

Parkview Hospital

Founded: 1878

Location: West Main and Webster Streets, Fort Wayne (1878); Hanna and Lewis Streets (1878–83); Barr Street and Washington Boulevard (1883–1916); 119 West Lewis Street (1917–53); 2200 Randalia Drive (1953– )

William H. Myers, a widely respected Fort Wayne surgeon, was the major force behind the founding of Fort Wayne City Hospital in 1878. Myers, an agnostic who envisioned the creation of a nonsectarian hospital, recruited Jane Coombs and Mrs. C. L. Smith to his cause. The hospital, which opened 31 October, was briefly located in the residence of William S. Edsall on West Main Street but was forced to move to a new location after two weeks due to the property owner's reticence to assume responsibility for the property and the objections of neighbors. Fort Wayne City Hospital, which received no financial aid from the city, then moved to the corner of Hanna and Lewis Streets, where it remained for five years. The fledgling hospital initially lacked a trained nursing staff and had only eighteen beds; surgery was performed in patients' rooms. In 1883 it moved into the old homestead of Oliver S. Hanna, which most recently had been a boardinghouse, at the southwest corner of Barr Street and Washington Boulevard. In 1897 the hospital opened a nursing school. Dr. Miles F. Porter, a nationally recognized physician, became chief of staff, built the city's first operating room, and introduced aseptic surgery to the hospital.

The hospital was chronically underfunded and in debt. After large donations from the family of Jesse Williams, the hospital association offered to rename the hospital in their honor. But at the Williams family's behest, it was renamed Hope Hospital instead in 1891. (The name change did not become official until 1900.) The period from 1906 to

1917 was particularly difficult: a 1911 fund-raising campaign with the goal of \$100,000 netted just over \$4,000; the board of trustees considered closing the hospital in 1912 and rumors to that effect were printed in the newspaper the following year; and in 1914 the third floor was closed to save money.

In February 1916 the board ceded control of the hospital to twenty-six evangelical Protestant churches and two Jewish congregations. But Hope Hospital continued to be plagued by problems. The new president, Andrew G. Burry, believed the hospital staff should be open to all qualified doctors in the area and was soon feuding with Dr. Porter, who wanted it to remain small and exclusive. The property at Barr Street and Washington Boulevard was sold to the Young Men's Christian Association in 1916, a move which eliminated the hospital's debt but left it with movable equipment and no hospital facility. Plans were made to construct a hospital on a lot purchased at the southwest corner of Clinton and Suttentfield Streets, but it never materialized. The following year Hope Hospital moved to the Ways Sanitarium at 119 West Lewis Street, which it occupied rent-free by arrangement with the owner, Dr. A. H. MacBeth. The nursing staff was unhappy with the new facility; moreover, many were unpaid students who worked twelve-hour days, seven days a week, under strict authority. In December 1917 the board of trustees and Burry took the extraordinary step of discharging the entire nursing staff, depriving student nurses of all credits for their work.

In 1918 Methodist Episcopal Hospital, based in Indianapolis, and the Deaconess Home Association of Indiana took over control of the hospital, which became Hope Methodist Hospital and in 1922 Methodist Hospital of Fort Wayne. From 1922 through 1942 the debt-ridden hospital received regular grants from the Northern Indiana

Conference of the Methodist Church. In the 1930s, under the leadership of Rev. Ezra T. Franklin, the hospital's administrator, plans were made to reorganize the hospital yet again. In 1941 Fort Wayne Methodist Hospital, Inc., was formed, an entity legally independent from, but still deferential toward, the Methodist Church. Over the course of the next decade Methodist Hospital, Inc., successfully raised funds for a new hospital to be built at Randalia Drive and East State Boulevard; one-third of the costs were covered by a grant from the federal government made available under the Hill-Burton Act. The new 242-bed hospital opened as Parkview Memorial Hospital in November 1953. By the late 1980s Parkview Memorial Hospital was the fourth-largest general acute-care hospital in the state and served the entire region of northeastern Indiana. It had prenatal, pediatric, cardiac, and trauma intensive care units; a New Life Center obstetrics unit; 656 beds; and 2,300 full-time equivalent employees. In the 1990s the medical center eliminated the "memorial" from its name.