

Ground Broken to Build Cancer Center of Western Wisconsin

*Centrally located new facility under construction in New Richmond
Comprehensive cancer care coordinated by hospitals throughout the region*

New Richmond, Wisc. – August 3, 2010. During a ceremony held on August 3, representatives from eight collaborating organizations broke ground on the Cancer Center of Western Wisconsin. The new facility will anchor a regional care delivery system specializing in cancer treatment services for patients in the western Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota region.

Six hospitals are building the new cancer center and creating a cancer care delivery network that brings high-end cancer treatment closer to patients, and enhances the hospitals' abilities to provide local cancer care at each of their facilities.

The hospitals, Amery Regional Medical Center, Baldwin Area Medical Center, Hudson Hospital & Clinics, Osceola Medical Center, St. Croix Regional Medical Center and Westfields Hospital, in partnership with others are committed to improving health by providing high-quality cancer care which meets the needs of growing communities.

The new Cancer Center of Western Wisconsin will be staffed by specialists from Minneapolis Radiation Oncology P.A. and the HealthPartners Medical Group's medical oncology department. The team will also provide support at each of the six hospitals on a routine basis, providing coordinated cancer care prevention, treatment and supportive services.

During the groundbreaking event, speakers representing the group highlighted the unique collaborative approach of eight organizations – all with the identical vision of bringing more convenient local access for patients during the challenging times of cancer treatment. Dick Rademaker, longtime board member of Baldwin Area Medical Center and cancer survivor spoke about the added struggles he encountered over the course of year-long treatment having to travel to receive cancer care. "I'm excited that our hospitals are coming together to provide this wonderful new service right here in our communities," Rademaker said.

The state-of-the-art facility and care system is expected to open next spring. It will allow patients to receive specialized outpatient cancer treatments including radiation therapy, medical oncology and infusion therapy closer to home. Patients requiring specialized treatments will no longer need to travel into the Twin Cities up to five times a week for their care during a time when rest and comfort is needed.

Through their collaboration, the community hospitals will expand the availability and spectrum of medical oncology services on each hospital's campus. Radiation oncology services will be provided in the new facility on the Westfields Hospital campus.

While the cancer center in New Richmond will be conveniently and centrally located for patients requiring radiation therapy, the new system of delivering regional cancer care through each hospital location ensures that patients have the option of staying closer to home and in the comfort of their current health care system throughout their experience with cancer.