

## March 21, 2008 - Uniontown Hospital Dedicates New Lab

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Uniontown hospital dedicates new lab

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The Uniontown Hospital dedicated its cardiovascular lab Thursday with a tour and a special thanks to U.S. Rep. John Murtha. Ben Wright, chairman of the hospital's board of directors, said yesterday's media conference represented another advancement in the delivery of cardiac care services at the hospital for the residents of Fayette County with the cardiovascular lab.

The lab is adjacent to the hospital's existing cath lab and offers techniques to do cardiovascular procedures once only done in operating rooms.

Josef Vanek, M.D., a vascular surgeon and president-elect of the hospital's medical staff, said the equipment includes a digital-image intensifier, which is able to view larger areas on the body and "can view a patient from head to toe, where the old machine could only view from above the waist."

The other piece of machinery offers digital subtraction, which eliminates solid tissues like bones from the images so technicians and doctors can see only what they need and less radioactive dye is needed.

"It also measures the size of blood vessels," Vanek said. Paul Bacharach, president and CEO of The Uniontown Hospital, said the services of the two labs will be a great benefit to the county, which is high in obesity, smokers and diabetes.

"The reason the cath lab is here is because this is where the heart disease is," Bacharach said, adding that the lack of resident transportation makes traveling to Pittsburgh hospitals difficult.

"This is very gratifying to me," Murtha said, adding that many hospitals, including military hospitals, have been behind in gaining technology. He said it makes him feel good to put federal money into centers. "They (the hospital board) showed me how important it is to put money in these programs."

Wright thanked Murtha for his efforts to obtain \$1 million in grants to help with the cost. He said that two labs to deal with prevention and intervention care with cardiovascular issues is better than one. "It has enhanced our ability to serve our constituents," Wright said.

Wright said the hospital recently celebrated its 10th anniversary of one cath lab, which has performed more than 5,000 catheterization and more than 1,000 interventional procedures, which includes angioplasty procedures and artery blockage.

Veerunna Yadagani, M.D., medical director of the cath lab, said guidelines of the American College of Cardiology state that the time from when a patient first enters the emergency room to when they receive an angioplasty should not exceed 90 minutes.

"I don't think 50 percent of hospitals meet that criteria," Yadagani said, adding that factors like distance and traffic in big-city hospitals contribute to that, but in a hospital like Uniontown, with technicians and doctors living close to the hospital, their response time is faster.

"The small communities make it better," Yadagani said, adding that the staff should feel proud of its accomplishments. "Our fastest door-to-balloon time was 46 minutes."

For more information , visit [www.uniontownhospital.org](http://www.uniontownhospital.org).