

Rockdale Citizen

Orthopedic surgery: Hospital will shift funds to upgrade

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CONYERS - Rockdale Medical Center administrators said they will spend \$480,000 to upgrade equipment in the orthopedic surgical area, which was identified as one of the most popular services provided at the hospital.

Most of the money for the improvements will come from other capital expenditure items previously approved by the RMC Board of Directors and Rockdale County Hospital Authority. The two boards also approved \$193,534 in new funding to complete the project.

Mike Potter, chief executive officer with RMC, said the nature of orthopedics makes it one of the most in-demand services provided by the hospital. From traffic accident victims coming in from the emergency department to patients undergoing corrective surgery in their joints or spine, the orthopedics surgical center gets a lot of use, he said.

"The equipment there is 10 to 15 years old, and though the equipment still works and people are used to using that equipment, you're looking at resolution video with 10-year-old technology compared to what we see that is out there now," Potter said. "We need to bring the equipment up to standards today to help doctors who use the (orthopedic) services here to do so more efficiently and effectively."

All of the items to be purchased are to be used in orthopedic surgical procedures. The largest expenditures will be a fracture table for surgery, estimated to cost \$150,000, and arthroscopic video equipment that should cost \$146,555. Power equipment and a camera for microscopic spinal surgery also were on the list of items.

The money used for the orthopedic surgery equipment will come from projects previously approved for capital expenditures, including the renovation of office space and upgrading computer systems in the hospital, Potter said.

RMC administrators reduced the scope of work in two areas that accounted for \$126,000. They took money from the renovation of administrative and physician office spaces and refurbishment of the day surgery area.

Replacement of network switches and installation of new hardware and transmitters throughout the hospital also were put on hold until the next fiscal year to make up the remainder of funding.

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