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Elizabeth Fields holds her son, Thomas,

at Capital Health Medical Center-Hopewell. Fields had the last baby at Capital Health's Mercer Campus and was a new patient at Hopewell on opening day Sunday.

KEVIN COOK / FOR THE COURIER TIMES

# New Jersey hospital aims to reduce stress, attract Bucks patients

Capital Health's new medical center opened in Hopewell, N.J., on Sunday.

By **GEORGE MATTAR**  
STAFF WRITER

Thomas Fields' bright blue eyes stared at all the attention he got early Sunday at the new \$530 million Capital Health Medical Center-Hopewell in New Jersey.

Thomas, you see, was born only a few hours before and was posing with proud mom, Elizabeth Fields, for cameras and the media as the new hospital opened for business about 6 a.m. Sunday. He and his mother were among the first to arrive Sunday from the old campus in Trenton, about 15 minutes away. A large contingent of ambulances was lined up outside the hospital moving patients into the new facility.

Thomas was the last baby born at the 116-year-old Mercer Campus and the first to enter the new, state-of-the-art hospital, which

looks more like a five-star hotel than a medical center.

Elizabeth and her husband, Robert, have two other children, 8 and 2, both girls. Thomas weighed in at 7 pounds 2 ounces and is almost 21 inches long.

"This new hospital is beautiful. I love the new rooms. It sure is different than the old one. The staff has been great and it's nice to know our son is the last baby ever born at the old hospital and will be going home from the new one," Elizabeth Fields said from her bed, holding Thomas.

Earlier in the morning, about 6 a.m., ambulances started bringing patients from the Mercer Campus to the new hospital just off Interstate 95, minutes from the Scudder Falls

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KEVIN COOK / FOR THE COURIER-TIMES

Patients arrive at Capital Health Medical Center-Hopewell on opening day Sunday.

# Hospital

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Bridge. Between sips of coffee, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Larry DiSanto was busy checking his iPad for the 67 patients that would be coming in Sunday to new rooms.

"It's moving and opening day and we've been planning this move for two years. It is a major logistical move as each patient has different needs. We set up three different entrances, red, blue and green so they could be moved to their specific unit. This operation is not about speed, but rather safety and was not dependent on the weather, that's why you see the canopies at the entrances," said DiSanto adding the beautiful fall morning helped with the move.

Hospital officials are hoping the new campus will attract more patients from nearby Bucks County.

"We already have a good number of patients from Bucks County, but with our new

hospital and all it has to offer, we're hoping for more. A lot of patients have looked into us. We hope they come here not because it is a beautiful building, but because of all the high-tech medical services we provide," he said.

Entering the hospital, one is greeted by warm wood and tile, rather than a carpet. The bright morning sun poured in through the glass. Instead of a cafeteria, there is a bistro.

Generous artwork graces the walls and there is even a fireplace near one of the many nurse's stations.

DiSanto said the hospital's careful research showed that a warm environment and artwork play a major role in a patient's mood and recovery.

"We went for the least stressful environment we could provide for our patients, as well as our staff. This new hospital brings very little from the old Mercer Campus," he said. "The stress level goes down and if that happens, patients recover more quickly and our staff operates with the highest efficiency possible.

The hospital will employ

about 1,700, about 200 more than the old campus, DiSanto said.

One of the reasons for more employees is the roughly 25 registration kiosks throughout the hospital, which will eliminate long waits to check in.

And in the emergency room, there will be bedside registration, meaning a walk-in will get a bed almost immediately without being first asked what their insurance company is, he said.

Fields said the new patient rooms are more relaxing, brighter and larger than the old hospital. A comfortable couch was in her room, along with a wooden bassinet for Thomas.

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