



WVU Eye Institute will be game-changer for vision care in West Virginia

January 30, 2025

WVU Medicine's plan to build a new \$233 million WVU Eye Institute is great news for a state facing significant medical challenges, particularly regarding vision care for many of its 1.7 million residents.

The new facility will feature 102 exam rooms and 44 testing rooms, a substantial increase from the current Eye Institute's 60 exam rooms and 13 testing rooms. This expansion will not only enhance services to better meet patient needs, but will also help recruit more high-quality providers.

WVU Eye Institute Executive Chair Dr. Thomas Mauger emphasized the significance of the new facility during last Friday's groundbreaking ceremony.

"I'm so excited, and I'll be even happier when we complete the project in 30 months," Mauger said. "We have baby boomers who are getting older and having more problems, and that's creating an enormous amount of eye care needs right now — from simple things like cataracts to more complex things we do every day like retinal detachments and macular degeneration."

That's why the new WVU Eye Institute is critical to the eye health of thousands of the state's aging residents.

"It's created a wave of patients that we've been trying to take care of in our current facility. ... Even though we're using every square inch of our space, we don't have enough room to hire more doctors to take care of the patients who want to see us," Mauger said.

WVU Health Sciences Chancellor and Executive Dean Dr. Clay Marsh praised the Eye Institute's leadership and others involved in moving forward with the new facility.

"If you look at West Virginia, we have the worst vision and eye health in the country," Marsh said. "One out of every 30 West Virginians needs help in some way, shape or form. Now, we're much better positioned to deliver. The impact of chronic diseases and an aging population with obesity, hypertension and diabetes is one that we need to embrace — not only at the level of the Eye Institute but at the level of WVU Medicine. Our commitment is to provide the best health care to our population and eventually ... to improve the health of our population."

"We are here to serve you, and we're now in a position where we can serve you better, and we appreciate the great support and help."

The new WVU Eye Institute is just the latest example of WVU Medicine and West Virginia University stepping up to provide critical health care services to Mountain State residents.

We applaud their forward-thinking approach and commitment to delivering high-quality health care.