

THE EAST HAMPTON STAR

SHINES FOR ALL

First Summer a Success at New E.R.



Durell Godfrey

Since its May 22 opening, the 22,000-square-foot Stony Brook East Hampton Emergency Department on Pantigo Place has “fundamentally changed the health care landscape,” receiving almost

5,000 visitors between the Memorial Day and Labor Day holiday weekends, a Stony Brook Southampton Hospital official said.

“As an emergency department, we’re prepared for anything and everything that comes through the doors,” Emily Mastaler, Stony Brook Southampton Hospital’s chief administrative officer, said last week, describing the facility as “a rare resource.” As one of just a few off-campus emergency facilities in New York State, the East Hampton Emergency Department is “a unique and rare opportunity,” she said, “and it has done exactly what everybody was hoping for.”

The emergency department, which is adjacent to the East Hampton Healthcare Foundation building, features advanced diagnostic technologies and lifesaving treatments including a dedicated resuscitation room; cardiac monitoring capabilities in every exam room; specialized fast-track treatment rooms for general, pediatric, obstetrics/gynecology, and ophthalmology patients; two isolation rooms; a comprehensive imaging center featuring advanced diagnostic technologies including M.R.I., CT scan, Ultrasound, and X- ray; an on-site ambulance for hospital transport, and eco-friendly elements including rooftop solar panels, a rain garden, and native plantings.

The facility operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, including holidays. Its imaging center is also open to patients, who can schedule appointments through Stony Brook Southampton Hospital.

The emergency department proved itself in its first 24 hours of operation when a life was saved there, Ms. Mastaler said. “It’s a broad need that comes in,” she said. “We’ve had folks with very critical issues — the team has absolutely saved lives. . . . Anything you’d anticipate coming in, we’re seeing come through.”

Not surprisingly, emergency medical personnel serving nearby hamlets and villages are pleased with the new facility, as it has pre-empted many trips to Stony Brook Southampton Hospital on a Montauk Highway clogged with summer traffic.

Brad Hughes of the Amagansett Ambulance Company is one such official. “Our transport times are way down now,” he said. Taking a patient to an emergency room “was way quicker, obviously, for all parties involved: the patient suffering a medical episode or trauma, to get them in front of a doctor or emergency room staff, but also for

volunteer staff,” who are now able to return to their district and to service much faster than when Stony Brook Southampton Hospital was the closest option.

“These are mostly volunteers,” Mr. Hughes said of his colleagues, “and it’s good to get the people back to enjoy the rest of their day, and not be tied up on a three-hour round trip.”

Turnaround time — the duration of a patient transport from the ambulance’s arrival at its destination to when the crew is cleared for another call — is greatly reduced with East Hampton’s new emergency department, said Mary Mott, the East Hampton Village Ambulance chief. “It’s always easy to get to [Stony Brook Southampton Hospital] with lights and sirens,” she said, “but to come back has always been the slow part. You come around the curve, traffic is backed up from the diner, it takes over an hour.” Now, she said, an entire call, from responding to an emergency to returning to service, can be completed in less time than it can take simply to return from Southampton. This is particularly evident between 5 and 11 a.m., she said, when Montauk Highway is choked by the “trade parade” of vehicles traveling east throughout the year. “It’s been terrific, from my perspective,” she said.

“The feedback I’ve received from our colleagues in the community has been ‘very quick and efficient transfer of patients,’ “ Ms. Mastaler confirmed. “Somebody in Montauk might be out of service for north of three hours” when transporting a patient to Stony Brook Southampton Hospital. “These folks are now able to transport a patient to an emergency room within 20 minutes.”

Ms. Mott compared statistics from the summer of 2025 with the prior summer. “In June 2024, we had 160 calls,” she said. “In June 2025, we had 102. I don’t believe we had less people calling 911, but this emergency room’s goal was to help people on the East End have an emergency room close by.”

The trend continued through the summer months. In July 2024, there were 177 calls, Ms. Mott said, but in 2025 there were 132. The statistics were closer for August — 155 in 2024 versus 142 in 2025 — but the three months collectively saw a drop in ambulance calls from 492 to 376. “I believe it had to do with the opening of the emergency room,” Ms. Mott said. “Does that mean less people are accessing 911, or more people are now also grateful that they can access it on their

own time, without calling an ambulance? There are still a lot of people who call an ambulance — these are calls of a serious nature — but people don't have to negotiate through traffic to get to Southampton.”

Even in Sag Harbor, where the majority of ambulance calls are routed to Stony Brook Southampton Hospital, the East Hampton Emergency Department “is definitely an improvement,” said Steve Hatfield of the Sag Harbor Volunteer Ambulance. “It cuts down on travel times, and we find that some people ask to go there — they’ve heard good things. It’s an option for us that we didn’t have before, when we only had one destination. I find our patients like to have a choice.”

“It fit the purpose and it fit the need” when a patient has been taken to the East Hampton Emergency Department, said Ed Downes of Sag Harbor Volunteer Ambulance.

The opening of the East Hampton Emergency Department “has created 11 additional beds of capacity for the South Fork, which is remarkable,” Ms. Mastaler said. Stony Brook Southampton Hospital has 21 emergency-room beds, or treatment areas in its emergency department, she said. “Naturally, this increase in our capacity is going to decompress service resources in Southampton, which is what we wanted to see. We’re very excited about that, because it means we can serve patients from the west more efficiently.”

We want to be able to serve people through emergency medicine as quickly as possible,” she said. “With this increased capacity, we didn’t add just additional capacity to the emergency room. We physically brought it to the doorstep of our community. You have immediate access regionally to an emergency room resource. With this increased capacity, we really are demonstrating leadership in emergency medicine at Stony Brook Southampton.”