Local Leaders Announce Expansion of UHealth and Collaboration to Ease Traffic in Doral

Working with municipal leaders from Miami-Dade County and Doral, a new UHealth facility will also offer fast connections to the Metrorail to ease traffic.

(From left) Stuart Miller, University trustee and chair of UHealth Board of Directors; President Julio Frenk; City of Doral Mayor Juan Carlos Bermudez; Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava; Armando Codina of Codina Partners; UHealth Chief Operating Officer Dr. Dipen Parekh; and Manny Kadre, vice chair of University Board of Trustees.
Leaders from the University of Miami joined local officials from Doral and Miami-Dade County on Friday to celebrate the start of a thriving partnership that will make health care more accessible in the burgeoning Doral area.

University President Julio Frenk and UHealth Chief Operating Officer Dipen Parekh, M.D., were flanked by Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, Doral Mayor Juan Carlos Bermudez, and developer Armando Codina to announce plans for a transportation solution that will allow patients, residents, and employees to take a trolley from the Palmetto Metrorail station to the new UHealth at Doral medical facility, which is being built inside the mixed-use development of Downtown Doral.

Slated to open in late 2024, the six-story, 150,000-square-foot UHealth at Doral facility will offer a range of health care services.

Last week, UHealth opened an 18,000 square foot satellite facility on the first floor of an existing building in Downtown Doral, at 8333 NW 53rd St. It now offers cancer
services through the nationally ranked Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center and urology services from physicians in the Desai Sethi Urology Institute. In late 2024, UHealth will open a much larger, six-story, 150,000-square-foot facility next door, modeled after the health system’s flagship Lennar Foundation Medical Center in Coral Gables. The new state-of-the-art UHealth at Doral facility will offer a range of health care services in addition to oncology and urology, including primary care, cardiology, neurology, and ophthalmology through the No. 1 ranked Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

“Launching this first phase of our presence solidifies our footprint in Doral,” said President Frenk, during a news conference at the Doral Government Center, with construction trucks and cranes building the new UHealth facility behind him. “The new facility, coupled with our current satellite location, will allow UHealth to bring preeminent care to the rapidly growing Doral community of more than 81,000 residents and will serve as a western hub for our expanding network of ambulatory services.”

The new facility reflects the University’s strategy to offer health care closer to patients.
The new UHealth at Doral facility will be ideally situated for both patients and employees to hop on the trolley outside its doors take a short ride to the Palmetto stop on the Metrorail, allowing them to travel home or to the University’s main medical campus.

As part of this collaboration, Miami-Dade County is devoting $7.7 million to widen Northwest 84th Avenue from Northwest 58th Street to Northwest 74th Street. This means the two-lane road will soon become four lanes to accommodate a bus-only lane on each side that will be used by two trolleys, donated by Codina Partners and operated by the City of Doral.

UHealth at Doral will be modeled after the health system’s flagship Lennar Foundation Medical Center in Coral Gables.

“We are creating easy and reliable access to jobs, to medicine and to community services and we are doing it so that all of our county residents will be able to thrive now and well into the future,” Levine Cava said. “It is a perfect example of collaboration that I hope will be replicated throughout the
county.”

But opening the new UHealth at Doral also represents part of the University’s larger strategy to offer health care closer to their patients, said Dr. Parekh. Just two weeks ago, the health system broke ground on what will be its largest ambulatory site, UHealth at SoLé Mia in North Miami.

“It is our mission to make access to academic-based health care easier across South Florida by providing multispecialty, academic medical services to patients in the same neighborhoods where they live and work,” Dr. Parekh said. “UHealth at Doral will be a health care destination focused on healing, wellness and prevention of disease and illness. It will set the standard for world-class health care in this community and in the surrounding neighborhoods.”

Manny Kadre, vice chair of the University’s Board of Trustees, and a member of the UHealth Board of Directors, said the new facility will offer UHealth physicians another outlet to improve the level of care in Miami-Dade County.

The facility will be situated next to the trolley and a short ride to the Palmetto
Metrorail stop, making travel convenient for both patients and employees.

“This is a very underserved area in health care, and since we are the only academic health care system in South Florida, it will not only serve the area well, but give people the opportunity to benefit from our magnificent physicians and staff,” he said. “Everyone talks about how great the Lennar Center is, and this will be a state-of-the-art twin of that facility, in a city that is growing at the highest clip.”

To better serve its swelling population, the city of Doral incorporated in 2003. Codina saw that as an opportunity to improve the community west of Miami’s downtown core, and shortly after, he shared his vision for the development of Downtown Doral with Bermudez. The newly elected mayor agreed it would be ideal and supported the development. Today, Doral continues to draw new residents. But as the city flourished with Codina’s Downtown Doral, it also spurred more traffic, so the new affordable mass transit options will help ease that tension.

“This [development] will go down as one of the most important things that will happen to Doral,” Codina said. “And UHealth coming here with transit will take this to another level.”