

Hospital's new wing opens

\$47M building houses facility's maternity and surgery services

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REDLANDS - The first babies delivered at Redlands Community Hospital's new wing were born about one hour apart.

The first baby, a boy named Kurtis, was born to mother Chenoa Compton, 17, of San Jacinto at 2:09 p.m. Thursday. Kurtis is Compton's first child.

Kurtis was followed by a baby girl who was born at 3:16 p.m. Mother Joy Markel of Banning had not yet decided on a name for the child - her second daughter - as of Friday morning.

"She's a good baby. She's been sleeping this whole time," Markel said.

Friday morning, hospital president Jim Holmes and Zachary Tucker, president of the hospital's foundation, presented gift baskets to the new babies. Kurtis received a collection of powder blue gifts and the baby girl's items came in pink.

The hospital's new Surgery and Maternity Services building is a three-story, 72,000-square-foot structure that was built at a cost of \$47 million, Holmes said.

The ground floor was designed to house the hospital's operating rooms while the second and third levels were built to be home to facilities for the care of infants and new mothers.

The second and third floors were up and running by Friday, and the new surgical facilities are expected to open today. About 200 babies are born at the hospital each month, and about one-tenth of newborns require treatment in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Holmes said.

In the new building, the Neo-natal Intensive Care Unit is equipped to treat 16 infants, up from 12 that could be cared for previously.

Other bonuses in the new facility are windows and more breathing space.

"I think nurses got a little claustrophobic. We were in a cramped-up space," patient care coordinator Rachel Garcia said. "It (the new facility) is a more, I think, family-friendly environment."

Friday, Tucker said the hospital's foundation received a pledge for a \$500,000 challenge grant from the Los Angeles-based Weingart Foundation. The money would be spent on medical equipment, but Tucker said the foundation has to raise \$3 million on its own to receive the money.

"This is another gift of the season, you could say," Tucker said.

The foundation already has collected about \$1.5 million for new technology, he said, noting that the Weingart donation would represent the largest private grant in the foundation's 26-year history.