

UCI Health

Opening Doors

TO ADVANCED MEDICINE

The opening of University Hospital marks a turning point in the history of Orange County healthcare.

The seven-story, 482,428-square-foot structure on the northern perimeter of University of California, Irvine Medical Center features a highly innovative patient- and family-centered design that incorporates leading-edge technology.

“The new hospital is in a class by itself, elevating patient comfort and safety to new levels, while opening doors to advanced medicine and helping our doctors and staff deliver optimal care,” says UC Irvine Chancellor **Dr. Michael Drake**. “The hospital provides a showcase for our leading-edge services and world-class medical staff.”

Our mission. The hospital’s distinctive architecture—including its copper tower, jutting wings and bridge—supports the connection at UC Irvine Medical Center between patient care, research and education. “We are the only university-based medical center in Orange County,” says Chief Executive Officer **Maureen Zehntner**. “Our University Hospital will help us fulfill our mission, which is to ‘discover,



UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OPENS

With the opening of a world-class hospital in February 2009, University of California, Irvine Medical Center ushers in a new era in medicine.

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teach, heal.' Every element in the new building is intended to create an ideal environment for outstanding patient- and family-focused care, as well as teaching, and the discovery of new and better ways to fight disease."

The \$555.8 million new hospital—completed on budget and ahead of schedule—will house a 30-bed, Level III neonatal intensive care unit, 15 high-tech operating rooms, two cardiac catheterization labs, and a state-of-the-art burn unit with eight beds. Furthermore, every floor will have a pharmacist to work closely with the healthcare team and enhance patient safety. The new hospital will also have an area devoted to clinical trials and the stimulation of new ideas for research.

Patient-centered design. The design of University Hospital reflects an emphasis on patient comfort and safety. From soothing colors and nature themes, to large windows that allow natural light into every room, the building suffuses a healing environment. Most rooms are private to reduce noise and the risk of infection. Each is furnished with alcove seating that converts into an overnight bed for family members. Noise-reduction strategies are incorporated throughout the building. And the rooms are so spacious that multidisciplinary teams can often provide treatment for patients without moving them to another area. Additionally, the entire structure is wired for Internet accessibility.

Furthermore, patients can often remain on the same floor as they progress through their recovery, going from a specialized intensive care unit, for example, to a step-down unit, to a regular medical/surgical patient room. "Same-floor progressive care promotes safety by allowing consistent communication among the medical staff, family and patients," says Zehntner. "This innovative design is indicative of the many safety systems built into the hospital."



WHO'S WHO

A stairway in University Hospital is the setting for a quick meeting between two doctors dressed in the required attire for medical staff—a shirt and tie or other business apparel, and long white coats. Residents and fellows also wear long white coats, while medical students dress in short white coats.

Leading the nation. UC Irvine Medical Center is one of 33 hospitals in the nation to receive the prestigious Leapfrog Group award for hospital safety. Additionally, the medical center adopted the LifeWings program, which uses aviation-derived safety protocols such as cross-checking before every surgery begins. The hospital was also named one of "America's Best Hospitals" eight years in a row and received renewed Magnet designation—the nation's highest honor for nursing excellence from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

"UC Irvine Medical Center has been recognized as one of the top 100 hospitals in the nation," says Drake. "University medical centers represent the gold standard for American hospitals. We provide highly specialized services not

available at community hospitals, while fostering medical research and educating doctors and nurses. The new University Hospital will help us immensely in furthering our mission, which benefits the community and ultimately the entire world."

During Phase II of the construction project, four more ORs and additional patient rooms will be added. More visibly, the medical center's current main building, which was opened in 1960 and could not be retrofitted to meet new earthquake safety standards, will be demolished, and the ground will be landscaped to provide a striking entrance. "Medicine had advanced beyond the physical confines of the old hospital," says Zehntner. "Orange County residents needed and deserved a hospital that could address their diverse and complex healthcare needs."