

## **Cape Coral's Medical Industry Growing to Meet Market Demands**

Cape Coral, FL, Dec. 1, 2017 – Cape Coral is making rapid advances in the medical arena, with expansions in medical device makers and distributors, cancer research, assisted living and niche medical businesses. They join a vital medical environment led by Lee Health, which was recently ranked in the top 6 percent on *Forbes'* "America's Best Employers 2017," and has four health facilities in the city.

Cape Coral is experiencing robust growth in health care providers of all types seeking to capitalize on the growing needs of the expanding city in this critical sector. From regional facilities to renowned clinics and assisted living campuses, health-related businesses and medical offices are opening or expanding at a healthy clip in the largest city in Southwest Florida.

"Being the 10th largest city in Florida drives the need for additional medical-related services," notes City of Cape Coral Economic Development Manager Dana Brunett. "Considering we are only 50 percent built out to date, we see this need as ongoing and growing, due to our population growth."

### ***Lee Health Leading the Way***

A leader in health and wellness is Lee County's hospital system, Lee Health—the largest not-for-profit public health system in Florida and serves more than 1 million patients each year. In November, it became the first healthcare system in the United States to offer select menu items to patients, visitors and staff that are "Heart-Check certified" by the American Heart Association. "Leading the way for other health systems to pursue this certification also reinforces our vision of being a national leader for the advancement of health and healing," said Lee Health President & CEO Larry Antonucci, M.D., MBA.

The evolution of Lee Health from a small community hospital to a holistic, person-centered organized focused on being an optimal healing environment for its employees and patients is documented in the recent book, “Mindful Healthcare: Healthy Team, Healthy Business.”

In addition to Cape Coral Hospital—named one of the nation’s “most wired” hospitals for four consecutive years—it also operates the state-of-the-art Outpatient Center at Surfside, walk-in Convenient Care and Cape Coral Wellness Center, where popular wellness programs continue to grow to meet community demands.

### ***Ideal Location for Manufacturing and Distribution***

Several national and international medical device companies find Cape Coral an ideal location for U.S. sales, distribution or manufacturing.

Pro Med Instruments has been an international distributor of neurosurgical instruments for more than 20 years. Headquartered in Germany, it opened its U.S. subsidiary, based today in Cape Coral, in 2003. Its core products are cranial stabilization and retractor systems, and also distributes a wide range of accessories, customized products as well as a distinct selection of non-stick bipolar forceps.

The Taiwan-based Merits Health Products opened its U.S. division, Merits USA, in Cape Coral in 1995. It is the maker of high-quality power mobility chairs and scooters, manual chairs, motorized beds, patient aids and respiratory products. It operates a total of three plants in Taiwan and China, as well as two bicoastal U.S. warehouses, but has found its location at 730 NE 19th Place in Cape Coral an ideal location for selling products to the city’s expanding residential base.

A veteran in the medical device manufacturing field is S4J Manufacturing Services, Inc., established in 1965, and owned and operated today by second-generation family members. It

operated in New Jersey for 35 years, relocating in September 1999 to Cape Coral. Its facility is dedicated to producing ultra-precision components, reusable Luer lock connectors, quick connects, and adapters useful in an array of medical applications and equipment. With more than 1,000 customers worldwide, it typically sells direct to Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) of medical equipment and devices for biomedical and laboratory applications.

### ***Medical Services Cluster around Growing Population***

Gulf Coast Village, a Cape Coral landmark for 27 years, recently opened Palmview, a 128-unit assisted living and memory support facility on its campus. The 131,000-square-foot community is designed for adults aged 62 and older, with 80 assisted living and 48 memory care residences featuring one- and two-bedroom plans.

“The market certainly continues to telegraph to us that there’s a need for housing on a campus like Gulf Coast Village,” says Kevin Ahmadi, executive director of Gulf Coast Village. Palmview was built as part of a three-phase redevelopment project at Gulf Coast Village, and was designed with flexible space on the third floor. What is now memory care can be converted to skilled nursing if that need rises precipitously. “We’re positioned for tomorrow’s residents,” Ahmadi says.

The statewide Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute recently opened its newest Cape Coral facility, a combination of expanded patient care and clinical research. The 27,000-square-foot medical office offers 10 on-site physicians, 15 exam rooms and 75 chemotherapy chairs to better serve a growing patient base. The new center uses next-generation PET/CT imaging technology, providing highly advanced, detailed images. An extensive clinic research program is scheduled to soon begin at the center. This Cape Coral facility is located near the Lee County Regional VA Healthcare Center, which draws more than 1,000 patients daily and has exceeded its patient goals since opening about four years ago.

Florida Cancer Specialists was built in the Veterans Investment Zone, designated by the Cape Coral Economic Development Office to draw compatible medical, corporate and hospitality businesses. One component of this zone is Liberty Village, which will house a 131-bed assisted living facility and a 320-unit apartment complex with retail, is currently under construction.

Cape Coral is a magnet for expanding medical operations and businesses. Between 2000 and 2010, the population 65 years of age and older increased by 29 percent, based on the latest U.S. Census data available. The waterfront community, with 266 days of sunshine each year, consistently ranks in the top 10 as a great city for retirement by several surveys. At the same time, Cape Coral has grown exponentially, and is the fastest-growing metropolitan area in the nation, according to Moody's Analytics. Florida ranks No. 1 in the nation for retired military veterans, according to WalletHub. The average veteran is 42 to 45 years old upon retirement from service; an estimated 260,000 veterans live in Southwest Florida.

The medical industry target sectors that the Cape Coral Economic Development Office focuses on to continue raising services and opportunities for wellbeing in this city of 179,804 residents. Florida's economy is outpacing the rest of the country and is projected to continue to do so for the next three years. And the Cape Coral metro area is also projected to have the nation's highest rates of employment growth (3.83 percent) and output growth (6.82 percent), so "now is the time to get into the market," says Brunett. "If you're interested in the medical or corporate market, we have the space and the willingness to support new growth and jobs."

To learn more about incentives and opportunities for expanding or locating a medical or biotech firm in Cape Coral, contact us today.