An overview of the year ahead in local business and industry.
Achieving benchmarks in 2017
Bristol Hospital, Hartford HealthCare look to expand services

Local hospitals are building on last year’s successes in health care services as they look to initiatives for 2017.

“We’re very pleased with our accomplishments this last year and how they’ve set us up for the future,” said Lucille Janatka, Hartford HealthCare senior vice president and president of the Hartford HealthCare Central Region, which includes the Hospital of Central Connecticut in New Britain. “We’re providing access in communities around us, not just having everything in New Britain.”

Kurt Barwis, president and CEO of Bristol Hospital, said, “We will continue to achieve national quality benchmarks, like the one we just reached for infectious disease control. And we’re expanding our specialty programs, like our cancer programs and orthopedic joint program.”

Both hospital leaders said they have entered 2017 by growing services, reaching out to underserved communities, enabling residents to get health care nearer where they live, and helping older patients stay in their homes while receiving services.

“We have been in expansion mode in Bristol with our family health center and we continue to forge ahead with physical therapy, wound care urology and primary care,” Janatka said, adding that new centers in Plainville and Southington are also open. “It’s somewhat new, but we’re very optimistic about growth in that area. We offer specific services, very patient centered, very community focused services.”

Barwis said Bristol Hospital has also expanded into Plainville and Southington with obstetrics and gynecology, cardiology, and cardiology.

“We’re looking for ways to really cover our service areas and take care of all our patients where they live,” he said. “We’re providing access throughout communities so people don’t have to go far for services.”

Janatka said services, including outpatient surgery and physical therapy, are being provided in other communities to enable residents, especially older ones, to stay in their homes.

“Interesting thing about us: As the population ages, people are living longer with these diseases and they need support,” she said. “One of the reasons we go out in community, providing home care and home care services is so people can stay in their homes, where they’re comfortable.”

Facility enhancement and building are large parts of plans for both hospitals.

Bristol Hospital is renovating its radiology department, building out its emergency department, and renovating surgical rooms.

“We’ve done a lot of work internally to get here. We can’t be as good as others. We have to be the best and the staff delivers in all we do,” Barwis said.

In addition to the growth in other communities, the biggest growth for Bristol Hospital is expected to take place on about 4 acres of Centre Square, where Barwis said he hopes that this year, people “will see a shovel in the ground.”

The hospital recently chose a developer for the ambulatory care center and hopes to have construction underway by 2018.

The Hospital of Central Connecticut New Britain campus is expanding further into Southington, and in the spring, a Neuroscience Institute is set to open. The new facility will focus on providing services for people with epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, strokes and other neurological conditions, Janatka said.

“There are not a lot of services for that around the state, particularly in our region,” she said. “We’re very excited about this.”

Both hospital leaders said that, while the growth of their facilities and services is great for people and employment, it’s the patients and families who matter most.

“We want them to know we are truly dedicated to their wellbeing. We not only focus on the patient, but the family. That’s our true north,” Janatka said.

“The culture of this place, the magnet status, that’s wonderful, but it’s taking care of our patients, that’s our priority,” Barwis said.