

John Muir Health and San Ramon Regional team up for new Pleasanton outpatient center

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PLEASANTON -- To meet the demands of Tri-Valley growth, San Ramon Regional Medical Center and John Muir Health have acquired a 92,000-square-foot building to create a new outpatient center in Pleasanton. It is expected to open early 2015.

The purchase of the property at 5860 Owens Drive was completed Jan. 31 at a cost of \$19 million. The new center is part of a joint venture partnership announced in 2013 between Dallas-based Tenet Healthcare Corp., the for-profit parent company of San Ramon Regional Medical Center, and Walnut Creek-based John Muir Health, a not-for-profit health system with hospitals in Walnut Creek and Concord and Contra Costa County's only trauma center.

Last year, officials from both medical organizations said they decided to join forces to offer more integrated and accessible care through the Tri-Valley area and surrounding communities. John Muir acquired a 49 percent ownership interest in the 123-bed San Ramon hospital, Tenet's only hospital in the East Bay. They agreed to develop outpatient centers together, such as the one planned in Pleasanton, which is their first.

"It's a dynamic community, and it's growing," said Paul Smith, acting CEO for the joint venture, who works with Tenet's outpatient service division. "And we all saw an opportunity to reach out to area physicians and give them a convenient place to practice and expand our access in this growing market."

The center, which will be off of Interstate 580 and a short walk from the Dublin-Pleasanton BART station, would house primary care physicians, specialists, an urgent care center and imaging services. The facility will serve the Dublin, Pleasanton, San Ramon and Danville corridor.

Lee Huskins, president and chief administrative officer of John Muir Health's Physicians Network, said the new center will create a "patient-centered" destination for outpatient care in Pleasanton for existing John Muir and San Ramon Regional patients, as well as give residents another choice along the Interstate 680 corridor for their medical care, he said.

"That area continues to expand through housing development," Huskins said. "And as developers continue to build communities, it's important to us that families that move into these areas get the care they need."

Similar to the new John Muir outpatient center that opened its doors less than a month ago on Treat Boulevard in Walnut Creek, the Pleasanton outpatient center is also intended to provide a continuum of care from primary and specialty doctors to urgent and pediatric care, X-ray, lab and medical home services, all in one location, Huskins said.

"We're pretty proud of this step -- and there's a lot more work to be done," Smith said, adding that the "one-stop shop" center for outpatient care planned for Pleasanton is a model for health care delivery in California and nationwide.

Designs for the existing four-story building will be developed in coming months. It's too early to provide estimates on how many physicians or employees will be housed there, he said. Both new and current physicians affiliated with those hospitals will be recruited to work there.

The joint venture between the former competitors to build more of such outpatient centers will help both increase their presence and physician connections in communities along the Interstate 680 corridor, for which ValleyCare Health System, Kaiser Permanente and Sutter Health's Palo Alto Medical Foundation are major players in a competitive medical marketplace, officials said.

"And we're very, very excited about this opportunity to go down there and continue to expand the model for care in our community," Huskins said.

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