

Stockley to open 54-bed facility

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A \$30 million facility at the Stockley Center near Georgetown will be opening later this month, changing the way the state's residents with developmental disabilities are cared for.

The Mary A. Coverdale Center will provide residential care for Stockley residents who need full-time medical treatment and also will provide temporary and respite care for dozens of other people with developmental disabilities.

"The building has a lot of new things to make life easier for the people who live and work there," said Charlotte Brown, director of residential services at Stockley.

Everything from new lift systems to state-of-the-art beds are designed with better patient care in mind, she said.

"We've got the best beds we could research and buy," she said.

In addition, the Stockley kitchen and laundry will be moved to the new building and will be air-conditioned -- a first in the center's history, Brown said.

Stockley opened in 1921 as an institution that provided residential care for those with cognitive and developmental disabilities. It was a time when both physicians and families felt the disabled were best cared for in institutions. At the peak in the 1970s, about 700 people lived in the wooded setting south of Georgetown.

But these days, most families care for people with disabilities in a home setting so fewer people live full-time at Stockley. Many who remain are severely disabled and require full-time medical care.

"This new 54-bed Intermediate Care Facility is specifically designed for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Some of the beds are for short-term, rehabilitative stays and some will provide medical care for individuals who live at home but whose families need brief periods of respite care," said Marianne Smith, former state director of Developmental Disabilities Services.

These days, 85 people live on the Stockley campus. Of those, 45 live in the current medical care facility. The rest live in cottages on the grounds.

Brown said once the new facility is open -- sometime later this month -- the old medical care building will be torn down. It dates to the 1950s, she said.

Besides offering care to the severely disabled, the new center will provide an outpatient clinic for people who don't live on the grounds, she said.

The site of the old building will be converted into a parking lot, she said.

The new center, dedicated last week, is named for Gov. Ruth Ann Minner's late mother. Coverdale volunteered as a foster grandmother at the center in the 1970s.

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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