UC Davis Medical Center to spend $215 million over 3 years on earthquake safety

UC Davis Medical Center has laid out a plan to spend $215 million over the next three years on demolition, construction and renovation of existing buildings to meet the state's hospital earthquake-readiness requirements.

The plan also calls for moving patients between buildings as demolition and development occurs.

The 627-bed hospital in Sacramento is the largest in the region. It recorded $2 billion in net patient revenues and about $220 million in net profit in 2016.

The costliest portion of the plan will be the demolition of the hospital's North South wing, which is scheduled for 2020. Before then, the health system has to carry out the complicated process of moving patients to another wing of the hospital and disconnect the North South wing from the system.

"The basic requirements for 2020 is that we need to take the North South wing out of service and move patients to other parts of the hospital," said Joel Swift, chief of facilities, design and construction for the medical center complex. "It’s outlived its lifetime as a hospital."

UC Davis plans to move the patients in the North South wing to another building in the hospital next year and disconnect the wing in 2019. Demolition over the next three years is expected to cost about $95 million, with the bulk of it resulting from demolishing the North South wing.

Costs associated with new construction and updating existing buildings are estimated at $120 million. Much of that will go toward the hospital's North Addition, located on V Street adjacent to the hospital, which carries an estimated price tag of $80 million. The new six-story addition is scheduled for completion in 2018 and will house 12 hospital-based departments.

The most significant update to existing infrastructure will be in the hospital's east wing. The wing will get a new lobby and a new exterior “skin,” according to Swift, which will help it meet the state standards. The east wing will take on the patients moved from the soon-to-be decommissioned North South wing.

But the east wing updates are meant as a short-term fix, according to Swift. The east wing is scheduled to be vacated by 2030 because it will not meet the state's earthquake readiness requirements by then.
According to Swift, UC Davis is planning a new bed tower on the east end of the hospital campus that will house the patients moved out of the east wing by 2030.

The health system has not determined the number of beds the new tower will hold, according to Swift, but early estimates peg the cost of the project at $750 million to $1.4 billion. The new tower — including associated infrastructure like parking — will need to be completed by 2030 in order to meet the state's 2030 requirements.

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