New NICU to Provide “Just the Right Kind of Space” for Babies and Families

Anticipation is riding high for a major event at the Perinatal Institute on Nov. 6, 2021: the grand opening of its new, 80-bed newborn intensive care unit (NICU). The state-of-the-art NICU will be located on the fourth floor of the new critical care building at Cincinnati Children’s, which is currently under construction. Once complete, the building will add 632,500 square feet and 249 beds to the medical center’s main campus.

Families will have more space to relax and consult privately with the care team. They also will be able to access amenities throughout the critical care building, such as the exercise facility, business center and outdoor terrace.

“The new NICU will be of a size and configuration that allows us to provide collaborative, multidisciplinary care that optimizes patient outcomes,” says James Greenberg, MD, co-director of the Perinatal Institute and lead physician executive for the critical care building project. “It is just the right kind of space for our team of subspecialists to care for newborns with complex conditions including gastroschisis, congenital diaphragmatic hernia, renal failure and airway abnormalities. Cincinnati Children’s offers a number of destination programs for children born with these conditions, and the new NICU will help us serve this patient population well.”

More than 200 clinicians, ancillary support staff, architects, medical planners, patients and families contributed to the new NICU design. Providers have already been training to work in the new building for months. Virtual reality software is helping them acclimate to the space, safety features, equipment and workflows in three dimensions.

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Total number of states from which patients have traveled for care

38

Based on FY20 NICU Discharges

Once the new NICU opens, the former NICU (located on the fourth floor of an adjacent building) will close for extensive renovations. It will re-open in 2022 with about 23 beds, bringing the NICU total to about 100. The Cincinnati Children’s Fetal Care Center will remain in its current location, next to the newly renovated NICU space.

The new NICU will feature larger, private rooms; acoustical properties appropriate for optimizing brain development in babies; and special lighting to support circadian development in infants.

Learn more about the critical care building at cincinnatichildrens.org/critical-care-building.