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# Le Bonheur Children's Hospital announces \$95.4M expansion

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Le Bonheur Children's Hospital is about to undertake its largest project since completing its current building in 2010.

The hospital is planning a \$95.4 million, four-story expansion, which will encompass 129,000 square feet of construction and renovation work. The addition will extend the west side of the hospital to the sidewalk of Dunlap Street, between Poplar and Washington Avenues.

"This addition will help us make a generational difference in the care provided to children of the Mid-South and beyond," [Michael Wiggins](#), Le Bonheur president and CEO, said in a press release. "This kind of momentum will allow Le Bonheur to continue attracting and retaining the best physicians and caregivers to achieve our mission of providing excellent health care for children, teaching the next generation of pediatric experts, pursuing scientific discovery, and serving children in their communities. This will have an impact for decades to come."



LE BONHEUR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL  
Rendering of the \$95 million expansion announced by Le Bonheur Children's Hospital in July 2021.

The plans involve enlarging the cardiovascular and neonatal floors, along with the surgery recovery area and main floor.

It will bring 14 new beds and eight surgical recovery bays to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) — currently there are 60 beds — and strengthen the hospital's Heart Institute, giving it a 31-bed, dedicated cardiovascular unit.

The moves come as Le Bonheur's Heart Institute have seen significant growth and demand. The Heart Institute has added 21 new cardiologists since 2015, and it's recognized as a top program by U.S. News and World Report.

The hospital's NICU, meanwhile, has seen high levels of demand during the pandemic, with occupancy rates increasing across the country, according to the release. In 2020, Le Bonheur's NICU cared for 525 babies.

Le Bonheur first announced plans to expand the Heart Institute in 2019, with the intention to add the two-story, 31-bed, dedicated cardiovascular unit. The cost, at the time, was \$37.6 million, and it would have brought 70,500 square feet to the hospital's footprint.

That expansion, however, was put on hold by the COVID-19 pandemic. Le Bonheur is now returning to it, and the new announcement adds two stories, significant square footage, and millions of dollars in investment to that initial plan.

**John Klyce**

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