Hospital plans building move

Industrial expansion and bursts in population have resulted in unparalleled construction and development in this and several Louisiana parishes. And with expansion in these areas come intensified health care responsibilities.

This is the crux of Abbeville General Hospital's plans for expanding the existing complex - physically and professionally.

According to hospital Administrator Paul Landry and Robert Broussard, chairman of the hospital's board of commissioners, it was the added burden of growth that sent them to the state last year for a certificate of need.

The two this week revealed that the hospital has, indeed, obtained a Certificate of Need from the Health Planning and Development Agency, approving an expansion program to include the addition of 40 new beds and a patient wing.

Landry said the approval is required for hospitals seeking federal reimbursement for treating Medicare and Medicaid patients, and acquisition of it means the state agrees with hospital evidence supporting the need for expansion.

The administrator, in a Meridional interview this week, said the proposed expansion provides for the construction of 36 adult and pediatric beds, four additional intensive care beds and the enlargement of the ancillary departments.

The project - at an estimated cost of $10 million - calls for an additional 37,000 square feet of space.

Landry said expansion is necessary "to meet the increasing demand for beds and services by the community."

"Today, Abbeville General provides many services that were once available only at other hospitals," Landry noted. "New services have encouraged local residents to seek hospitalization and medical care at Abbeville General Hospital, and we're pleased and proud of the services that are offered to residents of Vermilion Parish."

Landry also stated that the hospital is planning to implement an expansion program that will interrupt the present level of medical services.

"And we also hope to provide the needed additional medical services as soon as possible," Landry noted.

The administrator said a "patient tower" would be constructed onto the facility's north side. This complex would be attached to the current structure, but will offer complete nursing care.

He predicted construction would begin in about a year and expansion should be completed within three to four years.

The state certification is based on need, status of the facility within the community, the local census and fiscal feasibility.

There was partial expansion at the facility in 1976, and there are currently 137 beds - 121 medical-surgical beds, eight in obstetrics and eight in intensive care.

The certificate of need for the expansion was issued by the state...