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All Children's Hospital Innovates For Patient Care

In designing the hospital, the central challenge was how to create a state-of-the-art, patient-focused facility featuring an innovative design that won't ever go out of style.



All children's hospital delivers a new facility that combines innovative design and patient-focused care

OVERVIEW

All Children's Hospital has been serving the St. Petersburg, Florida, area for more than 80 years. Until recently, the hospital was located in a small 40-year old building – just 350,000 square feet over two floors – that left no room for growth.

With demand on the rise, board members opted to build a new hospital – one that could incorporate a wish list of items for patient and work environments.

In January 2010, All Children's Hospital moved into its new home, which comprises 259 beds over 10 floors. At one million square feet, the new hospital is nearly three times larger than its predecessor. It even boasts a view of the Gulf of Mexico. About three-fourths of the space in the new facility is dedicated to inpatient care, with the balance set aside for outpatient services.

In designing the hospital, the central challenge was how to create a state-of-the-art, patient-focused facility featuring an innovative design that won't ever go out of style.

DECENTRALIZED NURSING STATIONS

From conception to move-in day, various stakeholders, including administrators, physicians, nurses, support staff, and a family advisory group, provided input on making the hospital top-notch. Among the key strategies: private patient rooms (every one of them); decentralized nursing stations; and an on-site school, playground, and playrooms.

The decentralization of nursing stations was among the most significant changes. The vision was to transition from centralized fixed millwork to decentralized modular stations that could be positioned close to patients.

After considering multiple modular solutions, none of which fully met the hospital's needs, All Children's decided on Sync™ caregiver stations from Steelcase Health. A new product at the time, Sync first appeared on the hospital's radar two years into the building process. The product's chief appeal was its ability to facilitate the transformation to decentralized nursing stations without compromising the existing infrastructure and architecture so late in the game. Sync even allowed installers to work around floor outlets and other existing power and data locations.

Highly efficient Sync workstations are designed to promote collaboration and support workflow. Upon evaluation, All Children's Hospital staff determined that this new modular product could:

- Provide accessibility on all sides
- Conceal computer technology, yet allow easy access
- Maintain open sight lines between staff and patients
- Accommodate different body types
- Accommodate multiple activities and work styles
- Support the hospital's ergonomic culture
- Assist with wayfinding
- Support collaborative activities within a decentralized environment



Multiple Sync stations support caregivers in a variety of work postures

MAKING IT A SUCCESS

The transition to Sync could have been difficult, especially considering that hospital nurses were becoming decentralized along with their workstations. Buy-in from the hospital's key decision makers was critical to cultivating an adaptable culture willing to give the new work style a chance.

"Sync helps us put caregivers closer to their assignments," says Cindy Driscoll, director of the med-surge nursing unit. "On my floor, we have Sync configured as eight small workstations situated close to patient rooms. Plus, there are computers in each room. These changes have enhanced care by increasing our efficiency and making our nurses more accessible to patients."

All nurses now carry handheld phones to make communication easier when they're on the move. When they do get a chance to sit, it's often in a Cache® work chair from Steelcase. The chair works well in the clinical environment as it supports short and longer term activities and can be wiped down, supporting infection control. The chairs also pair nicely with Sync caregiver stations located throughout the hospital. The changes took some getting used to, Driscoll admits. "At first, not having a central nursing station eliminated our go-to place to support each other and discuss situations," she says.

"Now we congregate in the staff reporting area. It's actually better because it's private and conversations can't be overheard."

DURABLE AND TIMELESS

Anna Stratigos, administrative director of support services, had one imperative: The new hospital had to withstand the test of time, preferably without ever showing its age.

"I wanted vinyl and faux leather everywhere – no fabric," she says. "People looked at me like I was crazy. This wasn't a desire to keep warmth away; it was a desire to preserve the hospital."

Steelcase Health made it happen using Designtex Performance Fabrics. Working with Stratigos and her team to design vinyl and faux leather fabrics based on samples that were well-liked but made from other materials.

Says Stratigos: "Not only did Designtex recreate the look of other fabrics in vinyl and faux leather, but they also had to create fabrics that would withstand our cleaning and disinfectant products. They did it! And the result was amazing."

Creating a durable and timeless environment went beyond selecting the right textiles. It was imperative that furnishings would provide long lasting support, flexibility, and durability – Sync and the Neighbor™ Collection by Steelcase Health, a family of contemporary seating and caregiver stations, provided just that and became anchors in the facility design at All Children's Hospital.

ALL AROUND ALL CHILDREN'S

Patient interaction hasn't been overlooked. All Children's Hospital has an auditorium for special events like movie nights, a rooftop play deck with a pirate ship showpiece, and designated craft areas.

Playrooms abound. One is reserved for teens and includes a pool table and other age-appropriate activities. Another is set aside for transplant patients, taking their special care needs into consideration. There's also a music therapy room where patients can create their own music. And let's not forget school. Since every child is a student, All Children's Hospital has a built-in classroom.

Even the cafeteria is beautiful. Overlooking the Gulf of Mexico, it's designed to look like a ship, with vents that mimic portholes. For durability, cafeteria tabletops are made with granite, while seating is comfortable and easy to clean, thanks to Cachet multi-use chairs.



Decentralization of nursing stations was among the most significant changes. Here, Sync from Steelcase Health puts caregivers closer to their assignments.

Space designers also paid special attention to the waiting areas. "It was important that the lobby not look like a train station with seating just lined up in rows," Halstead says.

To be sure it didn't, designers created seating vignettes with the Neighbor to create more private gathering areas.

"Families like to be together and will move furniture around by pulling a chair here or there," Stratigos says. "With Neighbor, we were able to create conversation areas that don't require chairs to be moved around. This way, the lobby area always looks nice, not disorganized. Besides, the Neighbor pieces are relatively heavy, so people aren't tempted to move the furniture themselves."

Space planners paid attention to every detail. For instance, alcoves reserved for linens and supplies are outfitted with Slatwall by Details, a Steelcase company. Mounted to the Slatwall are medical glove boxes – another Details product – as well as specially designed medical mask boxes, so nurses can just take and go.

Finally, art plays a significant role throughout the hospital. Local artists contributed works to add fun and color. There's even some interactive art encased in the flooring – step on it, and it changes.



The cafeteria was created in the shape of a ship with granite tabletops and comfortable, easy-to-clean Cachet multi-use chairs. Specially created Steelcase fabrics and vinyl were designed for booth seating.

FAVORABLE OUTCOMES

Most important, the decision to favor modular over millwork has proved justified – especially since changes are already taking place. Four months after move-in, one space originally used for admitting was converted into a neonatal intensive care unit. The usage change caused bottlenecks in the caregiver station areas, but with Sync in place the area was easily reconfigured to accommodate the flow. With millwork, the bottlenecks would have caused problems for years because it would have been too costly to change things around.

As for furnishings, the early insistence on durability seems to be paying off. "We haven't had to replace anything, and I don't anticipate replacing anything anytime soon," Stratigos says.

"I occasionally might notice a place where we need a bumper guard or something, but I know we've done everything possible to meet our goal of making All Children's durable and timeless."

Patient and family satisfaction has never been better. A recent survey rated nursing care at 4.93 on a five-point scale, a 9 percent improvement over the final survey conducted at the old hospital. Driscoll attributes the increase primarily to nursing staff being more visible and closer to patients.

Even nursing fatigue has been better than expected, given the greater square footage of the new building. As part of a Children's Hospital Corporation of America study, nurses have been measuring their steps with pedometers. What did they find? "Our new hospital may be larger, but we're actually walking less because the design is more efficient," Driscoll says.



PRODUCTS

STEELCASE HEALTH

Neighbor seating
Sync with Designtex Fusion
Verge stools
Opus headwall and Switch seating – Steelcase Health and Coalesse

STEELCASE

U Free
Answer
Criterion and Leap
Cachet chairs
Post and Beam
Post and Beam with Details Series 7 Adjustables
Details slatwall with project binder
Switch and Leap Lounge – Coalesse and Steelcase
Archipelago
Aulall tables
Walden

COALESSE

Switch seating
Ripple
Donovan
Peek

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