

Case Study

Disney Family Cancer Center

Collaborative Care Extends the Personal Touch

Roy and Patricia Disney Family Cancer Center

With more than two dozen oncologists on staff and an innovative nurse navigator program for patients and their families, the Roy and Patricia Disney Family Cancer Center, located inside the Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center in Burbank, Calif., represents the state of the art in cancer treatment. From chemotherapy to radiation to the latest breakthrough treatments, patients are typically undergoing intense therapies, resulting in extreme emotional and physical stress. When plans to renovate and expand the Center took hold, administrators seized the opportunity to build a new environment that would put patients and their families at ease while traveling together along the cancer care path.



Project Goal: An Environment for Integrated, Compassionate Cancer Care

In the Center's redesign, the new 55,000-square-foot facility specifically aimed to create an environment in which each patient would be personally welcomed and cared for - in body, mind and spirit. In support of its mission statement, "Together, We Can Triumph Over Cancer," the Center knew that to design a truly innovative environment, the building itself would need to be "smart" - able to adapt to specific patient needs and contribute to the collaborative workflows of the staff.

Key to achieving this environment in the patient rooms, hallways and treatment centers was the connection of various technologies that would allow caregivers to adjust environmental factors based on each patient's preferences, and create a comfortable setting for care delivery:

- Automated Environmental Controls - As patients enter designated areas, automated environmental controls enable temperature settings to be adjusted automatically based on previously-configured profiles
- Ambient Experience - Based on patient preferences, lighting, images on walls and ceilings, and sound (e.g., music and soothing background noise) are adjusted in real time to create the ideal ambient experience
- Work-Flow automation - Notifications are dispatched to clinical team members, signifying that patients are ready and waiting for treatment procedures (e.g., their radiation visit, chemotherapy appointment or weekly exam). This enhances staff collaboration and ensures that patients spend as little "down time" as possible between treatments.

Enhanced Patient Experience Leads to Industry Recognition

The Center installed Connexall technology, which enables communication between passive RFID readers from ThingMagic, Reva Systems TAP technology, AeroScout WiFi-enabled asset tracking systems, Johnson Controls P2000 building management and the Avaya Voice over IP (VoIP) phone system. The Connexall system makes the technology invisible to the staff, patients and families, so they can collaborate to focus on beating cancer.

In creating that state-of-the-art patient-friendly experience, the Center has achieved improved collaboration between clinicians, patients and administration. With Connexall, patients are free to wander the facility, and are easily located and alerted when needed for appointments through the AeroScout MobileView platform. Likewise, doctors are also notified when patients enter the Center for treatment, which facilitates a deeper, more personal and comforting relationship.

With these disparate and specialized systems as well as the goal of creating a unique and integrated experience - the design project, including assessment and development, took the Disney Family Cancer Center about two years to complete. From there, only four months of testing was required before the facility welcomed its first patients in February 2010.



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The project received compliments not only from its patients, but also from the technology industry. At the 8th Annual RFID Journal LIVE Conference, the RFID Journal named the Disney Family Cancer Center winner of The Most Innovative Use of RFID award. The award recognized the center for:

- A pioneering RFID system designed to reduce patient anxiety
- An integrated solution from leading technology vendors that improves collaboration and workflow between clinicians, patients and hospital administrators
- A solution architecture that addresses key areas of hospital operation and provides a platform for future growth.

“I walked through these doors and I swear it was like angels singing. I’m not a really spiritual person, but this is so beautiful, the way it puts you at ease by diverting your mind from your treatment and using nature to help you relax. When I was treated at the hospital, I would ignore the scary room. I would close my eyes and put my mind in another place. I don’t have to do that here. They take me to that place.”

– Julie Stevens
(Disney Family Cancer Center’s first patient)
