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## **DiGiorgio Associates and McCarty Associates awarded contract to build 80,500 s/f Community Health Connections facility**

November 10, 2011 - Spotlights

Community Health Connections (CHC) was awarded a grant for a major addition/renovation to an existing professional office building located on the HealthAlliance Hospital Burbank Campus adjacent to their current location. DiGiorgio Associates Inc. (DAI) was selected as the architect and McCarty Associates, Inc. was selected as the project manager.

The new addition, which houses the family clinic, dental clinic and administration, enables CHC to use the latest planning concepts and principles to improve patient care and enable staff efficiencies. This project consists of the renovation of 20,000 s/f within the professional office building and 60,500 s/f of new construction. The new 80,500 s/f community health center will offer providers twice the amount of space that they currently have to serve the patients of central and western Mass. and provide room for growth.

In addition to providing staff and users with increased space, DAI designed the new facility to make the most efficient use of space and provide better workflow for staff and patients which results in increased productivity. Although CHC is not seeking LEED certification for this project, DAI worked with an energy consultant to provide sustainable design features on the building envelope and mechanical and electrical systems to provide an energy efficient facility. These systems are designed to produce significantly lower operating costs.

Design on the new facility began in May 2010. Construction started in October 2010, steel was set in February 2011 and the new facility is due to be complete and ready for occupancy in winter 2012. This patient centered healthcare home provides many needed services to the community including preventative and primary health care, chronic disease management, women's health services and behavioral medicine. Some of the aspects of the medical home model include a dual corridor system for increased patient privacy, large exam rooms to accommodate group education or caregivers and universal design so that access points, exam rooms and nurse's stations are in the same place within each pod. In addition, CHC is unique in that it is a teaching center in partnership with UMass., with residency programs in family medicine and dentistry. These program requirements were seamlessly integrated within departments to promote the residency visibility.

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