



LEE HEALTH'S APPLICATION FOR HOSPITAL IN ESTERO GETS PRELIMINARY APPROVAL

This morning, we received very exciting news for the residents of the Estero and Bonita Springs community, and for our health system: We received preliminary approval from the Florida Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA) to build an 82-bed hospital tower at Lee Health – Coconut Point. The HCA application for an 80-bed hospital in Estero also received approval.

As you know, it has always been our plan and desire to build a hospital in South Lee County, as we've recognized the need for acute care services in that part of our community for a very long time.

We've been building Lee Health Coconut point to the exacting standards of hospital building codes knowing one day there would be a hospital there. We are excited about the possibilities of how our hospital tower will integrate beautifully to provide well-coordinated, patient-centered care in one convenient location.

In addition to our application and supporting materials, AHCA received 550 letters of support for a Lee Health hospital from residents, community leaders, dignitaries and physicians from various specialties throughout Southwest Florida. We appreciate this vote of support and confidence from our neighbors and partners.

This preliminary approval is another step toward a hospital in South Lee County, but it is important to understand that this approval should be considered preliminary. The CON process includes an established challenge period following AHCA's announcement, and it is quite probable that NCH and Physician's Regional Medical Center will file challenges against both of the approved hospitals.

The News-Press has inquired about our reaction to the news so we expect coverage over the weekend. We will keep you updated as appropriate throughout the next steps in the process.

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