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Ten health care facilities employ creative land use strategies to integrate medical care and wellness services into their communities.

Health Care Reaches Out

By Ron Nyren

A range of factors is leading health care institutions to experiment with real estate development strategies. Advances in technology have enabled procedures that once required a hospital stay to be carried out in outpatient facilities, allowing such buildings to be untethered from hospital campuses. Hospitals in urban areas are increasingly running out of room on campus for expansion. To carry out their mandates, health care institutions have to develop strategies to make access to medical care convenient for populations in medically underserved areas—whether in fast-growing suburbs or low-income pockets of inner cities. Because they are often one of a city's largest employers, health care institutions undertaking major developments have the opportunity to serve as a catalyst for revitalization.

Using techniques that range from the adaptive use of a historic jail and vacant big-box retail stores, partnerships with the private sector, the integration of medical facilities with housing or mixed-use villages, and innovative approaches to transportation using pedestrian sky bridges and an aerial tram, ten health care developments are reaching out into the built environment in new ways.



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1. Anadolu Medical Center, Gebze, Turkey

A highly active seismic zone may not seem like the most obvious location for a new hospital. After the devastating 1999 earthquake in the densely populated Kocaeli district, however, the area had an increased need for comprehensive, international-quality health care. The Anadolu Foundation Health Care System in Gebze partnered with Baltimore, Maryland–based Johns Hopkins Medicine International—the unit of the nonprofit health care enterprise Johns Hopkins Medicine that shares the organization's patient care, research, and medical education with institutions and physicians around the world—to create Anadolu Health Center, a 209-bed research and teaching hospital with specialty centers in oncology, women's health, cardiovascular services, and neurological sciences, as well as an outpatient complex and medical offices. Intended to remain functional after an earthquake, the facility has foundations placed 23 feet (7 m) below ground level and concrete waffle slabs to reduce vibration in surgical suites. Designed by Oklahoma City–based REES Associates, Inc., and HAS Architects Ltd. of Istanbul, Turkey, and completed in 2005, the center occupies 49 acres (19.8 ha) overlooking the Sea of Marmara, close to major highways and the Istanbul International Airport. The 484,376-square-foot (45,000-sq-m) complex has served as a catalyst for local road construction. [The project was a finalist in the 2006 ULI Awards for Excellence; Europe competition.]

2. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

For more than 150 years, 27 acres (10.9 ha) of downtown Toronto have accommodated an isolated campus for successive psychiatric institutions. The site's current owner, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), developed a master plan for a complete overhaul of the site, extending existing streets through the campus and replacing its outdated facilities with a mixed-use urban village. Completed last year, Phase 1A of the project includes three four-story structures, a four-story outpatient and administrative building, a new public park, and the first new city street. Designed by a joint venture of Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects, Montgomery Sisam Architects Inc., and Kearns Mancini Architects Inc., all of Toronto, the complex is intended to help recovering patients from CAMH's addiction program and mood and anxiety program transition back into society. The apartment-style residences include rear courtyards and large windows for natural light. Later phases will comprise shops, restaurants, parks, and offices, with new streets connecting the site to the surrounding neighborhood.

3. Holyoke Health Center, Holyoke, Massachusetts

By the end of the 20th century, the central business district of Holyoke, an industrial town incorporated in 1850, suffered from a high vacancy rate and decaying building stock. In 2001, Holyoke Health Center, a nonprofit organization with facilities scattered throughout downtown, acquired three vacant structures—originally built in the late 1800s to house a department store and furniture store—to consolidate its facilities, jump-start development in downtown, and provide health care access to the area's low-income residents. Steffian Bradley Architects of Boston restored original architectural features, reconstructed facades and storefronts, and linked the structures with a linear, glazed atrium to create a 110,000-square-foot (10,219-sq-m) complex. The project relied on federal historic restoration grants and new market tax credits issued in conjunction with the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation, a community development financial institution based in Boston. The health center opened in 2006 with a pharmacy, a dental clinic, and family practice and health education facilities as well as office space for other medical and human services organizations.

4. Melton Health, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Health care institutions have to keep pace with rapidly growing suburbs. Melton, a suburb of Melbourne, had 117,000 residents in 2001 and is projected to reach 201,000 by 2016—an increase of nearly 75 percent. The state's department of human services envisioned creating "superclinics" as an easily accessible way to deliver same-day diagnostic, treatment, and follow-up care to Melton's residents with complex medical conditions, reducing the number of hospital stays required. Completed last year, Melton Health is a hybrid model that falls somewhere between traditional community health centers and hospitals, offering a range of

health services, including renal dialysis, chemotherapy, radiology, chronic disease management, outpatient surgery, and physical rehabilitation. Designed in consultation with clinicians by Melbourne-based architecture firm Lyons, the 27,426-square-foot (2,548-sq-m) facility is located next to a large shopping center in the heart of Melton on a 7.4-acre (3-ha) site.

5. Oregon Health & Science University Center for Health & Healing, Portland, Oregon

Since the early 1900s, Oregon Health & Science University—Portland's largest employer—has occupied 116 acres (47 ha) on a hilltop above downtown Portland. Seeking to expand and improve its physical linkage with downtown, the university looked to the underused South Waterfront Central District less than a mile away. The Center for Health & Healing is the first piece of what is planned to become a 20-acre (8.1-ha) campus for the university. Designed by GBD Architects for Gerding Edlen Development, both of Portland, and completed in 2006, the 16-story, 412,000-square-foot (38,276-sq-m) building is the first medical facility to achieve Platinum certification from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system. Eight levels contain outpatient practices, surgery, and imaging, with remaining floors including a health and wellness center and education and research facilities; the ground floor comprises an optical shop, a café, and a pharmacy. A new 70-person aerial tram connects the facility to the hilltop campus. Since the university announced its expansion, the south waterfront area has experienced a condominium and apartment construction boom.

6. RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness, Mercerville, New Jersey

Wellness facilities that foster healthy living as well as provide medical care are becoming more prevalent as the fitness-conscious baby boom generation ages. Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in Hamilton, New Jersey, originally contemplated creating a 40,000-square-foot (3,716-sq-m) wellness and health center on campus. However, a feasibility study revealed that more room was needed, and space on campus could be better used for hospital expansion. The hospital chose to retrofit a vacant 87,000-square-foot (8,082-sq-m) retail building in a strip mall in Mercerville instead. The former big-box space offered wide column bays, high ceilings, and proximity to the New Jersey Turnpike, and conversion proved to be a quicker, less expensive alternative to new construction. Designed by Heery Design of Philadelphia and opened in 2004, the 87,000-square-foot (8,082-sq-m) facility contains a health club, a 220-person conference center, a demonstration kitchen, a healthy-food café, a day spa, and a medical reference library, as well as the hospital's rehabilitation department. Staff members include exercise physiologists and nurses. Princeton, New Jersey–based Fitness & Wellness Professional Services, LLC, operates the center as a joint venture partner.

7. South End Community Health Center, Boston, Massachusetts

In Boston's historic South End, urban renewal efforts in the 1950s left a hole in the community. During the 1990s, the Boston Redevelopment Authority worked with Boston developer South Park Associates, the local neighborhood association, and the community-owned nonprofit South End Community Health Center to fill that hole with an atypical mixed-use project. Designed by Anshen+Allen of Boston and completed in 2000, the six-story 1601 Washington Street includes retail space, a commercial pharmacy, and a café on the ground floor; the health center on the second and third floors; and 39 condominiums on the top three floors. The area's largely Hispanic population now has convenient access to adult and pediatric services, obstetric and gynecology services, a dental clinic, drug counseling, and mental health services. The building's contemporary design incorporates brick, stone, and ironwork that reference historic structures in the district. Parking is placed underground; development of the site also included a community garden and 19 single-family townhouses designed by the Architectural Team, Inc., of Chelsea, Massachusetts.

8. Warren Medical Office, Tulsa, Oklahoma

The medical office campus at Saint Francis Hospital grew in an unplanned, piecemeal fashion, with three 12-story office towers built during the 1970s and 1980s surrounded by a sea of surface parking. Tulsa-based Warren Professional Building Corporation, which owns and operates the campus in support of the not-for-profit Saint Francis Health System, brought in HGA Architects and Engineers of Minneapolis to create a master plan for the medical office campus and design a new building that would house medical offices and an ambulatory surgery center while serving as the campus hub. The asphalt parking lots were replaced with green space incorporating native grasses, gardens, and more than 300 trees. New parking structures were built for each medical office building, including HGA's 177,000-square-foot (16,443-sq-m) Natalie Building, which opened in 2004. Elevated, enclosed sky bridges connect the Natalie Building with the existing hospital and office towers as well as with the parking structures, enabling visitors to drive in, park, and walk to doctors' offices without navigating multiple elevators.

9. Wellspring Medical Center, Woodburn, Oregon

Silverton Hospital, a not-for-profit organization based in Silverton, Oregon, purchased a vacant K-Mart building located in downtown Woodburn and worked with local developer Webstar V and Clark/Kjos Architects of Portland, Oregon, to renovate it into an 87,000-square-foot (8,082-sq-m) wellness facility. Wellspring Medical Center offers integrated medicine, stress and weight management, and physical rehabilitation services as well as a fitness center, aesthetic plastic surgery, a spa, and health-related retail. The facility's immediate care center has its own entrance and parking. To serve the wider community, a 100-seat bistro offers casual dining for visitors and downtown workers. A 6,800-square-foot (631.7-sq-m) conference center provides space for health education programs and is also available for lease to local organizations; it includes a demonstration kitchen for healthy cooking classes and other events. Completed in 2006, the remodeling added two contemplative garden courtyards, extensive glazing to let in daylight, and curving elements to break up the big-box form.

10. Yawkey Center, Massachusetts General Hospital Ambulatory Building, Boston, Massachusetts

Like many urban hospitals, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) needed to expand, but it had little room to spare around its campus. In 1990, the hospital and Cambridge-based developer Carpenter & Company purchased the Charles Street Jail, which was built in 1851 adjacent to the hospital. Local architecture firm Cambridge Seven Associates transformed most of the jail into the Liberty Hotel, incorporating historically significant portions; the jail's east wing became part of the hospital's expansion. The wing was disassembled to protect it during construction of an underground parking garage, then reassembled as part of the Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care, a new 400,000-square-foot (37,161-sq-m) ambulatory care building designed by Cambridge Seven in association with Michael Fieldman Architect of New York. Completed in 2004, the ten-story building includes a lobby, a coffee shop, and a café on the ground floor, as well as cancer care, cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, and women's and children's health programs. The site's redevelopment was coordinated with the city's renovation of the Charles/MGH subway station across the street. [The project was a finalist in the 2006 ULI Awards for Excellence; the Americas competition.]

