

Move to New Medical Office Building Saves \$1 Million Annually.



A major health system was ready to move 50+ outpatient clinics to a new, state-of-the-art medical office building, but lacked internal expertise for a relocation this large. Freed managed the massive move, plus several other facility needs, helping the client save \$1+ million in annual lease costs.

Problem to Solve

It's difficult to relocate any business. Health care facilities can face even greater challenges when moving, considering their medical equipment and supplies, regulatory and environmental hurdles and other challenges.

After years of planning, designing and constructing a state-of-the-art, multi-story medical office building, a major health system was poised to begin moving more than 50 different outpatient clinics to this new central location. Lacking sufficient internal expertise and resources to oversee a relocation of this magnitude, the system needed an experienced external partner to direct moving dozens of clinics from multiple locations to a single new facility.

Based on several successful prior engagements with Freed Associates (Freed), the health system engaged Freed to help manage this massive moving project. During the course of the project, Freed was also asked to assist with several auxiliary needs for the health system, including the opening of testing, treatment and mass-vaccine clinics to combat COVID-19.

Strategy and Tactics

For the health system's multi-clinic move to the new medical office building, Freed oversaw several facets of this effort, from helping fulfill the health system's master facility plan to overseeing logistical details, such as signage, furniture and medical equipment placement. To prepare for and help direct this move, Freed worked directly with a transition and steering committee, including leaders from several key departments such as IT, Finance, Facilities and Supply Chain Management.

Working from a master facility transition roadmap, Freed monitored all milestones and resource plans associated with the move. This included engaging functional area teams and work groups, managing move-related events and vendors, working with multiple moving companies, and addressing go-live and post-go-live issues via a designated command center.

As unanticipated move-related issues arose, such as the need to swap multiple specialty clinics from one floor to another within the new medical office building, Freed ensured these issues were properly addressed. Freed also directed the move of additional specialty clinics to the building—more than had been originally planned—to capitalize on a chance to reduce existing lease obligations held elsewhere.

As dozens of specialty clinics moved from their existing buildings to the new central medical office center, this created a chance for other specialty clinics that were not moving to expand their facilities. Freed managed clinic placements within all of these auxiliary redevelopment and development projects, in addition to the “core” medical office building project.

As this work was progressing, COVID-19 hit, which presented added logistical challenges and unexpected facility needs. One need was to open a new respiratory care clinic for testing and treating potential COVID-19 patients. Another was to reconfigure current primary care and specialty clinics to see in-person non-symptomatic patients and allow physicians to conduct telehealth visits in secure, private spaces. A third need was to open up mass vaccination clinics, capable of vaccinating hundreds of patients each day. Freed assumed responsibility for sourcing and revamping facilities for all of these needs, as well as facilitating and coordinating the necessary logistics.

As the health system developed a plan to see patients potentially ill with COVID-19, the greatest need was keeping these patients separate from healthy individuals. Freed found a suitable location, and ensured this clinic was equipped with all necessary testing and respiratory care equipment and personnel.

Reconfiguring the health system's existing clinic space to see and treat non-symptomatic patients proved challenging, as these clinics were built to serve patients before the COVID-19 pandemic. Setting these clinics up to effectively operate in the new pandemic environment typically meant significant shifts of furniture, equipment, supplies and personnel.

Freed also sourced locations for the health system's two mass vaccination centers. One facility, capable of seeing more than 1,000 patients each day, was set up within weeks in collaboration with city and county authorities. A second clinic, which could vaccinate more than 3,000 patients a day, was also completely established, although ultimately never utilized.

Results

All of the health system's clinic relocations, redevelopments and openings were successfully completed, with Freed's leadership and support. More than 50 different specialty clinics moved to the new multi-story medical office building, with no interruption to patient care. This move enhanced care availability and delivery to thousands of patients each day, and saved the health system more than \$1 million per year in lease costs.

Freed's efforts to expand the health system's COVID-19 local response, through a specialty respiratory clinic and new vaccine administration clinics, also succeeded. From day one, the respiratory clinic began testing and treating dozens of patients each day. Though the health system ultimately opened just one of its two planned and fully equipped COVID-19 vaccination clinics, the open clinic was extensively used and proved an important asset to the local community.

Health system leadership credited Freed with making a critical care- and cost-related difference to the organization's health care delivery needs. The health system is now able to more efficiently serve thousands of additional patients each day.