundbreaking ceremony and the planning and design of such things as lighting and furniture, Turner says. Children's is trying to help improve care of kids across the state and has received a fantastic response. Turner wants parents to feel they have chosen the best hospital to take care of their children.

Decor includes lots of glass to allow natural scenery along with brightly colored hallways and rooms, many with a view of next-door Kinnick Stadium. The 70,000-seat stadium is the home of the university's Hawkeye football team. At 164 feet high, the new hospital dominates the Iowa City landscape.

Nancy Quellhorst, president and CEO of the Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce, is pleased with the project.

"The University of Iowa Hospitals, including the University of Iowa Children's Hospital, is an economic engine for our community which provides high-quality jobs and national recognition of the Iowa City area," says Quellhorst. "The stunning new Children's Hospital building created construction industry and supply chain jobs as well."

"The University of Iowa Children's Hospital is nationally distinguished and revolutionary in their treatment approaches. Access to innovative, comprehensive care for children and families contributes to quality of life for community members."

The chamber has more than 1,000 members and serves the communities of Coralville, Iowa City, North Liberty, and Solon.

Iowa City's location in a high-wind, tornado activity section of the country means extra attention to the building's readiness for severe weather. Goodin couldn't estimate the construction cost for protection from severe weather, such as flying object impact testing of the glass, but says it's well worth it.

According to its website, the UI Children's Hospital is the only comprehensive children's hospital in Iowa. Its range of services includes the care of general childhood illness, surgery, traumatic injuries, life-threatening and chronic illnesses and developmental disabilities.

It features more than 40 pediatric specialties, more than 170 pediatric physicians and surgeons, and more than 500 specially trained pediatric nurses. In 2013, UI Children's Hospital cared for 57,889 patients from every county in Iowa, nearly every state in the U.S., and several other countries.

Dick Davis



Veteran writer of more than 30 years with passion for the business of healthcare and hospital expansion. Dick possesses an extensive background in journalism, media relations and healthcare communications and marketing. Dick enjoys traveling in Italy with his Italian wife, Mary, and writing about la dolce vita. Salute!