



\$57 million orthopedic hospital in the works

5 comments by **Ken Alltucker** - Dec. 18, 2009 12:00 AM
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A group of local doctors will join Catholic Healthcare West and a Dallas-based health-care company to develop a new \$57 million orthopedic and spine hospital near Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

Developers will start construction today on the 71,000-square-foot surgical hospital with a scheduled opening in January 2011. The facility, which will be called Southwest Orthopedic and Spine Hospital, is expected to employ about 140 people.

The project is a joint venture among 37 area specialists, Catholic Healthcare West and United Surgical Partners International. The doctors will own 60 percent of the hospital, and United Surgical and Catholic Healthcare West both control 20 percent shares, said Dr. David Ott, an orthopedic surgeon who is heading the doctors group.

"Our goal is to get all of the best doctors we could to come together under one roof," said Ott, whose practice is Arizona Orthopaedic Associates in Phoenix. "We

wanted to bring these doctors together for a single focus of everybody doing the same thing."

Physician-owned hospitals and mainstream hospitals have traditionally competed against each other, and health-care bills in the House and Senate would place new restrictions on physician-owned hospitals. Bills would limit the ability of physicians to refer patients to hospitals or surgical facilities in which they own an interest.

"This is a real concern to us," Ott said of the potential for new limits on doctor-owned hospitals. "We have met with legislators, and we have lobbyists working in Washington to make sure we don't lose this opportunity."

Ott said he has recruited orthopedic specialists from across the Phoenix area, including many who now practice at Valley hospitals.

The specialty hospital, which will be near Loop 202 and 40th Street, will include 44 inpatient rooms, eight operating rooms and an intensive-care unit. Its goal is to treat 4,000 patients each year, with procedures such as hip and knee replacements as well as spinal surgery.

Ott said he approached Banner Health years

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ago about opening a specialty hospital. Banner initially expressed interest in such a joint venture, Ott said, but Arizona's largest hospital system decided against such a partnership.

United Surgical will manage the hospital and oversee the staff of nurses and support workers, according to Josh Miller of United Surgical.

United Surgical manages five medical facilities in the Phoenix area with Catholic Healthcare West, the parent of St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, Miller said. United Surgical also has partnered with Catholic Healthcare West on projects in Nevada and California, he added.

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