

## QC to get its first hospital in November

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The Arizona Republic

The first hospital in the Queen Creek area is set to open this fall, officials of Banner Health have announced.

Banner Ironwood Medical Center, on Combs and Gantzel roads in Pinal County, will open Nov. 1.

The first phase for the 220,000-square-foot hospital calls for 36 beds, and Banner officials envision it ultimately expanding to 500 beds, spokeswoman Susan Gordon said.

"I think for us it's an opportunity to bring health care to a community that doesn't have it," Gordon said.

The hospital, which sits on unincorporated land in Pinal County, will serve approximately 80,000 San Tan Valley residents and 25,000 in Queen Creek. Currently, Queen Creek's nearest hospital is Gilbert Hospital, on Power Road south of Ray Road.

San Tan Valley residents often go to Mercy Gilbert Medical Center and Banner Baywood in Mesa, Pinal County Supervisor Bryan Martyn said.

Banner Ironwood has been years in the planning, Gordon said, because of growth around Queen Creek. Construction started in 2008, but an opening last fall was postponed due to the economic downturn.

The hospital will offer emergency, obstetrics, surgical and intensive-care services.

"This hospital will be a true community hospital," Gordon said.

Martyn, who led an effort to name San Tan Valley last year, called the hospital a "huge success" for the area.

"It definitely demonstrates Banner is committed to the community," Martyn said.

Deb Krmpotic has been named as CEO. She most recently was chief nursing officer at Banner Baywood Medical Center in Mesa.

"I am excited about the opportunity to bring much needed health-care services to this portion of Pinal County," Krmpotic said.

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