

# Guards armed at Reno hospital after deadly 2013 shooting

By Scott Sonner, AP

Renown Regional Medical Center has taken a number of steps to enhance security since a deadly shooting on the Reno medical campus in 2013, including arming private security guards, hospital officials said Thursday.

Renown officials said they spent a year reviewing security protocols and consulting outside experts before adopting new policies based on “national best practices” after a gunman fatally shot a doctor, critically injured two others and killed himself in December 2013.

“Armed officers are part of a tiered approach to many security enhancements that we’ve implemented in recent years,” hospital spokeswoman Stacey Sunday said in an email.

The *Reno-Gazette Journal* first reported on its website Wednesday that the hospital added armed security guards for the first time last year.

Alan Frazier, a California man who blamed his doctor for a botched vasectomy, walked past patients in a medical office waiting room on the Renown campus with a 12-gauge shotgun before he opened fire on Dec. 17, 2013, police said.

Sunday said the hospital cannot provide details about all the security changes since then, including the number of armed guards who first began work in February 2015 under a contract with G4S, a private, Florida-based security company.

Renown Health Security Director Ryan Clarke said in a statement that one security officer staffs the emergency room around the clock and others man the main entrances, as well as

roam the facility and its exterior.

“The decision to hire armed officers was not an easy one or one we took lightly,” said Clarke. He explained that they worked with law enforcement, employees and the medical community “to evaluate and enhance our security practices.”

Security guards are not armed at Saint Mary’s Regional Medical Center in Reno, Northern Nevada Medical Center in Sparks or Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center in Carson City. But some do carry guns in Las Vegas at the University Medical Center of Southern Nevada and Sunrise Hospital and Medical Center, officials at those facilities said Thursday.

“Because of the nature of being Nevada’s only Level I Trauma Center, treating patients who have been injured in violent crimes, we do have armed public safety officers here at UMC, to provide an abundance of caution in keeping our patients, families and clinical staff safe,” said Danita Cohen, University Medical Center’s executive director for strategic development and marketing.

Sunrise, the closest hospital to the Las Vegas Strip, has armed its security guards for the past 18 months, hospital spokeswoman Marissa Mussi said.

“We see a large volume of individuals through our facility on a daily basis and our main concern is for the safety of our patients, visitors and employees,” she said.

Clarke said Renown, just east of downtown Reno, strives “to be a welcoming campus.”

“Our ultimate decision weighed the impact that armed officers would have on this perception against the need to provide ourselves with the ability to immediately address any security situation,” he said. “The addition of armed officers to support our general safety officers provides us with a controllable response time and the ability to address any

security situation in cooperation with local law enforcement.”