



Fort Carson-MEDDAC News

Patients roll into world class rooms

By Vincent Visuth, Health Facilities Planning Agency

World class would be the primary adjective that best describes Fort Carson's newly opened Inpatient Family Care Ward on the 4th floor. Originally located on Evans Army Community Hospital's 5th floor, the ward maintained 28 beds in shared rooms that did not provide optimal patient care. The staff and patients transitioned into their new space on May 21.

The newly renovated ward design is patient centric providing accommodations that rival top civilian hospitals and hotels. The number of beds remains at 28 with the capabilities to expand to 32 as necessary. The big difference for the patients is they get their own room with a private bathroom.

Amenities in each room include a flat screen TV for all patients with cable access and DVD player. The remote control not only operates the TV, but also the electronic blinds and overhead lighting. Video gaming systems are available.

The ward is outfitted with 4 bariatric rooms that provide facilities capable of handling patients with bariatric requirements, to include oversize doorways. To increase patient safety and reduce staff injuries, patient lifts are installed in all rooms, which have the capability to traverse the entire room as well as enter the bathroom.

Patients' families are welcome to stay with their loved ones throughout their stay at Evans, as defined visiting hours no longer exist. Couches and recliners in the rooms can easily be converted into sleeping areas, which are far removed from the standard Army cots.

Additional features of the new floor provide a respite room for families, as well as a play room for younger inpatients.

The new Inpatient Family Care Ward is divided into two wings, each with its own nurses station. This will help to improve response time for nurses as well as charting stations between rooms to reduce the amount of travel.

The 4th floor hallway walls are decorated with artwork and murals of scenic landscapes throughout the state of Colorado that were donated by photographer John Fielder, a native to Colorado. The artwork is intended to provide a comforting and relaxing aesthetic to patients and family alike and it complements the incredible views of Cheyenne Mountain from the patient rooms.



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Evans' new ward allowed the hospital to take part in a pilot program for staff to staff and direct patient communication system. The new technology uses a Vocera badge, similar to that seen in Star Trek the Next Generation, which allows staff to communicate between them at a touch of a button.

In addition, the badge also has the capability for patients to directly communicate with the staff regarding their care and needs. In collaboration with Vocera, the Hill-Rom nurse call system has been upgraded and provides an array of features. For example, the system allows patients the ability to contact the nurse through Vocera and hands free alarm deactivation when entering the room giving the care giver more time to provide care.

The new ward is now open and ready to provide patients and their families the comforts of home during their stay at Evans. We welcome our future guests to our state of the art, world class facilities.



Nurses 1st Lt. Liana Gates (right) and 1st Lt. Juliane Case wheel patient James Heckard into his new room on the 4th floor Inpatient Family Care Ward. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Troth)



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Col. John McGrath (MEDDAC commander), CSM Donna Brock (MEDCOM CSM & Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Surgeon General), Fort Carson Commander Col. David Grasso, Mrs. Ella Cochrane (spouse of former Evans commander Col. Charles Cochrane) and Col. John Thomson (Deputy Commander 4th Infantry Division) cut the ribbon to official open the Evans Army Community Hospital's Family Care Ward. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Troth)