

THEN & NOW

A reminder of the pace of change, and of timeless truths, from a 1973 case statement for a three-year, \$20-million DMS capital campaign:

“During the past two decades, cracks and strains in the health-care system became increasingly apparent to the American public. Although superb medical care—perhaps the best in the world—was available for the acutely ill in major medical centers, vast areas of the country had few or no primary medical services at all, particularly rural communities and inner cities. . . . Dartmouth’s location . . . presents it with a unique opportunity to explore effective systems for providing up-to-date, comprehensive medical care to a rural area.”



\$250 million

Goal of the current seven-year (2002-2009) DMS-DHMC Transforming Medicine Campaign

Renovation project and new buildings are on the drawing board

It used to be that laboratories were fixed, enclosed, often dingy spaces occupied by the same chief scientist for years or even decades. But that traditional model is fading away at Dartmouth Medical School. In 2003, the flexible, open-concept labs of the Norris Cotton Cancer Center were completed, and now DMS is renovating its older labs and plans to construct two new research buildings.

The School has committed a minimum of \$25 million to renovate labs in the Vail and Remsen buildings on the Hanover, N.H., campus, and plans are rapidly evolving for a new \$140-million complex on DHMC’s Lebanon, N.H., campus.

The Lebanon complex will consist of two rectangular buildings arranged in a V and linked to each other and to the existing Borwell Research Building by a large open meeting area called the LeBaron Commons. One of the new buildings will house lab space for research in areas such as neuroscience and cardiology. The other will provide a much-needed home for DMS’s Center for the Evaluative Clinical Sciences (CECS).

The new labs can be “reconfigured to meet the needs of the researchers and the problems to be studied” as they change over time, says Charles Mannix, chief operating officer of DMS. Lab spaces will not be permanently assigned to individual principal



This is an architect’s rendering of the buildings planned for the Lebanon campus.

investigators, he adds, but rather allocated to groups of basic science and clinical researchers who will come together in teams to solve specific problems.

Creating strategic adjacencies is also a guiding principle of the CECS building, which will bring DMS’s health-policy researchers and students together under one roof and in closer contact with their clinical and basic science colleagues.

“The idea,” says Mannix, “is they’ll meet in the LeBaron Commons and talk to each other,” thereby facilitating collaboration and a more rapid transfer of new knowledge from researchers to the patient bedside. “Just by their very design,” says Mannix, the new buildings “are going to make a statement that we can transform medicine.”

Move: To make room for the complex, the road that encircles DHMC will need to move. Construction crews will break ground next spring and begin expanding the Loop Road south. The roadwork is scheduled to be finished next fall.

The new buildings are tentatively set to open in 2009. But a

lot needs to happen between now and then. This fall, DMS will seek approval from the Dartmouth College Trustees for the final building plans and a funding strategy. The Trustees gave preliminary approval for the project this past spring.

Life: The Trustees also have other plans that affect DMS. Next spring, the College will demolish several DMS buildings in Hanover—Strasenburgh, Butler, and the modular brick building installed on the Medical School lawn in 1989—to make way for a new life sciences building. This has caused some concern about the future of the DMS lawn, according to Mannix. But not to worry, he says: the lawn area will actually be bigger when construction is done. Though DMS does not expect to have lab space in the College’s new building, it does anticipate sharing classrooms and meeting rooms.

Collaboration has always been a hallmark of DMS, Mannix points out. And now, with the renovations and the new complex, “our buildings will actually symbolize that.”

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