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Babcock Ranch, Lee Health bring back the hometown family doctor

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ADVERTORIAL



Top: The Babcock Ranch Health & Wellness Center anchors the east side of Founder's Square. Middle Left: Lee Health will offer exercise classes as part of the Health & Wellness memberships available to Babcock Ranch residents and neighbors from surrounding areas. Middle Right: Fitness is fun for the whole family at Babcock Ranch. Above Left: Healthy living is part of the Babcock Ranch lifestyle. Above Right: Town plans include 50 miles of trails and pathways.

"The doctor will see you."



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Babcock Ranch has partnered with Lee Health to bring family doctors and other medical services to America's first solar city. The health system will occupy 21,000 square feet in the town's two-story health and wellness center, currently under construction in Founder's Square. Lee Health will operate wellness services and fitness facilities and provide family physicians, specialists and telemedicine services through Lee Physician Group.

"Health and wellness have been one of the core values since the town's inception," said Syd Kitson, Chairman and CEO of Kitson & Partners, which is developing the 18,000-acre sustainable community just northeast of Fort Myers off State Road 31. "This agreement with Lee Health complements everything we're doing at Babcock Ranch to promote community-wide health and a true hometown experience. There's no need to travel offsite – residents can literally walk, ride their bicycle or use our autonomous shuttle to visit the doctor."



In April, Lee Health will begin offering an array of health and wellness services, including group and individual exercise classes, Pilates, mind and body programs, massage and physical therapy to both town residents and neighbors from surrounding communities. Primary care physicians and specialists will be available beginning this summer. The health system has first rights to provide emergency medicine, behavioral health, and urological and surgical services in Babcock Ranch for the next 15 years.



“We are excited to be the health and wellness partner at Babcock Ranch,” said Dr. Larry Antonucci, President and CEO of Lee Health. “We have been entrusted with providing the care for residents of a brand-new community, which is a truly unique opportunity. As Babcock Ranch grows, we will continue to meet the healthcare needs of the community, just as we have done for more than a century in other Southwest Florida communities.”

Second- and third-year Lee Health residents from Florida State University’s College of Medicine will staff the center’s six exam rooms, according to Dr. Gary Goforth, who oversees the hospital’s residency program.



“This is an exciting opportunity for Lee Health, our residency program, and residents of Babcock Ranch and surrounding areas,” said Goforth. “Our three-year residency program trains family physicians who can provide the full range of services for patients of all ages.”

“This supports Lee Health’s strategic priorities to advance community health by providing prevention and wellness services in a new growth sector of Southwest Florida that currently has limited access to care close to home,” said Dave Cato, Chief of Outpatient Services. “These services will also be available to residents in the area surrounding Babcock Ranch.”

Spanning the entire east side of Founder’s Square – the initial phase of Babcock Ranch’s lakefront downtown district – the 26,400-square-foot health and wellness center offers state-of-the-art, energy-efficient cardio and strength-training equipment, a multi-use half court, and a six-lane saltwater pool for competitive swimming and member exercise classes.

Medical residents have already visited Babcock Ranch, and several are talking about opening private practices, Goforth said. “This is an opportunity for our residents to get involved in a new community and practice lifestyle medicine,” he said. “Babcock Ranch is really organized around that thought with its trails, a restaurant serving healthy foods, and the idea of giving people a place to live and to live healthy. Having the residency program at Babcock Ranch is a great partnership.”

Providing on-site healthcare is part of Babcock Ranch’s emphasis on community health and wellness – an extension of a master plan that encourages walking and biking, clean energy and a mindful connection with nature. More than 50 percent of the town’s footprint is set aside for greenways, parks and lakes, creating an environment for residents to connect with nature. With lakes, blueways and 50 miles of planned trails, Babcock Ranch is setting the standard for sustainable development in Southwest Florida – and the country.

The health and wellness center is the final building planned in Founder’s Square, where residents and the public shop for farm-fresh produce and sundries at Slater’s Goods and Provisions and dine on a farm-to-table menu at Table & Tap restaurant. Many start their days with coffee at Square Scoops Coffee & Creamery, which is also a popular destination for families picking up their students from Babcock Neighborhood School. Outdoor enthusiasts can rent kayaks and trail bikes at Curry Creek Outfitters and learn more about the town’s dedication to the environment and its homes in the Discovery Center at Woodlea Hall. A sprawling downtown park offers a lakefront bandshell, boardwalk, covered pavilions, and charging stations for electronics – and electric vehicles.

Babcock Ranch’s seven homebuilders offer more than 50 home designs, including twin villas, cottages, single-family executive, manor and custom homes featuring one- and two-story designs, two to six bedrooms, and 1,400 to 4,761 square feet of living space. Priced from the \$190,000s, homes appeal to young millennials, families, empty nesters and retirees alike. Homes are built to Florida Green Building Coalition standards, emphasizing energy and water conservation, and offer a full gigabyte of fiber-optic connectivity.

More than 30 model and move-in ready homes are now open or under construction by Castle Harbour Homes, Florida Lifestyle Homes, Fox Premier Builders, Homes by Towne, Lennar, Pulte and Stock Classic Homes. Many models are open for viewing daily.

For more information about Southwest Florida’s new hometown, visit the Discovery Center at 42850 Crescent Loop in Babcock Ranch, call 877-709-6620, or visit www.BabcockRanch.com. †