

New \$12M Substance Use Treatment Center Coming to South Bronx Public Hospital

ETHAN GERINGER-SAMETH



The city's public hospital network is building a new substance use treatment center at Lincoln Hospital in the South Bronx to consolidate an array of services diffused throughout the community.

The board of New York City Health + Hospitals approved a \$12.3 million contract on Thursday with Midtown-based construction firm Barr & Barr to develop a new 12,000-square-foot substance use disorder and recovery center at the hospital, creating a full-service acute treatment and maintenance program. The development will improve the continuity of treatment for patients and provide more access to medication and other medical services.

The South Bronx and East Harlem have for years had the highest overdose rates in the city, with Black residents over 55 disproportionately dying from excessive drug use. Lincoln Hospital's Family Recovery Center, which serves pregnant women, children and adolescents, is currently located offsite more than a mile away from the main campus at H+H's Gotham Health, Belvis location. The building lacks a pharmacy, forcing the large number of patients who take medication as part of their treatment to go elsewhere. The building also has no lab, a roadblock for patients in court-ordered treatment, where drug testing is required.

The project, which is expected to take three years, would bring the system's family substance use clinic, its recovery center, an emergency department service for people with addiction and an intervention and referral service under one roof. Construction is set to begin in July.

The new center will have exam and consult rooms, spaces for child care, acupuncture and a medication room. It will also contain an administrative office and conference room and a staff lounge. The space currently houses infection control and community outreach programs, along with patient records, all of which will be moved.

The new center will be funded by H+H's expense budget, city capital dollars from the Bronx Borough President Venessa Gibson's office and money from the state Assembly. The firm was selected through competitive bidding to design and build the new center, which involves a gut renovation on Lincoln Hospital's 6th floor. Barr & Barr holds other health care contracts, including a \$154 million modernization project at Maimonides Medical Center.