Photo courtesy of Children's of Alabama

Benjamin Russell Hospital for Children

Birmingham, Alabama

The Children's Hospital of Alabama, ranked among the nation's best children's hospitals by US News & World Report magazine, is a not-for-profit hospital governed by a volunteer board of trustees. During their centennial anniversary in 2012, a 750,000 square-foot, $400 million expansion project was completed on the facility of the health system's downtown Birmingham campus, which was named the Benjamin Russell Hospital for Children upon completion.

The expansion enabled Children's to manage projected growth in patient volume, provide for anticipated medical technology needs and accommodate the consolidation and expansion of pediatric services.

Children's expansion is the largest health care construction project in Alabama state history and became the state's first LEED Gold certified health care facility. It is 12 stories high and connects with its surrounding structures via elevated enclosed walkways. The exterior features a glass curtain wall and a precast concrete "skin." The structural skeleton is also concrete with most of the building materials made within 200 miles of Birmingham.

History

Since 1911 Children's has provided quality, comprehensive health care to Alabama's pediatric population and excludes no child in that effort. Over the last century, Children's Hospital has grown from a community hospital into a comprehensive children's health care system that includes primary care physicians, specialists, parents, educators and child advocates.

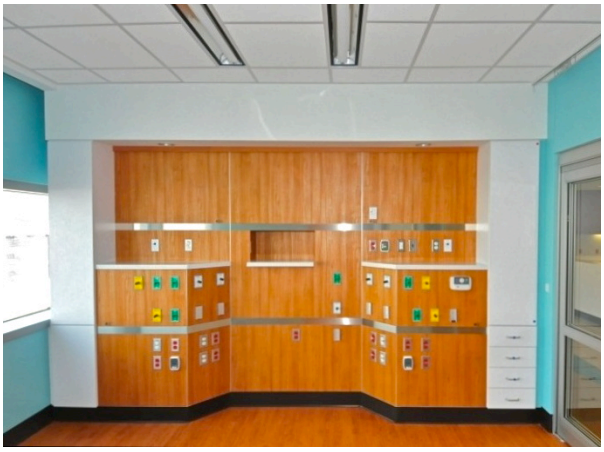
Children's Hospital is a licensed 275-bed facility that cares for medical and surgical cases for newborn through 19 years of age. The 13 on-site outpatient clinics handle follow-up visits for these patients as well as referrals from health departments across the state. In 2011, CHS saw 12,000 inpatients, 608,000 outpatients, and tallied nearly 50,000 visits to the level-one Emergency Department. A multidisciplinary approach is utilized throughout, where all the needs of the child are met - medical, physical, psychological, social and spiritual, when desired.

As the dream for the new 760,000 square foot addition to Children's of Alabama began to form in early discussions, the design team knew that they wanted to create the hospital using Disney World as their inspiration. They wanted an environment with colorful and bright surroundings that would help take away some of the child's stress of being in a hospital. The Groundbreaking occurred on May 14, 2009.

Partnering with Modular Services Company

With today's leading-edge healthcare facilities so reliant on technology and connectivity behind every wall and ceiling, few project types present more complexities than those for the healthcare industry. For this reason, the design team came to Modular Services Company for the construction of the headwalls that would be installed in their patient rooms. With over 40 years of experience in the industry, Modular was able to take the vision of the designers and architects and bring them to life - delivering the custom-designed headwalls on time and within budget.

Children's of Alabama relied on efficient modes of project delivery that would increase speed and reduce waste to ensure the project was completed on time and within budget, while maintaining a high standard of quality. Modular Services Company met the hospital's goals in both product and deliverables. Modular built and delivered 48 Bed Level III NICU headwalls, 164 Acute care bed headwalls, 81 PACU bed headwalls, and 112 PACU/Pre-Op headwalls.



The facility, with 12 patient floors plus equipment floors and rooftop heliport, houses state-of-the-art medical technology, all in an environment designed to reflect the playfulness of the young people it serves.

Photo courtesy of Children's of Alabama

Delivering Excellence

The expansion of the Benjamin Russell Hospital for Children not only made it the largest health care construction project in Alabama state history, but also the third-largest pediatric hospital in the country.

Children's became Alabama's first LEED Gold certified hospital building under LEED version 2.2 for New Construction and the largest LEED-certified project in the state to date, largely underwritten by a portion of the McWane capital campaign gift.

Family-centered Design was an integral part of the expansion project. To help children feel comfortable while away from home, the hospital added space for overnight stays for the families in each patient room. "In the old hospital, only one parent could spend the night," said Mike McDevitt, Children's executive vice president. "The new patient rooms are 30 percent bigger."

Each room has a "patient zone" which includes a large television that can be used for educational opportunities and positive distractions such as an Xbox and protected Internet access and a "family zone," with a reclining chair, a sleeper sofa, a "mom-and-dad" TV, large wardrobe and small safe for valuables.

"We will be expanding our services across all specialties," says McDevitt. "Increasing our space helps us fulfill our mission to grow to meet higher demand.

Modular Services Company is proud to have partnered with such a creative team in the development of an outstanding, new facility for a hospital that will serve many children in the years to come.