



**The character of the Wellness Campus establishes calming greenspaces, which are visually connected to the interior spaces and accessible outdoor places of respite.**

By Karen McCoy and Jerry Smith | Photos by Brad Feinknopf

# HEALING >> BY DESIGN

OhioHealth's Dublin Methodist Hospital is redefining patient care with an innovative design that promotes relaxation and faster recovery times. With a challenge to create a truly unique, patient-centered hospital, award-winning landscape architecture firm MSI Design became part of an interdisciplinary collaborative team that included architects, engineers, interior designers, consumer research professionals and hospital executive staff. This team was responsible for building the project from the ground up with the intent of improving patient well-being through design, attracting patients, enhancing operational efficiency, creating a safe environment, recruiting and retaining staff, and increasing philanthropic, community and corporate support.

OhioHealth's  
Dublin Methodist Hospital  
uses an integrated design team to improve  
quality of healthcare

The scope of the project allowed the opportunity for landscape architects to become an integral part of the project team from its inception. MSI had the opportunity to play a key role in creating an innovative stress-reducing design that provides a real connection to nature.

Karlsberger, a nationally recognized healthcare architecture firm, served as architect of record. The firm is known for its commitment to the healthcare market and numerous innovations and design projects. Greg Mare, a principal of Karlsberger at the time of the project, served as the design team leader.

"The owner believed in the team collaboration, as demonstrated at the kickoff meeting where 24 various team members assembled to understand the vision for the project," he said. A tone was set at this meeting, which created an easy foundation to build upon and established a baseline to refer back to when solving issues."

"Due to the aggressive schedule, we divided the project into over a dozen individual



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— *Rosalyn Cama, evidence-based design consultant*

offers an architecture that embraces humanity with a sense of well-being through the use of nature and also offers an evidence-based awareness that creates an environment that fosters safety. Evidence-based design elements such as maximum possible daylight, views to nature through large windows, access to nature in the form of gardens and courtyards, noise reduction measures, large and private acuity-adaptable rooms with space for families, prominently placed hand-washing sinks and standardized room design were used throughout the hospital. The team worked to create a healing environment and designed Dublin Methodist Hospital with a patient/family centered environment that respects the privacy and dignity of its patients while also addressing functional issues like

design phases,” said Robert L. Grundey, AIA, principal of Karlsberger and project manager for the project.

“While some portions of the hospital were being constructed, others were still going through the design process. This not only required all of the various designers to understand the project’s vision, but the contractors needed to be on board as well. It was an example of an ‘integrated’ project delivery process, before the term and concept became popular.”

The project team shared a belief that evidence-based design improves the emotional and spiritual well-being of users as much as it can improve operational efficiency, the quality of clinical care and productivity. Evidence-based design

program adjacencies and accessibility.

“The key driver of Dublin Methodist was evidence-based design,” said Rosalyn Cama, evidence-based design consultant for Dublin Methodist Hospital and author of Evidence-Based Healthcare Design. “We were creating a brand new hospital culture and there needed to be complete team buy-in to make sure the vision was kept.”

Access to daylight and nature has been proved to promote healing. To that end, the team wanted to infuse contact with nature throughout the hospital. One result is the natural light that streams throughout the hospital and touches all patient rooms. To make this happen, the

**Outdoor ‘rooms’ established in the courtyard gardens provide opportunities for interaction or for quiet reflection. The linkages between art and nature are integral to the design. Elements of whimsy mix in serene settings to further strengthen the visual and emotional connection.**

team needed to pull apart the typical hospital footprint while also integrating interior courtyards



both at grade-level and on rooftops. The two patient towers are unique, each with a central rooftop courtyard that supports the adjacent patient areas. The obstetrical department also offers expectant mothers access to a rooftop courtyard. Thirteen gardens and places of respite were incorporated into the design including restorative, Zen courtyards, tranquility and meditation gardens for patients, visitors and associates. The gardens were taken to new dimensions thanks to OhioHealth's commitment to the project and support from philanthropists.

The tie between interior and exterior areas is promoted throughout the building, especially in the hospital entry, lobbies and ground floor corridors where floor-to-ceiling glass blur the edges between the interior and the exterior. The exterior paving materials are carried into the interior, and exterior gardens that enhance the entry approach continue into the interior atrium lobbies.

"Taking an evidence-based approach, our interdisciplinary team studied the cultural shifts needed to achieve our goals," Cama said. "The design of the facility then responded to those shifts."

Water elements include an impressive indoor three-story water feature and an interior chapel font expressed in the exterior garden by recycled glass materials resembling water. Storm water, typically collected in pipes underground, is treated in a more sustainable way on the Dublin Methodist Hospital campus where the water is collected through bioswale green spaces throughout the parking lots. Here,

**Left: The Dublin Health Hospital glass atrium entry houses interior courtyard plantings visually linked to an outdoor grove of River Birch trees, establishing the visual interior/exterior connection to nature at the visitor's first approach to the building. Right: Rooftop courtyards are located directly in the center of the each patient tower, bringing the healing effects of nature right to the patient experience.**

green spaces are linked to create the 'park walk,' terminating into a central collector walkway. The bioswale system flows to wetland sediment basins at the perimeter of the site. The naturalized wetland basins are located adjacent to the hospital entry driveways and establish first contact with the water theme.

Dublin Methodist Hospital also is a Pebble Project Partner. Pebble Project research between The Center for Health Design and healthcare providers strives to create a ripple effect in the healthcare community by providing documented facilities whose design makes a difference in the quality of care and financial performance of the institution.

MSI Design also played a key role in the hospital regulatory approvals since the design model was outside the realm of standard zoning practices for building and ground coverage, parking lot design and green space allocation. The existing code did not acknowledge the type of bioswales that needed to be built for this sustainable approach to site design. MSI's approach for rivers of green space and collector walks was challenged by the zoning code, but the integrated team's work with planning officials led to necessary initial and date copy approval.



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