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## Medtronic welcomed to San Antonio

[By David Hendricks](#) - Express-News

With a shower of confetti, San Antonio welcomed Medtronic Inc. to the city Monday, an expansion of the company that will bring 1,400 professional-level jobs over a five-year period and \$23 million in capital improvements to a new office building on the Northwest Side.

“Every day is a good day in San Antonio, but today is an extra-special day,” Gov. Rick Perry said in formally announcing the Medtronic Diabetes Therapy Management and Education Center.

Medtronic Diabetes, a unit of Medtronic Inc., already is taking applications online for screening  purposes and will begin hiring this summer, along with starting operations at the 150,000-square-foot Overlook at the Rim building in The Rim shopping center near Loop 1604 and Interstate 10.

San Antonio won the yearlong site selection marathon after the company considered 930 locations in all 50 states, Medtronic executives said.

“I know you did your research,” Perry said to Medtronic executives. “But no spreadsheet can really indicate what you are getting in a move to this state. You get Texans, and there’s no better ingredient for success.”

When all employees are hired, the company payroll will be more than \$44 million a year, translating into an annual \$75 million impact, local economic development leaders said. Recent college graduates will be targeted for hiring and training, with average wages of about \$32,000.

“Today is the day we go to work,” Medtronic Diabetes President Chris O’Connell said to hundreds of San Antonians gathered under a tent next to the new office building at The Rim complex.

O’Connell said Medtronic employees in San Antonio will work with diabetes patients, their doctors and insurance companies as they receive treatment. The company makes and supports diabetes equipment, including glucose monitors and insulin pumps.

Medtronic Diabetes headquarters, with about 1,500 workers, will remain in Northridge, Calif., concentrating on research and development.

Medtronic Diabetes will receive about \$14 million in incentives from the state, city, county, CPS Energy and the developer of the building, Transwestern. The incentives, in part, will defray employee training costs.

The state is contributing \$6 million from the Texas Enterprise Fund as a cash incentive.

The city is adding \$3.7 million, of which \$2.3 million will come from the city's Economic Development Incentive Fund, with payments to the company over six years as the company adds jobs, City Manager Sheryl Sculley said. The remainder will be spread over 10 years, subtracted from the company's tax on equipment and fixtures. The City Council is expected to vote May 21 on the incentive package.

Bexar County is providing a \$2 million cash incentive, but the timetable has not been determined, county officials said. CPS Energy is providing another \$1 million from the county's allocation of the utility's Community Infrastructure Economic Development fund.

Transwestern also will provide an undisclosed number of rent-free months to Medtronic.

Medtronic also signaled it will be a corporate citizen with two \$50,000 gifts to city organizations. CentroMed will use its gift to help diabetes patients lacking insurance, and the Social & Health Research Center will educate bilingual preschool students on health matters and diabetes prevention.

Workforce Solutions Alamo will assist Medtronic with its hiring. Workforce Solutions Business Services Director Charlie Moke said the \$32,000 average wage is in line with starting pay for college graduates, depending on their degree, especially those without experience.

Mayor Phil Hardberger and Mayor-elect Julián Castro both said Medtronic's expansion in the city will lead to further opportunities.

"Other quality companies will come to San Antonio because the leader in the industry came," Hardberger said.

"The city will do everything to make sure Medtronic succeeds," Castro added. "We will leverage this for further investments, both from Medtronic and other companies."


Former Mayor Henry Cisneros had a significant role in attracting Medtronic to San Antonio as president of BioMed SA, a nonprofit group that promotes the city's health care and biotech sector. "This is like the anchor tenant in a mall," Cisneros said. "Other firms will come because of this. This sector is the engine that will pull the city economy."

The Medtronic Diabetes center in San Antonio will be headed by General Manager Jeff Ruiz, who said San Antonio is an appropriate assignment because he is a Canary Islands descendant. Ruiz and his wife already have been house-shopping.

"My wife said, 'Honey, this feels like home,'

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