It’s No Longer Just a Vision

The first quarter of 2017 quickly passed us by and excitement around the construction of the Shawn Jenkins Children’s Hospital and the Pearl Tourville Women’s Pavilion continues to fill the air at MUSC. In late 2016, our construction crew began driving 1,300 pilings deep in the ground. The last piling went in at the end of March, which signaled the beginning of the steel erection phase, when the steel and a second crane arrived.

This construction phase will be a major focus for our construction team during the spring, summer and fall of 2017 with anticipated completion by December 2017. Once completed, we will celebrate with a topping out ceremony. Imagining what’s possible is becoming a reality as we watch our skyline change and the projected completion date of 2019 does not seem so far away.

In addition to construction, the architects, physicians, nurses and parents recently met to begin planning an outdoor play area that will be located on a rooftop of the new hospital. In an exercise to garner excitement about this space, this team was charged with describing what they would want a patient, a family member, or a care provider to feel when entering this space.

Words like “family, healing, reflection” came to mind which motivated the group to roll up their sleeves and begin designing the aesthetics and functionality of the space. It was no easy task, but over the next few days, this outdoor space came to life.

“The fact that we used ‘feelings’ to guide our work was no accident,” said Robin Mutz, the hospital’s executive nursing director. “This space has a specific purpose—to leverage feelings of peace, happiness and fun into better patient outcomes.”

The area will also represent family-centered care at its very best. It will provide a place where children can enjoy fresh air, sunshine and the sights, sounds and scents of the surrounding saltmarsh and Charleston landscape, in a safe and secure setting.

The hospital’s Child Life team will also leverage the area’s therapeutic potential with activities designed to promote physical movement, intellectual stimulation and emotional well-being, all of which play an important role in the healing process.

“The idea is to create normal childhood experiences for patients who wouldn’t normally have that in a hospital setting,” said Dr. Mark Scheurer, Chief Medical Officer of the Children’s Hospital. “We hope this will add a whole new dimension to their care, in a fun and uniquely therapeutic way.”

The Shawn Jenkins Children’s Hospital and Pearl Tourville Women’s Pavilion is no longer just a vision of what children and women at MUSC will experience in the very near future. It is a reality, and the dedicated professionals and their community partners are making it so. To view our progress on a daily basis, visit imagine.musckids.org/hospital/live-cam.