Phoebe Opens New Helipad

Albany, Ga. – A new helipad is now in use on Phoebe’s main campus to provide more efficient and effective transport of emergency patients. Members of Phoebe’s emergency center team joined health system leaders and representatives from Air Evac Lifeteam to cut the ribbon on the helipad Friday.

“The location on top of our employee parking garage will provide a safer landing spot for emergency helicopters. It will also allow our ER team to move patients on and off helicopters with greater ease and speed. This change is all about doing what is best for our patients,” said Joe Austin, Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital Chief Executive Officer.

The helipad is located directly adjacent to Phoebe’s main emergency center. Previously, emergency helicopters landed a block away on an athletic field behind Phoebe Healthworks, and patients were transported to and from the landing zone by ambulance. “Our team is excited about this change that will benefit our patients, staff and air transport partners. They know this is just one very visible example of the many improvements that are underway or in the planning stages for our emergency department. There is a lot of enthusiasm about the direction we’re moving,” said Darlene Vaughan, BSN, Phoebe Assistant Vice President of Emergency Services.

One of the key initiatives under Phoebe Focus, the health system’s overall 5-year strategic plan, is building an entirely new, state-of-the-art emergency center that will be the biggest and best in the region. “We have a team that has visited some of the most outstanding new ERs in the country to get great design ideas. We’ve also held focus groups with patients and EMS workers, and we’ve gotten input from our ER team. We’re determined to build an outstanding emergency center that will serve this community well for years to come,” Austin said.

The new helipad is also an important step in Phoebe’s journey to become a state-designated Level II trauma center. “While we treat trauma patients every day, this designation will help us expand and enhance our trauma services and save more lives. Our new helipad is an example
of our commitment to earning trauma center designation and offering more comprehensive, lifesaving emergency care,” said Leon Dent, MD, Phoebe Medical Director of Trauma Services.

Phoebe’s new trauma team began a mandated 12-month data collection process in September. They hope to submit their designation application to the state by the end of this year.