

LPN center could move by year's end

BY KEVIN MERTZ
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MILTON — The Central Susquehanna LPN Career Center could be operating out of a new location by the end of 2021.

In October, Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) Executive Director Dr. Kevin Singer confirmed the organization was looking to relocate the center from its current Lewisburg location to an annex building near CSIU's main headquarters on Lawton Lane, Milton.

At the time, Singer noted CSIU employees working in the building would be shifting to telework or working out of CSIU's main building.

CSIU in October approved contracting HUNT Engineers, Architects and Surveyors, of Towanda, to provide engineering and architectural services, as well as project management, for a CSIU office reorganization.

The services were contracted at a cost not to exceed \$92,500, to be drawn from the

capital reserve budget.

CSIU Assistant Executive Director Dr. John Kurelja recently provided an update on the nursing center's planned move to the annex building.

"Of late, we've been meeting internally with the director of the LPN center... to determine what the space needs are," he said. "We've identified what those needs are."

He hopes the move of the LPN center to the annex building will be completed by December.

"We've certainly seen and heard stories about delays (in renovation and construction projects) due to COVID and manufacturing times," Kurelja noted.

"The most exciting part is, while COVID has been a significant challenge for everyone on the health front, it has provided us with the opportunity to work differently," he added. "(We can) reduce the footprint (of individuals working in office



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DR. JOHN KURELJA

space) so that we can bring the LPN center into our traditional footprint of square footage."

Kurelja believes the center will successfully be relocated.

"I'm confident that it's going to happen," he said. "We are really excited about having them closer to the main building, and the prox-

imity to the highway.

"It will be convenient for (students) to come to the center, and to grow the program."

Singer previously noted the importance of having the LPN center located in close proximity to the Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation (CSVT) project. The northern section of the highway is expected to be completed in 2022.

By relocating the center to the annex building, there's also room for expansion.

"Should there be a need, we have the space to grow, both in the (annex) and also with the land that we own in the cul-de-sac there," Kurelja said. "There's lots of opportunity to grow."

Both Kurelja and LPN center Director Dr. Timothy Campbell noted that the program has been continuing to operate through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Campbell said the center has been holding virtual classes and clinical exercises

since the onset of the pandemic in March.

"We had the opportunity to participate in a few clinical rotations in late summer," Campbell said. "Due to rising COVID cases, we are again totally online."

He noted that some students work in health care facilities and have provided care to COVID-19 patients. He said that's one reason why it's important for the school to hold virtual classes at this time.

"Our students have not had any direct care experience with COVID patients in their student roles," Campbell said.

"We have had several agencies reach out to see if we would be willing to participate in (COVID-19) vaccination clinics, which we are willing to do," he added. "(We) have not had any further communication related to specific dates."

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