

Health care battle sees merger

By Judith Doner Berns
staff writer

West Bloomfield took a giant step forward Tuesday as a developing community when Henry Ford and Sinal hospitals announced plans to co-sponsor a 200-bed, acute-care hospital on the grounds of Ford's West Bloomfield outpatient center.

If Ford and Sinal can prove the need for the proposed facility to state and regional hospital planning agencies, it will serve residents of West Bloomfield, Orchard Lake and western Oakland County, said Maxwell Josepy, president of Sinal Hospital board of trustees.

"When Henry Ford opened his West Bloomfield outpatient center, we hoped it would be the first step toward development of an in-bed hospital," West Bloomfield Township supervisor John Doherty said.

West Bloomfield residents must travel miles to full-fledged hospitals, Doherty said. "And the roads keep getting more congested and difficult to get to."

St. Joseph Mercy in Pontiac and Providence in Southfield are the hospitals closest to West Bloomfield. Emergency care is available at Ford's West Bloomfield center, on Maple west of Drake.

BESIDES MEETING health care needs of area residents, Doherty acknowledged the proposed hospital should spur township growth. "It might happen faster. But our area's going to develop no matter what — it's the nicest part of the metropolitan area."

"I congratulate Sinal and Ford for working together on this," he added.

"I'm real happy about it." All parties acknowledged the problems which needed to be overcome to get two diverse institutions to reach the point of the joint venture, which has been discussed off and on since 1977.

"It was for a long period of time on the shelf," said Douglas Peters, president of Henry Ford Hospital. "I can't think of any particular straw that started that domino up again."

A new non-profit corporation will operate the hospital, managed by Sinal on Ford property. Doctors from both hospitals, as well as non-affiliated physicians, are expected to be appointed to its staff.

"IT WILL BE a community hospital in concept," Peters said. "It won't be managed from Detroit."

Name, cost and where it will be located on the 78-acre Ford site still are unknowns. So far, it is called the West Bloomfield Community Hospital, Peters said.

Officials refused to estimate costs, but said funding will be a combination of bonds issued by the state's Hospital Financing Authority and donations.

No determination has been made whether it will be free-standing or attached to the current outpatient clinic, Peters said.

Plans call for groundbreaking in October, 1984, and a 1987 opening, pending successful completion of the required approval process.

"What's being created is a regional campus," Sinal executive vice president Irving Shapiro said.

That campus includes the current Ford facilities — outpatient and Maplegrove alcoholism treatment centers; the Jewish Community Center and sen-

ior citizen housing and care across Maple Road; and Sinal's new outpatient facility, which offers rehabilitation and psychiatric services and is slated to open early in 1984 north of Maple on Farmington Road.

"IT'S A rather significant contribution to this community," Shapiro said. The two hospitals have a history of cooperation in providing medical services in the West Bloomfield area.

When the Henry Ford facility opened in West Bloomfield in 1975, Sinal board president Josepy was on the founding board.

A joint pulmonary rehabilitation program has been offered at Ford-West Bloomfield for several years. Sinal also worked closely with Ford leaders in designing its new Farmington Road health care center.

The thrust is regional planning to avoid duplication of services in the interest of patient care, Josepy said. Sinal currently has a 622-bed hospital on West Outer Drive, Detroit. Ford is a 1,000-bed hospital in Detroit's New Center area. It also has outpatient centers in Dearborn, Sterling Heights and Troy and will open a Plymouth center in January.

THE CURRENT West Bloomfield Ford center records more than 160,000 patient visits annually, including approximately 28,000 emergency care visits, officials report.

Also on the site is Maplegrove, a treatment center for alcoholism and chemical dependency. Plans recently were announced for construction of a teen substance abuse treatment center at Maplegrove.



House afire

Firefighters from Farmington and Farmington Hills responded to a house fire at 33700 Edmonton in the Eight Mile-Farmington Road area of Farmington Hills last Monday afternoon. According to the fire report, a blaze was found in the wall of the house and extinguished. No injuries were reported, but fire officials estimated the damage at about \$5,000.

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Registration is planned for OCC

Regular registration for the 1984 winter semester at Oakland Community College will be held from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 3 and 4, according to an alphabetical schedule. Classes for the winter semester officially begin at 8 a.m. Jan. 5. Students may register at any one of the following OCC campus locations: the Auburn Hills Campus in Auburn Hills (853-4200); the Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills (471-7500); the Highland Lakes Campus in Union Lake (360-3000); and the South-east/Royal Oak Campus in Royal Oak (967-5700).

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