

Torrance Memorial Medical Center Prepares to Meet Community's Future Health Care Needs with New Patient Tower

By Craig Leach
President and CEO
Torrance Memorial Medical Center



Seven years ago, we challenged HMC Architects to create something unique and special to serve the health care needs of the South Bay community of Los Angeles for the next several generations. Today, as we prepare to open our new seven-story, 390,000-square foot Melanie and Richard Lundquist Tower on November 16, 2014, it's evident they listened. Our new gleaming

tower, in my humble opinion, is a beautiful architectural creation, which is designed with the input of our staff to masterfully increase functionality.

The Lundquist Tower will offer the latest medical technology, 256 private rooms, 18 surgical and interventional treatment rooms, a healing garden and the South Bay's most advanced Hybrid Operating Room (OR).

The Hybrid OR positions Torrance Memorial to better serve the complex health conditions of our growing aging population, who would normally face difficult recoveries with open surgery or would not be candidates for it. Nearly double the size of a traditional operating room, the Hybrid OR will offer breakthrough surgical and interventional procedures—sometimes simultaneously. Like other interventional rooms, the Hybrid OR features sophisticated imaging systems for catheter-based procedures, but also meets

the sterility standards and has the equipment of a traditional operating room. This will enable providers to perform high-risk, minimally invasive procedures and switch to open surgery without moving the patient if a dire complication arises.

It will be used to perform a full range of endovascular services including abdominal aortic aneurysm repair, carotid artery stenting, and transcatheter aortic valve replacement, known as TAVR.

The decision to construct a new patient tower came during a time when hospital closures were on the rise and patient volumes were down due to a changing health care landscape. Because our existing tower, built in the 1960s, no longer complies with seismic state laws, we were faced with the decision of either an expensive retrofit, with required construction of a new tower by 2030, or building a new facility now - to make us future ready. We did our homework and decided building a new facility

now was our best option. Locking in construction contracts when we did enabled us to save \$30 million. Because of the scope of the project, we deemed it imperative to approach the community and ask them to help us financially support the new tower. We originally budgeted \$75 million in gifts from the community. We were surprised by the outpouring of support. To date, Torrance Memorial has raised more than \$130 million toward the new tower, exceeding its fundraising goal. It is an amazing statement on the part of this community that they trust this hospital and believe in the importance of this new community asset. As we prepare to open six months ahead of schedule, the final project cost is \$10 million under budget.

The Lundquist Tower helps facilitate the continuation of our nearly 90-year legacy as a community based and supported hospital. The original hospital was founded in 1925 by Jared Sidney and Helena

Childs Torrance. In 1921, Jared Sidney Torrance, the founder of his namesake city, made a will leaving \$100,000 for the creation of a modern hospital for the city's 1,800 residents. After his death, his wife Helena helped honor his bequest by seeing through the construction and the 1925 opening of the Jared Sidney Torrance Memorial Hospital originally located on Engracia Avenue.

Fast forward to December, 2013—Melanie and Richard Lundquist of Palos Verdes Estates announced their game-changing donation of \$50 million at our Holiday Festival Fundraiser. It was the largest donation in the history of the hospital. The new patient tower has since been named the Melanie and Richard Lundquist Tower and has been dedicated to the memory of Richard B. Hoffman, MD, a radiologist and former chief of staff, who committed his career to building the medical center's Radiology Department.

Melanie and Richard Lundquist helped bring this vision for local health care's future to reality through their passion and financial support. The new tower will truly transform healthcare delivery for patients in the South Bay and across our region. The hospital's 5,000 volunteers and physicians, and the entire South Bay, will benefit from the calming design of the our healing environment.

In addition to providing state-of-the-art medical technology, the tower's patient-centered design addresses the comfort of visiting family members by incorporating family-friendly lounges and comfortable overnight spaces. Patient rooms in the new tower are 30 percent larger than in the existing tower.

To provide our patients with extra comfort, each room is equipped with a 40-inch HD television with expanded channel choices, movies on demand and health education videos. Patients will soon have the



Melanie and Richard Lundquist Tower, Torrance Memorial Medical Center

ability to order meals from a room service-like menu and will have access to entertainment choices equal to, or perhaps better than, what they have at home.

Patients will have access to the internet, be able to play video games and listen to music. Additional system expansions will enable patients to request a variety of hospital services, including a visit from a volunteer, patient services representative, spiritual care giver or a pet visitation dog all through their hospital TV.

The hospital's existing services such as the Burn Center, the Hunt Cancer Institute, Chen Surgical Center and Graziadio Radiology Center will all move into the new Lundquist Tower. Patients will benefit from a new MRI unit and CT scanning unit, with space available for additional technology as it evolves. The new tower will also house three ultrasound rooms.

Gently-curved nurses' stations in the Intensive Care Units allow for better visibility of patient rooms. The Auxiliary Healing Garden, located between the new and existing facility, provides a serene, healing space for patients, visitors and staff.

Sixteen original installations of art are featured throughout the Lundquist Tower in a variety of media, sizes, style and color. Art consultant Cheryl Thiele worked closely with the artists to ensure that the works "feel like they were made for the space." Many of the art pieces were commissioned with

local artists to depict Californian landscapes and themes. Artists featured in the new tower include Laddie John Dill, Sherry Bullard, Erin Hanson, Judy Rand, Ellen Dittebrandt, Christopher Jeffries, Lori Prenner and more.

Designed by HMC Architects and constructed by contractor, McCarthy Building Companies, Inc., the replacement hospital will serve as the new front door of the medical center and the centerpiece of the campus. The south entrance is positioned at the end of what's called the Toyota Plaza, and leads to the bright and open Vasek Polak Grand Lobby. The indoor-outdoor Yang Café, the Norris Foundation Gift Shop, Admittance Services and the Turpanjian Chapel are all easily accessible on the first floor.

The tower's exterior skin is a combination of metal panel, precast concrete, plaster and curtain wall. The combination for the tower's facade responds to the correct solar orientation to reduce energy consumption and gives the tower a contemporary and elegant aesthetic.

Continually evolving and adapting to the health care needs of its patients, in 2012, Torrance Memorial Medical Center joined the ranks of the top hospitals in the nation by earning coveted Magnet® recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, which recognizes nursing excellence. Torrance Memorial has also been ranked as one of the best hospitals for 2014-15 in California and the Los Angeles metro area for the third year straight by *U.S. News & World Report*. The report

recognized Torrance Memorial for providing high performing and quality care in seven specialty areas: diabetes/endocrinology, gastroenterology/GI surgery, geriatrics, gynecology, nephrology, orthopedics and urology.

On September 19, 2014, it was heart-warming and inspiring to see community members lined up at 5:30 a.m. to tour our new facility during our two-day Open House event, and to learn by their feedback that they are just as excited about it as we are. For nearly a century, Torrance Memorial Medical Center has provided extraordinary and compassionate care to the South Bay and its surrounding communities and will continue to for decades to come. Our hospital is thrilled to share yet another great milestone in Torrance Memorial's history.

Craig Leach became the president, chief executive officer at Torrance Memorial Medical Center on January 1, 2006. Craig has been with Torrance Memorial for 30 years, including five years as the chief operating officer and many years prior to that as the chief financial officer. Craig was born and raised in Torrance, Calif. He graduated from Loyola Marymount University in 1977 and joined Torrance Memorial in early 1984. Craig is involved as a board member with various health care related organizations.

To learn more about Torrance Memorial Medical Center and its new Lundquist Tower, visit: <http://www.torrancememorial.org/>

Reprinted with permission from the California Healthcare News. To learn more about the California Healthcare News visit cahcnews.com.