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Medical center a prototype for Group Health clinics

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Photo courtesy of Group Health [\[enlarge\]](#)
CollinsWoerman designed the Group Health Puyallup Medical Center and GLY Construction built the 50,000-square-foot facility.

Having blood work done at a doctor's office is no fun, but at the recently opened Group Health Puyallup Medical Center it should be more convenient.

A care provider uses radio frequency devices to signal lab and injection services to come to a patient's exam room so they don't have to go to the lab.

It's one of the features of the approximately 50,000-square-foot building at 1007 39th Ave. S.E. in Puyallup whose design was tested by patients and providers in a full-scale cardboard mock-up.

The complex is in the South Hill Business and Technology Center owned by The Benaroya Co. of Bellevue. Benaroya developed the building for Group Health and owns it. Group Health leases the space and paid about \$20 million to build out the interior, including furniture, fixtures, technology and equipment.

CollinsWoerman designed the clinic and GLY Construction built it.

Phil Giuntoli, health care principal at CollinsWoerman, said Group Health hopes to use the design as a prototype for its other medical clinics, with adjustments for size. “This forms the thinking behind the next wave of facilities and facility remodels that they’re going to do.”

The building, which replaces a Group Health clinic in Puyallup that opened in 1996, offers lab, medical imaging, pharmacy, primary care eye care and physical therapy.

Group Health serves 14,500 members in the Puyallup area, but the new clinic was designed for 30,000 because the non-profit health system anticipates growth.

Giuntoli said the new facility has three care pods that can serve 8,000 to 10,000 patients each. One is being held in reserve for future growth.

Michael Erikson, vice president of primary care for Group Health, said in a press release that services can be expanded at minimal cost in the flexible and modular clinic. Also, the design can be used to build new clinics in less than a year on average. In the past, it has taken two or more years.

Giuntoli said adjustments were made in the year-long lean design process to foster more efficient and better patient care, and the way care is delivered was redesigned.

The aim was to lessen waiting times. For instance, patients go to a care room instead of waiting in a public area when they arrive. “(The designers) were trying to get past check-in but they couldn’t get all the way past check-in,” Giuntoli said.

Even the equipment was re-evaluated. For instance, exam rooms have a chair that can be used to take blood pressure and then folded into the exam table.

Giuntoli said Group Health plans to test its assumptions about the work processes and space at the clinic, and tweak as necessary.

The design team also includes PCS Structural Solutions (structural engineer), PacLand (civil engineer), Prime Electric (design-build electrical) and University Mechanical (design-build mechanical).

The project is pursuing LEED gold for health care. Wood harvested from trees on the site was used as benches and finishes, and high-efficiency mechanical systems and a green roof were included.

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