



What will it look like? A digital rendering of the new hospital.

Transformations

Color and shape are defining the emerging new university hospital at University of California, Irvine Medical Center. Recent construction has focused on installation of towering exterior walls of soft sand color that can be seen from the Santa Ana and Garden Grove freeways, as well as from bustling surface streets.

The seven-story building's exterior is made of precast concrete, with golden-hued stones at the base and soft white window sills. The windows are a light grey-green energy-efficient glass. Stair towers will be made of copper-penny colored metal.

Once the exterior structures are in place, construction will focus on building and installing interior features for quiet, patient-friendly rooms, as well as for treatment areas that will support the latest medical technology and equipment.

Completion is expected in early 2009. It will have 191 beds and 13 surgical suites. This is in addition to the existing 102 beds in the medical center's tower and the 84-bed Neuropsychiatric Center.

The new hospital is being constructed on the north side of the existing medical center grounds and will replace the current main hospital building, built in 1960. During construction, all inpatient and outpatient care continues uninterrupted.

As part of the construction of the \$372 million hospital, the entrance to UC Irvine Medical Center's Emergency Department has been moved. Construction has been completed on the new Emergency Department lobby and reception area, accessible directly from Medical Center Drive, where there is parking nearby.

For more information about UC Irvine Medical Center's new university hospital, please visit www.ucihealth.com/newhospital. A special thank you to our patients and visitors for their understanding during this time of transformation.

www.ucihealth.com

Seniors: Ask the Doctor

Evaluating Long-Term Care

Deciding when it's time for long-term care is one of the most daunting challenges facing seniors and those who love them. Join Dr. Sonia Sehgal, a geriatrician with UCI SeniorHealth Center, as she discusses residential care options.

Q When is it time for long-term care?

A There are usually many signs that a person is no longer capable of living independently. Having difficulty with the activities of daily living—bathing, toileting, dressing, grooming and eating—is one. Others include forgetting medications, having trouble walking and being unable to keep the house in order. Chronic conditions such as arthritis, failing vision, impaired hearing, paranoia, depression and memory loss can add to the dilemma.

Q How can home-health care and assisted living help?

A Home-health care allows people to remain in their own residences attended by helpers ranging from homemakers and aides to nurses. Services may range from hands-on nursing care to housework and help with bathing, dressing and more. Assisted living facilities provide many of the same services—except for skilled nursing help—in a group setting. Residents live in private apartments, eat in a communal dining room, have access to transportation and can participate in scheduled social activities, if they wish.

Q What about nursing homes?

A They offer a fully supervised environment for people who need 24-hour nursing care, rehabilitation or protective supervision. A higher level of care is provided at skilled nursing facilities, which can act as bridges between hospitalization and going home.

Q Do family doctors visit long-term care facilities?

A In some cases, yes, but it depends on the doctor's practice policies. UCI SeniorHealth Center doctors are strong proponents of continuing the physician-patient relationship and visit several local facilities on a regular basis.

Q What's the first step in selecting long-term care?

A A good starting point is to contact the California Registry toll free at 800-777-7575. This organization inspects and rates assisted living facilities, home-health care organizations and nursing homes. It can supply you with a free list of long-term care facilities in your area with their ratings.

Q What if a person doesn't want help?

A If a loved one is adamant about not getting help, the UCI Health Assessment Program for Seniors may smooth the way. It provides in-depth patient assessments by geriatric specialists to assist in making informed decisions about living arrangements. In some cases, a family intervention may be necessary to discuss housing with parents. Ultimately, establishing a conservatorship, which is legal control over the person's affairs, may be necessary.



Dr. Sonia Sehgal is a geriatrician at the UCI SeniorHealth Center and an expert in matters affecting seniors. She will present a free public seminar on the symptoms and treatment of shingles (herpes zoster) on Friday, March 30 at 1 p.m. The seminar will be held at Oasis Senior Center, 800 Marguerite Ave., Corona del Mar. For more information, call toll free 1-877-UCI-DOCS.