



Media Release

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FORT HOOD, Texas – Congressman Chet Edwards (D-Texas) announced March 17 that funding had been secured for a replacement hospital at Fort Hood, Texas.

“On behalf of the Soldiers, family members and retirees of Central Texas, we appreciate Cong. Edwards', the Department of Defense's and the U.S. Army Medical Command's faith and trust in our ability to provide world-class health care to those who truly deserve it,” said Col. Casper P. Jones III, commander of Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center.

Jones added that past commanders of Darnall have been good stewards of taxpayers' dollars with excellent upkeep of the existing building, but because of our expanding missions and patient base, “we have outgrown our buildings.”

Darnall expects the design contract for the replacement hospital to be awarded by Sept. 30, 2009 and construction to begin by Sept. 30, 2010. The new hospital will be constructed in two phases, with only phase one funded.

Phase 1 is funded for \$621M to build 585,000 square-foot facility that houses a three-story outpatient clinic, ancillary Services, and operating rooms. Featured in this phase is a consolidated Behavioral Center of Excellence that co-locates the Resiliency and Restoration Center (outpatient psychiatry and psychology), substance abuse, and social work services.

Outpatient clinics include primary care, pediatrics, orthopedics, podiatry, surgical specialties, medicine specialties, EENT, oral maxillofacial surgery, physical medicine, physical therapy, and occupational therapy.

Another activity in the phase one facility is a consolidated medical evaluation board clinic with Department of Veterans Affairs resources. Ancillary services in the new facility include radiology, pathology (laboratory), and an outpatient pharmacy.

The phase one building complex will also include perioperative services (operating room suite, post anesthesia care unit, and support services).

Phase 2, which is not currently funded, is a five-story, 362,000 square foot inpatient tower with medical/surgical units, intensive care units, inpatient psychiatry, inpatient pediatrics, women's health clinic, Labor/Delivery, Mother/Baby unit, neonatal intensive care unit, and the Emergency Department.

A new medical center will improve services, access, and the quality of healthcare for our family members and retirees, but especially for our wounded troops returning from combat with visible and invisible wounds.

Fort Hood deployed the largest number of troops to Iraq and Afghanistan. Not only are our Soldiers returning with visible and invisible wounds such Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, but their families have also been affected and need many types of services.

“The main hospital cannot be further expanded,” Jones said. “Repairs become more expensive over the years, to the point it is often less expensive to build than to repair or renovate. There comes a time when you cannot financially or physically make the building useable for today's healthcare needs,” he added.

The current five-story hospital was built in 1964 for 17,000 troops. As Fort Hood continued to grow, a two-story wrap-around addition was built in 1984 for the 30,000 Fort Hood troops.

In the '90s, Darnall began planning and building outlying primary care clinics to take primary care out of the hospital to make room for an increase in administrative staff and additional specialty clinics.

Today, with about 55,000 Soldiers, 67,000 family members, and 52,000 retirees, the population base continues to grow and to need more and different services. The medical center needs more space to house the additional military, civilian, and contract staff needed to provide these services.

Darnall's goal is to ensure every healthcare beneficiary receives the highest quality of healthcare. Healthcare is the number one quality of life concern for Soldiers. Knowing that their families receive quality health care while Soldiers are away eases the stress of deployments.

A new hospital at Fort Hood means better access to care, more healthcare services at Fort Hood, and pride in the work place, which translates to better customer service. Every patient, whether it is a Soldier, family member, or retiree, deserves the highest quality of healthcare.