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Inglis will tour hospital with VA officials
Mental health advocates also have eye on hospital

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By Lark Reynolds
STAFF WRITER

Inglis and VA representatives from the agency's Southern region office in Decatur, Ga., will visit Allen Bennett on Friday, an Inglis spokesman said.

The hospital, which underwent a \$6 million expansion in 2003, will be vacated next year when Greenville Hospital System opens its new Greer Medical Campus on South Buncombe Road.

The Greer Commission of Public Works recently added its voice to the chorus of local governing bodies that have expressed support for a veterans' hospital at that location.

Its Nov. 26 resolution "simply expresses the commission's support in hopes that (the hospital) does not become a vacant element out there," said Jerry Balding, general manager.

Advertisement The Greer City Council and the Greenville County Council already passed similar resolutions. State Sen. Lewis Vaughn, R-Greer, has said resolutions will be introduced in the state House and Senate when they reconvene in January.

Meanwhile, another Upstate group is looking at the hospital as a potential site for a crisis stabilization center for people with mental illness.

The Greenville chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness formed a committee to explore how best to address the needs of mentally ill patients who suffer a psychiatric crisis, including the possibility of opening a new crisis stabilization center.

Kelly Troyer, executive director of the Greenville chapter, said such a center would house 20 beds, an on-call psychiatrist, six master's-level clinicians to run support groups, four other clinicians and three nurses.

She said it would be wonderful if Allen Bennett could be used for such a center, and that it could coexist with a veterans' facility.

"We can do it all in the same place," Troyer said.
