

Dan's Papers

East End Hospitals Prepared to Handle Influx of Summer Patients

Max Rosen | July 26, 2026



A new Stony Brook East Hampton Emergency Department ER

East End emergency departments in the Hamptons and on the North Fork are bracing themselves for the annual influx of additional patients that comes during peak tourism season this summer.

The amount of people on the East End increases each summer as tourists and summer residents flock to the area. Coinciding with the population increase is an increase in hospital visits, placing an increased strain on local medical facilities.

“Our ER volume doubles for the months of July and August and almost doubles in September,” Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital Chief Administrative Officer Paul Connor said. “June it kicks up, July it really takes off.”

With the increase in patients at the emergency room, the Eastern Long Island Hospital’s med-surg unit also sees around a 30% increase in patients while its diagnostics services, laboratory and radiology units also see an increase between 20% and 30%.

To handle the patient influx, the hospital rotates through emergency room residents from Stony Brook. In the coming weeks, they will also be opening a fast track space that will handle lower acuity patients to diagnose and treat them quicker.

“The fast track for us is a local solution that will help us until we can get to the main solution, which is an expanded ER,” Connor said.

Connor expects to see the ER expanded in the next three to four years to better handle greater numbers of patients, which will help year-round as the hospital plans to become a primary stroke center in the fall or early winter, adding to year-round volume as patients with neurological symptoms will be brought to the hospital.

“We have some other projects that we have to do in advance of that to prepare for a larger space, so we have to get those projects underway,” he said.

While Eastern Long Island Hospital handles the North Fork, Stony Brook Southampton Hospital on the South Fork opened a second emergency facility in East Hampton to go along with their location in Southampton. The new ED has helped take some of the pressure off the Southampton location over the summer.

“The Stony Brook East Hampton Emergency Department is successfully managing the critical needs of those who live furthest east on the South Fork, which has resulted in the planned lessening of patient volume at Stony Brook Southampton Hospital’s Emergency Department,” Vice Chair and Site Director for Emergency Medicine at Stony Brook Southampton Hospital Darin Wiggins said.

“This allows for an increase in admittance to our Southampton ED for those further west, who are in need of emergency care,” Wiggins said.

The new ED, located about 14 miles east of the Southampton location, helps better serve those located farther east on the South Fork and spread patients between two locations instead of only one, allowing Stony Brook Southampton Hospital to handle more patients at any given time.

“Providing 24/7 emergency services in East Hampton is part of Stony Brook Medicine’s commitment to expand access to world-class healthcare throughout the East End,” Emily Mastaller, Chief Administrative Officer for Stony Brook Southampton Hospital said. “In addition to serving those in the Town of East Hampton, the East Hampton Emergency Department helps to reduce emergent patient volume in the Southampton ED, particularly during the busy summer season when the population on the South Fork increases three times that of the colder and winter months.”

Representatives of Peconic Bay Medical Center, a Northwell Health facility in Riverhead, said it has not seen the same influx of summer patients, perhaps due to its location in a less tourist-centric area just west of the split between the North and South Forks.

Eastern Long Island Hospital is located within the eastern half of the North Fork in Greenport while the Southampton and East Hampton ED’s in the western and eastern halves of the South Fork respectively.