



## Women's Health Services...Your Catalyst for Change

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Women's health services can be a catalyst for change throughout a hospital. They can lead the way in creating environments that support the humanization of the delivery of health care. The new St. Luke's Women's and Children's Center serves as a benchmark in this transformation of healthcare. Ken Buser, CEO and president of All Saints Healthcare stated: "It provides an environment that is breaking barriers and has increased satisfaction of the community, physicians and staff. Donations for new equipment have expanded, confirming this satisfaction. It is a boost in confidence, pride and innovation, putting us on the leading edge."

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Traditionally, women's health programs have focused almost exclusively on obstetric and gynecological services. However, women's unique health care needs extend well beyond these services into all areas of ambulatory, acute and chronic care. Only recently have providers begun to realize that they have been under serving women's health care needs for care conditions such as: cardiovascular disease, cancer and depression. And they have not built the relationships with women in a way that will capture needed service from women and their families.

To support this healthcare transformation, women's health programs must reflect a new understanding of women's clinical care needs and their expectations for customer service. Women's services are now taking into account women's unique needs by providing customized care options, wellness and support.

## Women's services can build patient attachment to your healthcare system by:

- Remaining grounded in OB/GYN Services
- Encompassing all women's life stages
- Providing a continuum of services
- Providing comprehensive support services

## Understanding Women's Needs

PRA understands that planning a new women's center must start by first understanding the needs of women throughout their life and the associated care needs.

### Adolescent and Young Adult (Age 15-21):

- Eating Disorders
- Anxiety
- Smoking and Substance Abuse
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Pregnancy

### Early and Prime Adult (age 22-35):

- Pregnancy
- Annual gynecological and breast screening
- Contraception
- Irregular reproductive cycles, Infertility

### Late Prime and Premenopausal (age 36-45):

- Infertility Issues
- High-Risk Pregnancies
- Uterine Fibroids
- Substance Abuse
- Urinary Stress Incontinence



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## **Premenopausal and Early Menopausal (age 46-55):**

- Fibroids and other benign uterine conditions
- Urinary Incontinence
- Cardiovascular Disease and Heart Failure
- Depression
- Cancer

## **Mature Adulthood (age 56+):**

- Menopause
- Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke
- Orthopedic Disease
- Diseases of the Aging – Lung Cancer

*Note: Information provided by the Center for Disease Control*

## **A Center of Excellence**

Women's Centers succeed when they are a center of excellence. Our clients are professionals with a passion for women's care and responsible for nurturing and developing unsurpassed women's service. Their common goal is to provide patients with coordinated, integrated care. Through an individualized approach that helps women develop a course towards better health.

## **Women's Centers**

- Provide access to the highest quality of medical expertise and technology.
- Provide options for healing treatments for improving or restoring health and maintaining
- Provide patient centered, integrated and seamless care delivery.
- Are Patient-directed and family oriented.
- Create a collaborative partnership between patients, physicians and specialists
- Provide programs that are innovative, holistic and affordable.

## **Clinical Centers for Women**

Understanding these diverse women's needs the clinicians and design team begin to delineate the possible centers within the program. These care centers relate to physical space needs that exist or are proposed within the facility. Below are a list of possible care centers:

- Osteoporosis Center
- Obstetric Center
- Gynecological Services
- Aging Center
- Cardiac Center
- Breast Health Center
- Assisted Reproduction Center
- Imaging Center
- Wellness Center



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## Creating the Vision

In the healthcare industry where time tested service procedures guide everyday behavior to protect community health and safety, how do you inject innovation into your work and workplace? The creation of Women's Centers of Health can be that opportunity for innovation you've been looking for. To make changes to your current care environment will require more than capital dollars. It will require a vision and champions of the vision. In the sphere of healthcare planning and design, stewards of healthcare need to be both visionaries and innovators to truly integrated care delivery in ways never before imagined. You must move vision into reality, frequently reminding each other that everyday decisions for a capital project must withstand the test of the vision. You must be willing to speak up at the most difficult moments to remind everyone what is most important.

## Co-Creating the Future

The creation of a Women's Center is an opportunity to reinvent yourselves, to practice healthcare in a way that is new for your organization. Many miss this opportunity because they see construction and renovation as a "construction project" and not an "innovation project." They continue to do things the way they've been doing them, only in a new environment. Real innovation, on the other hand, means transforming the total healthcare experience with a vision that synthesizes and aligns people, place, and services.

To develop a vision for the total experience, you first need to bring together a cross-discipline Innovation Team, fostering a culture of shared ownership where everyone's passion is brought to bear. As stewards of care and patient advocates, your innovation team is closest to the real business at hand and the thread of continuity in the patient experience. Who better to know the details of what patients and families experience every day, and the obstacles they have to navigate to get all they need? You also know what it will take to keep the healing professionals in your organization focused on transformation.

The idea of co-creation is powerful and we recommend engaging key stakeholders involved in your capital project: board members, leadership, managers, staff and community. Agreeably, it will be a large task, but one that will be a foundation for making the vision a reality.

## A Process of Transformation

Transformation requires a process, and that process begins with an Inquiry phase. If your care team has worked together for many years, you will need to look beyond your current care environment, get out of your care environment, and immerse yourselves in the world around. Look to other care models, operational models, or take time to tours other facilities. You may even look to other industries, such as the retail or hospitality industries for leaps of insight. The next phase is to Imagine the possibilities and create a new vision for who you want to be as a care provider. Deep down, each member of the care team is participating in a journey towards a common goal. It's vital that your vision be motivating, moving you towards collective action. This is not just an exercise in feeling good about the development of a catchy phrase. It is about developing a common vision that will be an inspiration not only for the life of the capital project, but well beyond.



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The Imagine phase moves seamlessly into the Innovation stage, where you design the steps for reaching your goals. It's at this stage you will need to have frank conversations and document how you will address disconnects between who you are now and who you want to be.

The Innovation Team is now prepared to move on to Illustrating the vision. In this phase it is crucial to methodically knit what is being drawn to your founding vision. It will be critical to confirm vision alignment and sharpen the vision towards the future. During this time it is important to envision redesign of service models, operational protocols, communication strategies, care environments and the testing of new ways of doing things.

Finally, you begin the Implementation stage. In this phase it is time to watch the vision take physical form. The Innovation Team must take time to tour the construction to familiarize themselves with their future environment and to align the fine details. During this phase it is essential to test operational changes in your current environment before living in the new building; this gives yourself space to make proper adjustments

prior to "go live." Working together, we believe that utilizing the right design process, one that centers on your mission, vision and values, and synthesizes people, places, and services, will bring differentiated health care to the community you serve: a goal we all need to be focused on.



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Mary is a senior project architect for the healthcare studio at Plunkett Raysich Architects and has been with the firm since 1997. Mary's experience and creativity enable client's visions to take physical form. She has worked with clients throughout the Midwest to create differentiated Women's Health services.