

New home for Pain, Spine/Rehab clinics

Makeover of Former ED Nears Completion

By Tyler Smith

The vacant property at the southeast end of the neighborhood has been sitting empty for more than two years. But it's been getting a makeover and new residents will move in soon.



The entrance to the former ED will become the entrance to the new integrated unit for pain and spine/rehab patients.

It's not a place you'll see on "HGTV Home Makeover," but rather the 18,500-square-foot space that once housed the Emergency Department at University of Colorado Hospital. Providers and staff [moved out](#) on April 7, 2013 to take over a much larger home in AIP 2. After much [discussion, planning, and hard work](#) that is still ongoing, the hospital is within weeks of opening the doors of the former ED to new tenants: the Spine/Rehabilitation Medicine Clinic and the Interventional Pain Management Practice.

Construction work on the roughly \$9 million project is tentatively scheduled to wrap up in early September, said Catherine Reeves, senior project manager for the hospital's Facilities, Design and Construction Department. With approval from University of Colorado Denver and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, followed by training, stocking, and testing, the clinics could be ready for patients by early October, but final dates are not set, Reeves said.

The project, which is only [one piece of a large-scale renovation](#) of the Anschutz Outpatient Pavilion aimed at increasing clinical space, will create an integrated unit (*see box*). Patients will use the former ED entrance to check in – the metal detector that stood at the front of the area has been removed – and then either go to an adjacent waiting room or proceed northward along parallel hallways to radiology, exam, or procedural rooms. The space also includes a combined pre- and post-procedural area that will have curtained bays.



Brimming dumpsters stand in what was an ambulance bay for the ED. It will become a patient pick-up area for the new unit.

The first-floor space is also designed to make it easier for drivers to pick up spine and pain patients who have limited mobility. The door at the east end of the building, which will be an exit for patients, opens onto a wide paved area that had served as an ambulance bay for the ED, noted Trent Walker, project manager for Facilities, Design and Construction, who is overseeing the work.

Facelift. The remodeled unit is the same size as its predecessor, but it's difficult to envision what it once was. The interior was thoroughly gutted. On an afternoon in late July, crews throughout

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This space will soon be the check-in area for patients.



Project Manager Trent Walker looks over plans for the unit.



One of the hallways that will be lined with exam rooms.

the space were busy readying new floors, walls, and wiring for the day the redesigned unit opens. Exam and procedural rooms awaited finished millwork and equipment. The radiology rooms will receive their equipment, including one 3D imaging machine, in early September. There will also be new work spaces, storage, and a locker room for staff, Walker said.

Aside from the usual heavy lifting involved in a major renovation – attested to by large dumpsters filled with waste materials that

stand in the old ambulance bay – the project had some special challenges, Walker noted. For instance, the hospital's fire command sits in the middle of the space, so workers had to reroute all the life safety cables and wires to keep it up and running during construction. The first-floor space sits on a slab. Without a basement workspace, crews had to cut through the concrete floor to install new underground plumbing, then re-pour the concrete.



One of the five partially completed procedure rooms.



The project requires extensive work on ceiling ductwork and wiring.



With no basement workspace, crews had to cut through cement to install plumbing.

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The work proceeded without much notice from employees and the general public. During two-and-a-half weeks in late June and early July, however, workers had to tear out the unit's air-supply ductwork and replace it with a larger system. That affected the heavily traveled east-west corridor between the AIP and AOP.

"That corridor is like the hospital's I-25 or I-70," Walker said. To assist pedestrians during the construction, workers put up signs, hung plastic, installed a handrail, and kept the corridor clean and well lit.

Work on the first floor will continue after the opening of the new unit. The hospital also plans to move the Express Lab into the space vacated by the Pain Practice, although dates have yet to be determined. On the fourth floor of the AOP, the Orthopedics Clinic clinics will expand into the space formerly occupied by Spine/Rehabilitation Medicine, Reeves said.

The Layout

When it is completed and opened sometime this fall, the renovated first-floor unit that was home to UCH's Emergency Department will house an integrated unit for pain and spine/rehabilitation patients.

The clinical areas include:

- » 19 patient exam rooms
- » 5 procedural areas (including one for Ob/Gyn patients)
- » 5 pre-procedural bays
- » 10 post-procedural bays
- » 2 radiology exam rooms (including one with 3D capability)
- » 1 radiology reading room