



**Lee Health Board of Directors Approves Pursuing
Certificate of Need to Build Hospital in Estero**

Plan Calls for up to 160 Bed Hospital Tower at Lee Health – Coconut Point

(Fort Myers, Fla. – Feb. 22, 2018) --- Lee Health Board of Directors agreed today to continue pursuing a Certificate of Need (CON) to build a hospital bed tower at Lee Health – Coconut Point. Lee Health submitted a letter of intent with the Florida Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA) to build a hospital at Lee Health – Coconut Point on Feb. 21, the first step required in the CON process. The next steps include the submittal of a preliminary application, which is due in early March, and the submittal of the full application in early April.

“Lee Health is committed to expanding and enhancing health care in South Lee County,” says Larry Antonucci, M.D., MBA, President & CEO, Lee Health. “We have recognized the need for a hospital in South Lee County for a very long time. This new hospital bed tower will integrate beautifully with Lee Health – Coconut Point, and provide necessary acute care beds to the community.”

Lee Health – Coconut Point is a 163,500 square-foot project being developed as a health and wellness destination on 30 acres of land just east of U.S. 41 and south of Coconut Road in Estero. It is scheduled to open in November. The outpatient facility will offer convenient, easily accessible, and integrated medical and preventative health services across the continuum of care in an attractive campus environment. Services will include a 24-hour emergency department, same-day surgery center, clinical decision unit, diagnostic testing, Healthy Life Center and medical office space for primary care and specialty care physicians.

“It is and has been our hope to build a hospital at Lee Health – Coconut Point,” Dr. Antonucci says. “We designed the project to hospital building codes exactly for this purpose. Submitting our letter of intent and now proceeding with the CON process proves to the state and the people of South Lee County that it has been and remains our intent to build a hospital in South Lee County and at Lee Health – Coconut Point.”

Lee Health applied for a Certificate of Need (CON) to build a hospital on its property in 2013. The state subsequently denied that application. Following the denial, the health system pivoted its plans and began development of Lee Health – Coconut Point as an outpatient facility, but developed to the exacting standards of hospital building codes. The proposed bed tower would be attached to that facility.

“We believe the best option for a hospital in South Lee County is on our land at Coconut Point and in conjunction with the facility we’re already building because the infrastructure will be in place to provide well-rounded, patient-centered care in one convenient location,” Dr. Antonucci says. “We are excited to share our plans with South Lee community groups,

individuals, and business organizations that provided significant support in our previous CON application.”

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