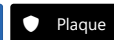
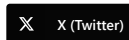


Hospital invests in hospitality

 Amy David  April 24, 2012  0



St. Mary's Hospital is building a \$4 million [guesthouse](#) next year where people can stay while visiting a sick relative or friend.



The 11,500-square-foot building will have 14 guest rooms, two family suites and common areas for families to work and eat.

Joe Rudisill, director of project management for St. Mary's, said the four cottages the hospital has for patients' families on Maple Avenue are insufficient.

"The houses hold one or two families each. A max of eight people can stay the night," Rudisill said. "A lot of times there's a waiting list for the houses, and sometimes folks in those guest rooms are staying for four or more weeks."

Rudisill said the house would cut down on costs for relatives who would otherwise have to pay for a hotel.

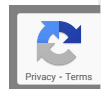
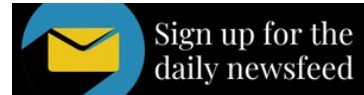
"We have families that come from Williamsburg, Fredericksburg and Farmville, and they can't afford driving back and forth," he said. "This spurred out of our cardiac program and those [other] patients that are in the hospital for quite some time."

The Bon Secours Richmond Health Care Foundation will put up \$3 million for the project. Rudisill said the other \$1 million would come from the Bon Secours Health System.

Rudisill said St. Mary's owns four parcels of land on Libbie Avenue where the guest house will be built. It will be within walking distance of the hospital campus, which is on Breemo Road in Henrico County.

The guesthouse is part of a bigger project that came out of the hospital's charrette, a weeklong planning session in 2009 for the hospital's expansion. The hospital has since expanded with a free-standing emergency facility, the [St. Francis Watkins Centre](#), which opened in Chesterfield County in November.

"We had a few donors that came together a couple years ago to start planning," Rudisill said.



There are four houses on the Libbie Avenue property whose tenants rent from the hospital, but Rudisill said those would be torn down.

“We sent a letter out to inform those tenants that we won’t be renewing leases,” he said. “The last lease expires in September, but we’re helping them find other homes and housing.”

The hospital hasn’t submitted bids for a construction team, but Rudisill said **Odell** is the architect on the project. St. Mary’s expects to open the new facility in fall 2013.

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