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**Twenty-Bed Meritus Health Regional Infection Containment Wing Completed in Four Months**

HAGERSTOWN – Meritus Medical Center’s new 2 South Regional Infection Containment Wing was recently completed in only 120 days, on time and on budget. Patients are already receiving treatment in the new care unit.

“It’s the first of its kind in the region and was completed in record time!” says Maulik Joshi, president and CEO of Meritus Health. “We requested an emergency certificate of need from the state for a permanent facility that could not only support the emergent work during the COVID-19 pandemic, but adapt to the changing, future needs of our community.”

The day after the Maryland Health Care Commission gave the approval to proceed, Matthei & Colin Associates and Gilbane Building Company were asked to join the team. The new space would need to be a negative pressure, contained area, providing 20 ventilator capable patient beds for medical/surgical care. For green purposes, an energy recovery unit would need to be installed to conserve energy.

“Eight days after our initial call, our team was moving soil and digging foundations,” says Gary Orton, vice president and director of health care for Gilbane Building Company’s Mid-Atlantic division. “A project like this would typically take more than a year to conceptualize, design and build, but we didn’t have that kind of time.”

After six weeks, the steel frame was erected and by two months, the space was weather tight. Orton explains that the Gilbane team adhered to strict safety protocols to keep visitors, employees and workers safe throughout the construction.

“In a normal, non-pandemic environment, this would have been a challenging building timeline, but with the presence of COVID-19, labor and material procurement produced issues and 90 percent of communications, including punch lists, owner meetings and walk-throughs, had to be done virtually,” says Orton.

“The schedule was met through the dedication and cooperation of the entire team, including county and state authorities,” says William Heun, lead architect for the project and partner with Matthei & Colin Associates, LLC. “We reinvented decision making and certification processes to recognize the realities of working remotely and serving the schedule to bring the facility online as quickly as possible for the community.”

A time lapse video of the 120 days of construction is available for viewing at <https://www.meritushealth.com/about-us/2-south-regional-infection-containment-wing/>