

MIDLANDS

B

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2013

OMAHA.COM

METHODIST HOSPITAL

Surgery expansion a delicate operation

By BOB GLISSMANN

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

If you're having surgery, you don't want the surgeon to be distracted by construction noise or to have dust in the operating room. That's why the work on Methodist Hospital's \$77.4 million surgery center will be done at night and under carefully

managed conditions.

Officials at the Tuesday groundbreaking for the project said all phases of the construction process will be completed without interrupting patient care, including surgeries. Methodist performs more inpatient and outpatient surgeries than any other Nebraska hospital, according to Nebraska Hospi-

tal Association figures, with an average of more than 25,000 procedures a year.

The hospital project is "tenfold more complicated" than other work, said Gary Leapley, executive vice president of MCL Construction. "We have to concern ourselves with patient care, infection control, making sure we create barriers to keep

dust out of patient areas, noise, vibration."

Air quality will be maintained by using double walls with plastic barriers inside of them along with negative air machines equipped with high-efficiency

See Methodist: Page 2

Methodist: \$77 million project to take about 3½ years

particulate filters, said Brian Halsey, an associate vice president with HDR, which designed the project. The scrubbed air then will be discharged out a roof vent or window, he said, so sawdust or drywall or concrete dust doesn't make it back into the hospital.

The hospital project will expand the number of operating rooms from 12 to 15, including two heart surgery suites and one endovascular (blood vessel) surgery suite. The operating

rooms will increase in size from 420 square feet to 650 square feet. The number of pre-op and recovery rooms will increase from 32 to 44. All of them will be private rooms.

Work on a \$12.6 million employee garage next to the surgery center already has been completed.

Physicians and medical staff members are excited about the project, said Dr. Bill Shiffermiller, Methodist's vice president of medical affairs. "Over the past several years, we have been handicapped somewhat by

an aging infrastructure" at the hospital, he said.

Much of the equipment that modern surgeries require wasn't around when Methodist opened in 1968. Imaging equipment, in particular, helps orthopedic surgeons properly align bones, neurosurgeons find lesions and cardiovascular surgeons see that stents are in the right spot.

Methodist physicians have donated \$4.3 million toward the project, said Cyndy Peacock, president and CEO of the Methodist Hospital Foundation. An anonymous donor has said

he will match donations up to \$20 million.

The project is on the south side of the hospital, next to Methodist's existing operating rooms. Crews have been at work inside the hospital since April. By late fall, Halsey said, people should see some excavation and retaining-wall work outside the building.

In all, the work is expected to take about 3½ years.

Contact the writer:
402-444-1109, bob.glissmann@owh.com
twitter.com/bobglissmann