



## **Two-story, 72-foot Tall Bridge to be Lowered into Permanent Position at WellStar Kennestone Hospital on March 23**

*Bridge will provide access from new Emergency Department to main hospital campus*

(MARIETTA, Ga. – March 22, 2019) – WellStar announced today that a two-story, 72.5-foot, 128-ton bridge will be lifted from its temporary supports, rotated 90 degrees and lowered into permanent position on March 23. The bridge will provide access from WellStar Kennestone Hospital to the hospital's new Emergency Department (ED) located in "the triangle" between Cherokee, Church and Cherry Streets.

"The design of the 129.5 long bridge was inspired by local architecture in combination with the surrounding buildings on the WellStar Kennestone campus, said Mary Chatman, WellStar senior vice president and president of WellStar Kennestone Hospital. "The bridge will serve as a gateway to the City of Marietta, while allowing WellStar to continue providing world-class healthcare to the residents and visitors of Marietta and beyond."

Construction of the state-of-the-art, four-story ED by Brasfield & Gorrie began in February 2018 and is expected to open to the public in the spring of 2020. The 162,825 square foot, \$126 million world-class facility will increase capacity and access for incoming patients and include technology that will allow physicians to treat emergency room patients more efficiently.

"This innovative approach to bridge installation means a shorter closure period for local roads, which is in the best interest of public safety," said Brasfield & Gorrie Vice President and Division Manager Reed Weigle. "The project also has personal meaning for many of our team members, who have relied on the expertise of Kennestone and other WellStar hospitals for birth, surgeries and other major life events. We are grateful for our longstanding relationship with WellStar."

The existing ED, designed to treat 60,000 patients a year, has been serving the surrounding community for nearly 50 years. The ED currently provides healthcare to more than 142,000 people annually, seeing more patients than any other hospital in Georgia and currently ranked fifth in the nation the number of patients treated.

Kennestone Hospital's new ED will accommodate up to 185,000 patients in the initial phase and up to 220,000 annually upon completion. Technological advancements will include four CT scan machines that will be used solely for emergency patients. The ER will also have its own MRI, ultrasound and X-ray departments, instead of having to share equipment with the rest of the hospital.

As the only Trauma Network in the state, a major feature of the facility will be improved access for cars and ambulances delivering patients daily. The design will rely on major, high-traffic city roads, rather than local neighborhood streets. Five separate vehicular access points, two for emergency vehicles and three for civilians, will separate ambulance traffic from walk-in patients.

Additional features unique to the modernized facility include a dedicated area on the second floor for treating patients with behavioral health needs and the ability to expand medical services into the parking lot to treat mass casualties, if needed. In the event of a hazardous material spill, tents would be erected outside to decontaminate patients before moving them into the ED.

Construction of the ED is being funded through a combination of bonds, capital funds and donations from the community.

### **About WellStar Health System**

WellStar Health System, the largest health system in Georgia, is known nationally for its innovative care models, focused on improving quality and access to healthcare. WellStar consists of WellStar Medical Group, 240 medical office locations, outpatient centers, health parks, a pediatric center, nursing centers, hospice, homecare, as well as 11 hospitals: WellStar Atlanta Medical Center, WellStar Atlanta Medical Center South, WellStar Kennestone Regional Medical Center (anchored by WellStar Kennestone Hospital), WellStar West Georgia Medical Center, and WellStar Cobb, Douglas, North Fulton, Paulding, Spalding Regional, Sylvan Grove and Windy Hill hospitals. As a not-for-profit, WellStar continues to reinvest in the health of the communities it serves with new technologies and treatments. For more information, visit [wellstar.org](http://wellstar.org).