NEWS FROM THEDACARE®
For Immediate Release
November 12, 2026

FROEDTERT THEDACARE ANNOUNCES NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT AT THEDACARE MEDICAL CENTER-WAUPACA

Investment Enhances Patient Experience and Expands Access to Emergency Care

WAUPACA, Wis. – Investing in the health and vitality of the communities it serves, Froedtert ThedaCare is announcing plans to create a new emergency department at ThedaCare Medical Center-Waupaca. The transformative investment reflects the organization's long-standing commitment to reinvesting in local healthcare, improving access to life-saving services and ensuring patients and families throughout Waupaca and surrounding communities can receive exceptional care when and where they need it most.

Groundbreaking for the project is taking place Nov. 12, 2026, with the new emergency department expected to be complete in early 2028. The project represents a more than $16 million investment in the health and well-being of the community.

“This investment reflects our unwavering commitment to the future of healthcare in Waupaca and the surrounding communities,” said Lynn Detterman, president of the North Region of Froedtert ThedaCare. “By creating a modern emergency department, we are enhancing access to critical care, supporting better patient experiences and helping ensure families can depend on exceptional care close to home for years to come.”

Meeting a Growing Need for Emergency Care

Emergency departments in rural communities across the country are experiencing increased demand. According to the National Institutes of Health, visits to rural emergency departments increased by more than 50% between 2005 and 2016, driven by factors including an aging population and limited access to alternative care settings.

The need is especially evident in Waupaca, where emergency care demands fluctuate significantly throughout the year. During the busy summer tourism season, daily patient volumes increase substantially as visitors join residents in enjoying the area’s lakes, parks and outdoor recreation opportunities.

“In emergency medicine, seconds can change outcomes,” said William Kumprey, MD, associate chief medical officer of Emergency Care and Emergency Medicine physician with ThedaCare. “Whether a patient is experiencing a stroke, heart attack or serious injury, our goal is to provide the right care at the right time in the right place. The updated emergency department will allow us to serve more patients, optimize the flow of care and better support patients and families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.”

In addition to seasonal demand, the hospital serves a growing population of older adults who often require more acute levels of care.

“Emergency care in rural communities is unique,” said Jenny Derks, vice president of ThedaCare Medical Centers-New London and Waupaca. “Our teams care for patients with a wide range of needs, often at a higher volume than the current space was designed to accommodate. This project allows us to better meet the needs of our patients today while preparing for the future healthcare needs of our community.”

Designed Around Patients and Families
The new emergency department will span nearly 10,000 square feet, more than 30% larger than the existing 6,600-square-foot department.

Developed in partnership with physicians, clinicians and team members, the new space will create a more welcoming environment while improving efficiency and safety throughout the department.

Key enhancements of the new emergency department include:

- Increasing treatment rooms from eight to 12, while expanding room size to better accommodate patients and caregivers.
- Creating a dedicated decontamination room with a shower to care for patients exposed to chemicals, supporting the area's farming and agricultural industries.
- Adding a new ambulance bay to accommodate larger emergency vehicles and protect patients from weather during transport.
- Relocating security resources closer to patient care areas to enhance safety and responsiveness.
- Adding features to better support patients experiencing behavioral health situations, while improving safety for patients, families and team members.

“Every element of the new emergency department has been designed with patients and families in mind,” Derks said. “From larger treatment rooms and enhanced privacy to improved behavioral health resources and a more welcoming environment, our goal is to create a space that provides comfort and confidence. At the same time, we are creating a more efficient environment for our care teams, helping them deliver the exceptional care our community expects and deserves.”

Continued Investment in Waupaca
The emergency department project is part of Froedtert ThedaCare’s broader commitment to investing in the health of the Waupaca community.

Recent advancements include welcoming new primary care physicians to improve access to preventive and primary care services, opening ThedaCare Behavioral Health-Waupaca in 2024 and launching a robotic surgery program in 2024.

Patients can remain confident in their access to emergency care throughout construction. The current emergency department will remain fully operational. After completion of the project, the current emergency department will be redeveloped into additional patient care space, creating new opportunities to expand services and better serve Waupaca-area residents.

“We continually evaluate opportunities to strengthen services through the lens of our Mission to improve the health of the communities we serve,” Detterman said. “The investments we have made in Waupaca over the past several years, and the creation of this new emergency department, demonstrate our long-term commitment to this community. We are investing in access, investing in our patients and investing in the future of rural healthcare.”

The project is expected to be complete in early 2028. For more information, visit ThedaCare.org/communities/Waupaca/.

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About ThedaCare
For more than 115 years, ThedaCare® has been improving the health and well-being of the communities it serves in northeast and central Wisconsin. The organization delivers care to more than 650,000 residents in 17 counties, and employs approximately 7,000 providers and team members at 180 points of care, including 10 hospitals. As an organization committed to being a leader in Population Health, team members are dedicated to empowering people to live their unique, best lives. ThedaCare is a not-for-profit health system with a level II trauma center, comprehensive cancer treatment, stroke and cardiac programs, as well as primary care. ThedaCare also partners with communities to understand needs, find solutions together, and encourage health awareness and action. ThedaCare is part of Froedtert ThedaCare, Wisconsin's most comprehensive healthcare system.

About Froedtert ThedaCare
Froedtert ThedaCare is an integrated healthcare system serving nearly half of Wisconsin's population. Its 28,000+ team members, physicians and clinicians are transforming communities through prediction, prevention and partnerships with excellence in primary and specialty care in 20 hospitals and more than 360 outpatient locations. Through the meaningful partnership with the Medical College of Wisconsin, Froedtert ThedaCare includes the only academic medical center in eastern Wisconsin providing the foundation to discover tomorrow's breakthroughs. The system is uniquely positioned to be the trusted partner in advancing the health our communities.