

## How Group Health designed new Puyallup building

**WHEN GROUP HEALTH EXECUTIVES** set about designing a new building for their Puyallup facility, they did something they had never done before. They decided to develop in advance a prototype of what an efficient and effective medical facility should look like to meet today's medical needs using lean methodologies.

To find out what those needs would be, they leased space in a warehouse and fitted it out with easily movable furniture, mockups of medical equipment, and cardboard walls. They brought in clinicians, teaming them with architects and contractors knowledgeable in building codes. And they invited mock "patients" to test the facility.



"Group Health staff who provide the care interacted with the patients who need the care and to those who know about designing and constructing buildings," says Group Health Vice President for Administrative Services Bill Biggs. "As we went, we moved the furniture and the walls and modified our plans. Above all, we wanted the design to be optimized around patients and processes." Not only that. The facility needed to be sustainable and built to demanding environmental standards.

The result is now taking shape in the **Benaroya Business Park** on Puyallup's South Hill where the new building - more than three-and-a-half times the size of the present facility about a mile away - is being constructed. It consists of three central "care pods," with larger patient care and examination rooms. Services will be closer together, reducing patient wait times.

When the new facility opens in the fall Group Health will add another 20 employees to the 60 it now employs in Puyallup. The building itself is providing 100 construction jobs.

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*Teamwork is a service of the EDB, a non-profit corporation focused on recruitment and retention of primary businesses in Tacoma and Pierce County.*

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