

Major investment is game-changer in Fairfax

Dr. Elizabeth Pusey's investment has transformed Rural Wellness Fairfax hospital. She acquired the hospital along with two area clinics in Fairfax and Pawnee with the goal of revitalizing and expanding the facilities to bring top-quality health-care to the community.

The critical access hospital in Fairfax underwent a \$5-million expansion following a \$500,000 investment to upgrade the facility amid the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. This multi-million renovation includes in-house lab services with advanced technology; enhanced accommodations for patients of size; private rooms with Hillrom Smartbeds; lift systems for secure and safe patient movement; a wound care center; respiratory care; an additional emergency department room; and a new CT building with state-of-the-art technology.

Fairfax is a small community -- 1,324 people in July of 2020, and a little more than 1,100 now, according to an estimate. It has been the site of significant events in U.S. history -- both the beautiful and the despicable. But now it's barely hanging on and looking for every possible advantage. Perhaps Martin Scorsese's new movie will bring waves of tourists, but that's still a dream.

With the new hospital expansion, residents of the area have been able to receive accessible and high-quality treatments in their own community. Additionally, there has been a substantial increase in patients from Osage County, the Tulsa area and beyond that travel to Fairfax for treatment.

Employee numbers have more than doubled. Approxi-



Rural Wellness Fairfax hospital's new CT building includes a new CT and lift system. The 128-slice FujiFilm Scenaria CT is capable of scanning and serving patients of size or with limited mobility. COURTESY

mately 115 staff now serve at Rural Wellness Fairfax Hospital, up from 50 just over two years ago.

"Critical access hospitals provide the backbone of the primary care infrastructure in rural Oklahoma and are a key compo-

ment of the rural health safety net," Dr. Pusey said.

There is reportedly more to come. There are contracts underway to bolster the hospital's cardiology program through services like echocardiograms. Avem Health Partners, which

manages the hospital, is also pursuing additional lab testing capabilities to further serve and treat patients in the area and beyond.

"This continued growth is part of Dr. Pusey's and Avem Health Partners' vision to care

for their rural neighbors, revitalize an essential critical access hospital, and elevate its surrounding communities to create Fairfax as a destination for quality healthcare. And, we are just getting started," said Jeff Hill, CEO of Avem Health Partners.