

# THE DENVER POST

Friday, September 28, 2007

## Move by Children's to new era at hand

**7.2** | Cost to move an equipment, patients in millions of dollars

By **Katy Human**, *Denver Post Staff Writer*

At 7 a.m. Saturday, workers will stretch a tarp across the Emergency sign at 1056 E. 19th Ave. in Denver — the century-old home of Children's Hospital.

Seven miles away in Aurora, doctors, nurses and other staff will scrub their hands at the hospital's glittering new \$567 million building on the Fitzsimons campus of the University of Colorado.

In a span of less than 20 hours, hospital staff and ambulance drivers are set to move about 130 very sick children out of town to a new building nearly twice the size of the old, with more sophisticated technology and more privacy for families.

> See **HOSPITAL** on 25A

## HOSPITAL: Teams from 3 other states to help

< CONTINUED FROM 1A

"There's a lot of this kind of construction going on around the country," said Larry McAndrews, president and chief executive of the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions.

The aim is to bring better services to families more efficiently, in more user-friendly buildings, he said.

"I just can't wait," said Randy Wilkening, the head of neonatology at the University of Colorado, who spends much of his time caring for very small, very sick babies at Children's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

For the moment, Wilkening said, they are coping with an "aging building, cluttered spaces and long distance between two wards for sick newborns."

### 1-day move for patients

Children's move will cost about \$7.2 million, said spokeswoman Natalie Goldstein.

That price tag includes the movers who have been ferrying files and equipment out to Aurora all month, new computer infrastructure and a new, freshly stocked pharmacy.

It includes the cost of moving — in a single day — all child patients, some of whom can't breathe without respirators, some fighting cancer, some with dangerous infections.

And part of that sum, about \$2 million, is to publicize the move, Goldstein said.

The hospital has doubled nurse staffing to 120 for Saturday, Goldstein said.

Children's will use 16 ambulances to move the children, said Karen Percell-de'Shong, clinical coordinator for the newborn young child team.

The hospital contracted with two local ambulance companies — Action Care and American Medical Response — in addition to the Flight For Life ambulance teams the hospital normally works with, Percell-de'Shong said.

A helicopter will be on standby, and four pediatric emergency specialist teams from Kansas, Ohio and Arkansas arrived Thursday for training.

"I'm here because I like to move babies," said Kelli Siebel, a nurse from Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City.

"... This is big move. It's an exciting opportunity."

Transport teams will take three routes across town, chosen to minimize stop signs, left turns without lights, and bumps and bounces, Percell-de'Shong said.

"This is going to happen quickly, as in timely, but not every child is going to go with lights and sirens," Percell-de'Shong said. "It shouldn't feel like a hurried process."

University of Colorado Hospital, which relocated to Aurora in June, estimated its moving cost at about \$7.4 million, said spokeswoman Tonya Ewers.

Care providers shifted about 150 patients from Denver to Aurora in three days, she said — a distance of about 6 miles.

Other hospitals take weeks to move, said Kathy Waller, a principal with 5THink LLC, a Pasadena, Calif.-based hospital transition consultant, which helped University with its move.

### Details, details, details

"There is no 'typical' hospital move," Waller said, but all require relentlessly detailed planning.

In the new Children's Hospital, rooms are all wired to the Internet.

The hospital has new computers everywhere and incorporates the latest in hospital design concepts, staff said.

Rooms in each area are identical to one another, for example — a safety feature that has become common in new buildings, said the children's hospital association's McAndrews.

When rooms are mirror images of each other, as in many older hospitals, it can be tricky to remember things like which side of the bed has oxygen.

Other state-of-the-art features at Children's include pull-out double beds for family to stay in a child's room; bathrooms within rooms; and visibility — so care providers can



Cyrus McCrimmon | The Denver Post

John Rieck, left, and Scott May, center, both from Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, work with Greg Blackmon in checking out equipment to be used in Saturday's move.

see what's happening in several rooms at once.

"Some of these things may take more money to build, but they might be cheaper to staff," McAndrews said. "And you might end up with fewer patient days if you avoid poor outcomes."

Staff writer **Katy Human** can be reached at 303-954-1910 or [khuman@denverpost.com](mailto:khuman@denverpost.com).

**"Some of these things may take more money to build, but they might be cheaper to staff. And you might end up with fewer patient days if you avoid poor outcomes."**

Larry McAndrews, president and chief executive of the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions