



## Chambersburg Hospital plans to expand in 2010

By **MARCUS RAUHUT** Staff writer

Chambersburg Hospital hopes to break ground next year for its building expansion project.

Summit Health President and CEO Norman Epstein said at the hospital's annual meeting Tuesday that the project to add private patient rooms could be "shovel-ready" by late spring.

Plans include two four-story towers to be attached to the north side of the hospital building, according to John Massimilla, vice president for administration and chief operating officer for Chambersburg Hospital. The project could go out to bid in the spring, he said.

Single-patient rooms are becoming the expected standard in health care today, according to Epstein.

An expansion project at Waynesboro Hospital, meanwhile, has been put on hold until 2015.

"The Waynesboro Hospital building project is planned for 2015. However, we are continuing to monitor economic conditions and health care reform issues that could potentially impact the scope of the project," said Melissa Dubrow, vice president of Allied Services, Waynesboro Hospital.

The impact of the economy and the anticipated

health care reform efforts were common themes in Epstein's presentation to community members.

Summit Health's expenses rose in fiscal year 2009, but so did revenue.

Revenues increased to \$371.6 million while expenses rose to \$335.2 million.

The 5.4 percent profit margin is slightly better than the benchmark for hospitals undergoing building projects, which is 5 percent, Epstein said.

"Are we weathering the downturn? We believe we are," he said.

Over the past 15 months, Summit Health has been working to reduce operating costs, including the elimination of 140 full-time equivalent positions at Chambersburg and Waynesboro hospitals through unfilled job openings or attrition. Epstein said this will not affect patient care.

Since 1989, Summit Health has seen an increase in outpatient volumes and a decrease in inpatient numbers, a trend Epstein expects will continue in the future.

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