New $7M critical care center opens in University of Michigan Hospital Emergency Department

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Patients arriving to the University of Michigan in the critical condition have a new destination within the Emergency Department.

The Massey Emergency Critical Care Center--abbreviated the EC3--opened Monday to deliver care from the moment of arrival for those with the most serious injuries and illnesses.

"The EC3 puts at our fingertips everything we need to provide exceptional care to every patient who needs the level of expertise our teams possess," Dr. Kyle Gunnerson, the U-M emergency physician who will lead the EC3, said in a statement. "This will raise the bar for emergency critical care."

The $7 million, 7,8000-square-foot unit has five resuscitation/trauma bays and nine patient rooms. The area is designed to not only give doctors and nurses the most state-of-the-art equipment available, but serve as a space for evaluating and implementing new diagnostic tools, monitoring techniques and therapeutic treatments.

"It's not just performing procedures there, but we're going to be keeping track of how the procedures are done and what the outcomes are," U-M hospital spokeswoman Kara Gavin said.

"They're going to be studying how we figure out and know what's going on inside a patient in those first few hours of service."

The Michigan Center for Integrative Research in Critical Care, a cooperative unit of more than 100 U-M scientists and clinicians who work with early-stage entrepreneurs and industry partners, will help deliver ideas for improved care to the EC3.

The new EC3 is located in what was formerly the Children's Emergency Department before it was moved to the new C.S. Mott Children's Hospital. The space has been under construction since May 2014 and renovations will continue in the emergency department until May 2015.

"Having the new trauma bays open in the EC3 will allow us to make necessary upgrades to the other units throughout the department," Gavin said. "Those will be phased in over the next few months."

Gavin said three new physicians along with other personnel will be hired to staff the new center, which will have a dedicated attending physician on-site at all times.

Patients arriving with health crises such as strokes, sepsis, hemorrhages, traumatic brain injury, cardiac arrest, overdoses and acute lung injuries could all served in the EC3. The center is also located close to the entrance accessed by survival flight patients, in order to give them the quickest treatment available.

In addition to better and more innovative care for patients in critical condition, the new center will help deal with increased needs in the U-M Hospital's emergency department. Demand for emergency critical care at the University of Michigan Health System has grown 24 percent in the last five years and the number of adult patients admitted to the ICU from the emergency department has risen 10 percent every year over the same time span.

The new center will also host post-residency physicians for advanced training in critical care. A special two-year fellowship program is available for emergency-medicine physicians who wish to be board certified in critical care by the American Board of Medical Specialists.

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