

Frequently Asked Questions/Answers about the new Avera Cancer Institute and the new Surgical Center

What makes the Avera Cancer Institute unique from other centers in the country?

First, its size and scope. The current ACI is 54,000 square feet; this building will be a total of 217,000 square feet – equivalent to five acres. It will be the largest single building project in Sioux Falls history at \$60 million for total building costs.

Second, its offerings. The new Avera Cancer Institute will be an integrated, comprehensive cancer center with all services needed by cancer patients under one roof, from prevention and diagnosis to treatment to survivorship care. In touring other prestigious cancer centers around the country, it is unusual to see diagnostic imaging services such as CT and MRI in a cancer center, even though this is crucial for diagnosis and surveillance of the disease. It is also very unusual to see a bone marrow transplant program housed in the same building, even though this is very standard, life-saving therapy for patients with certain cancers, such as leukemia or lymphoma.

Third, this building is planned as a green building, and we plan to pursue LEED® certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. There are currently only 20 LEED certified health care buildings in the United States. This project is currently one of about two dozen in South Dakota registered as a LEED building.

Fourth, it is being planned as a gift to the community, with community features including meeting rooms, a public Cancer Resource Library, a public outdoor sculpture garden and green space, a performance stage, indoor atrium with plants, trees, waterfalls and other water features, public bistro and retail space.

What is housed within the Center?

- The first floor will house public spaces including the library, atrium, music/performance area, bistro, meditation room and chapel. Also on first floor will be the laboratory, radiology and imaging center, integrative medicine area and conference rooms.
- The second floor houses the pharmacy, clinic space and infusion area with 44 infusion suites overlooking the indoor atrium. Clinics incorporate a specialized design for staff efficiency and patient privacy.
- The third floor accommodates women's health, including the breast health center and clinic for gynecological oncology plus an additional 13 infusion suites.
- The fourth floor will house the outpatient surgery center, with eight operating suites. This center will have a separate entrance with elevators from the southwest corner of the building.
- Fifth floor is reserved for future expansion.

How much will Avera McKennan invest in the Center?

This is a \$90 million construction project, with \$60 million for direct building costs. According to the City of Sioux Falls, it will be the largest building project on record in the city.

When will construction begin and end?

Groundbreaking is scheduled for May 19, 2008, with completion expected fall of 2010.

Why isn't the current Avera Cancer Institute building adequate?

In 1990, Avera McKennan opened the region's first free-standing comprehensive cancer center known as

the Dakota Midwest Cancer Institute. All cancer services were offered in one location including medical oncology and hematology, gynecology oncology, pediatric oncology, radiation oncology, radiation therapy, chemotherapy and cancer support services. It was renamed Avera Cancer Institute in 1998.

Avera McKennan has led the way in cancer care in our Sioux Falls community and the region. However, with growing patient volumes and expansion of support services it has become increasingly difficult to efficiently and effectively care for and support patients. The current facility was originally designed for private practice offices. As cancer services have expanded, this design has led to inefficient patient flow and the inability to implement new supportive services and to accommodate the staff expansion.

Cancer case volumes are up by 24 percent, cancer treatments are increasing in complexity and duration, and survivor care is a growing need. The next generation of cancer treatment is beginning to emerge. Some of these treatments include targeted drug therapies, vaccine therapies, DNA profiling, gene therapy, and further advances in radiation therapy. Staying at the cutting edge of cancer care requires a new state-of-the-art facility that accommodates all aspects of cancer care.

How does Avera McKennan's cancer program compare to other facilities in South Dakota and the region?

The new facility will be the largest, most comprehensive cancer healing environment in the city, state and region, and will house the largest integrative therapy program. The Avera Cancer Institute is the only local and regional program with bone marrow transplant. The ACI cooperates with and supports other cancer care programs within the Avera Health system. Avera has established four of the five accredited cancer centers in South Dakota, each of which is nationally accredited by the American College of Surgeons.

What kind of research will be done at the center and how does that benefit patients?

Through the Avera Research Institute, the Avera Cancer Institute participates in 40 clinical research studies to test new treatments, drugs or combinations of drugs in cancer care. This research adds to the national knowledge base concerning cancer and cancer treatment, and gives patients opportunity to receive the newest, most cutting-edge treatments. Studies exist for patients with breast cancer; lymphoma; cancers of the lung, colon, head and neck; myelodysplastic syndrome; leukemia and others.

How will art be incorporated into the building?

As in other recent Avera McKennan building projects, including the Avera Behavioral Health Center and Dougherty Hospice House, art will play an integral role in creating a healing, welcoming environment. There will be a stage for musical and other types of performances, stained glass, a number of significant commissioned pieces created by local artists, a community art project, and an outdoor sculpture walk.

How will the community be involved in the building?

The community has already been involved, by participating in focus groups to aid us in the planning of this facility. Focus groups have told us that people desire to see a building that welcomes the community; is a "green" building on a green campus; incorporates artwork; provides space for education, the fine arts and gatherings; and offers integrative medicine. The public will be welcome to use interior space, including meeting rooms, the performance stage, bistro, Cancer Resource Library and retail store, and will also be welcome to enjoy our outdoor sculpture garden and pond.

Why are integrative medicine and survivorship programs important to cancer patients?

It is known that 70 percent of cancer patients use integrative medicine, also known as holistic, complementary or alternative medicine. Dedicated space and professionals will offer integrative medicine services such as herbal and vitamin consultation, dietary consultation, stress management, massage, healing touch, prayer and meditation, acupuncture, Reiki, reflexology, yoga, tai chi and movement therapy. These therapies complement medical therapies, help patients deal with pain or side effects, and add to patients' sense of well-being.

Survivorship programs have been developed and will continue to be developed and offered at the ACI. As the number of survivors continues to grow in our community, programs need to be in place to assist them with the new and unique challenges they face in those areas of healthy living after treatment, physical rehabilitation, employment, sexuality, stress management, support and many other aspects.

Why is Avera McKennan considering the addition of an outpatient surgery center to its campus?

Outpatient surgery volumes continue to grow, both as a national trend and specifically at Avera McKennan. Our outpatient volumes have doubled in the past ten years and our current surgical facilities are at capacity. With the increase in outpatient surgical demand, it's important for Avera McKennan to capture this revenue stream and these new facilities will allow us to provide the best possible patient care with access to a full-service hospital.

Why put an ambulatory surgical center into a new cancer institute facility?

It is more economical for us to include a surgical center of this type into a planned building project from the beginning, rather than trying to "fit" it into an existing facility or build a stand-alone building.

How did a surgical center come up as part of the discussion in this facility?

Avera McKennan has considered the possibility of a new surgical center for a number of years. Our current hospital surgical facility is highly utilized but with advancements in surgical medicine, and the construction of a new facility on our doorstep, we felt now was an appropriate time to once again consider the community need and demand for this type of surgical setting.

How is this new surgical center good for patient care?

The Avera system has been very progressive in instituting an electronic medical record system. As with any of our current facilities, a new surgical center would have access to this system so we will continue to provide our patients with the opportunity to keep all their records within this system. It offers patients an integrated and consistent health care experience.

Patients are asking for shorter stays and with advances in care, many procedures can be done on an outpatient basis. However, surgery can still be a stressful event. If this facility is built, we would be able to provide them with a safe and comfortable environment.

Having this surgical facility in our new cancer institute would also provide for efficiency in their care due to easy access to MRI, CT and other diagnostic services planned for that facility.