Meridian Center for Health
Seattle, Washington

SQ FT
44,800 BGSF

OWNER/AFFILIATION
Neighborcare Health

ARCHITECT(S)
NBBJ

COMPLETION DATE
2015

ABOUT | DESIGN INTENTIONS

Partially funded by a federal grant, the Meridian Center for Health is a first of its kind: an integrated, one-stop model for health treatment and prevention for underserved Seattle-area residents. Uniting three health organizations under the same roof, the center provides low-to-no-cost medical, dental, and mental health services for adults and children. Design elements include an open-floor plan, a dramatic feature stair in the lobby, and a range of team and community spaces that remain available for neighborhood organizations after hours. The Center is tracking to receive LEED Gold certification.
Meridian Center for Health
Seattle, Washington

Vision
The Meridian Center for Health seamlessly integrates an array of typically siloed clinical and social services—including medical, dental, infant, maternity, behavioral, and recovery programs—for the underprivileged in underserved Seattle neighborhoods.

Breakthrough
Understand and address the diverse determinants to health required thinking more broadly about what constitutes healthcare and how it is practiced. Meeting patients where they are—by uniting three different organizations—bridges the gaps to wellness by providing the services necessary to support a fulfilling life.

Value
The Meridian Center is more than a place to go when one is ill—but also a place to go when one is well. To create an environment of health and well-being, the project addresses not just clinical needs in isolation, but also the social determinants of wellness, while embracing the rejuvenating aspects of nature through a restored site.

Insight
Eliminate wasteful handoffs between healthcare organizations promotes healthier outcomes. Creating a model where multiple services come to the patient during a visit instead of numerous follow-ups allows for a more accessible network of resources for living a healthy life.

A Site of Healing
The Meridian Center for Health is operated by Neighborcare Health and partially funded by a Federal Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) grant. It replaced a former public health clinic built in 1980. The site was repurposed to provide easier access and more open space for patients and their families, while enhancing an existing public park at the southeast corner.
A Warm Welcome

The clinic fosters a “no wrong door” philosophy to serve a patient population that speaks more than 65 languages via multilingual signage and wayfinding. By providing a welcome zone as the one point of entry, the clinic creates a fully integrated and united public face. A simplified patient journey reduces patients’ stress and increases trust in the care team, while seamlessly connecting complex health services.
**Meridian Center for Health**  
Seattle, Washington

*Whole Person. Whole Health.*

Eliminating waste—redundancy and repetition—is a central design goal of the Meridian Center for Health. Rather than referring patients to various specialists across medical clinics and campuses, different healthcare providers can meet patients right where they are—even together simultaneously in the same exam room. Beyond clinic areas, there are spaces for community resources that stay open into the evening—from conference rooms, housing placement assistance, job training, resume writing, nutrition advice and cooking classes. This one-stop-shop, holistic approach minimizes registration paperwork, travel and wait times for patients. During the day these spaces double as group education and therapy rooms.

Flexible features, such as large-format sliding and pivoting doors allow these spaces to work individually or together, to cater to the diversity and variation of groups looking to support this patient population. As a result, the center is able to operate as a true community asset, breaking out of the traditional boundaries of healthcare and offering a solution to a more holistic vision of health and wellness.

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**LEVEL 2:**

**TRAVEL DISTANCE ANALYSIS**

- Patient: 112 ft - 234 ft
- Family: 112 ft - 234 ft
- Staff: 12 ft - 75 ft

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**TRAVEL DISTANCE ANALYSIS**

- Dental Exam Rooms (118 sf)
- Exam Room (120 sf)
- Staff Work core (360 sf)
- Conference Room (385 - 440 sf)

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**DEPARTMENTAL GROSS SQUARE FOOT TAKE-OFFS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Gross</th>
<th>Net</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental Care</td>
<td>4050 SF</td>
<td>2815 SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women, infant and child</td>
<td>3380 SF</td>
<td>2741 SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Support</td>
<td>2260 SF</td>
<td>1518 SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting &amp; Registration</td>
<td>3380 SF</td>
<td>1802 SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>2200 SF</td>
<td>1518 SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>750 SF</td>
<td>383 SF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**KEY SPACES:**

- Dental Exam Rooms (136 sf)
- Exam Room (118 sf)
- Staff Work core (560 sf)
- Conference Room (186 - 440 sf)

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**KEY:**

- Primary Care
- Recovery Services
- Registration
- Community
- Staff Support
- Phlebotomy
- Support
Meridian Center for Health
Seattle, Washington

Sustainable integration

INTEGRATING a range of healthcare specialists—dental care, women, infant and children care, mental health wellness and more—helps increase provider availability and decrease treatment fragmentation.

Teaming spaces, “hot desk” (shared workstation) and cross-specialty exam rooms, and a staff lounge (for potlucks and staff events) promote greater interaction and collaboration between different healthcare providers.

The design team carefully considered the placement of onstage areas (health provider with patient) and offstage areas (health provider without patient) and the circulation between them, to promote greater engagement—as well as privacy regarding sensitive medical information—for caregivers and patients alike.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Project: Meridian Center for Health
Project location: Seattle, WA
Owner/Client: Neighborcare Health
Architect: NBBJ

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AIA/AAH DESIGN AWARD WINNER

Category: A: Built, Less than $25 million in construction cost

JURY COMMENT

▶ The siting of this building is masterful; the landscape invites clients as well as non-clients to enjoy and explore the grounds. The project is uniquely about health, gracefully including spaces for community resources that support a patient population with varying and challenging needs. A sensitive approach to mental health homeless patients led to the design of outdoor patios that can double as consult spaces; the driveway was widened to provide space for farmers markets. The project was designed as an asset and destination for the greater community, and as a good neighbor addressing the future of healthcare.

▶ The building itself uses a contemporary language, without being trendy. The scale is humane, and the use of materials, particularly wood, gives it a tactile appeal. Sustainability is evident throughout the program, structure and site. The use of views and natural daylighting is exquisite. The photography and presentation of the project are excellent.

▶ The jury’s key words for this project are “sweet” and “beautiful.”

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