The renovation and extension to Casey House, a specialized healthcare facility for individuals living with HIV/AIDS, develops new prototypes for hospitals. The facility meets the needs of patients and their providers in a setting designed to evoke the experience and comforts of home. With the fundamental goal of creating a comfortable, home-like user experience, the embrace emerged as a unifying theme—one of warmth, intimacy, comfort, privacy, connectivity, and solidity. Referring to the goals of Casey House, it also describes the design of the architectural form, the user experience, and the atmosphere in the building itself.
Casey House
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Design Concept

An Embrace

The architecture provides for both the well-deserved moment of victory for Casey House and an intimate dignity for patients. The architecture is a physical manifestation of the embrace—in both the vertical and horizontal planes. On the exterior, the new extension reaches over and around the existing heritage designated Victorian mansion, which has been carefully restored, while the new addition—a robust, textured exterior—surrounds the central courtyard on the inside for privacy and light.

Site Plan

Plan Sketch

Inspiration

The AIDS Memorial Quilt was an early source of inspiration for the design. Originally conceived in 1985 by activist Cleve Jones, and started in 1987, the gigantic patchwork quilt acted as an opportunity for individuals to remember and celebrate those loved one’s lives during a time when the disease was largely stigmatized by the majority of mainstream society.

The exterior facade of Casey House, consisting of a palette of various brick, heavily tinted mirrored glass, and crust-faced limestone, is highly particularized and rich, and becomes the architectural manifestation of the quilt.
Central Courtyard
The courtyard allows direct sunlight into the core of the building on all floors. Given the private nature of the facility, it provides protected outdoor space for users.

Clear sight lines across the courtyard and project allow for maximum light and transparency while at the same time maintaining patients’ privacy. The courtyard is also visible from each of the 14 private bedrooms (12 regular care and 2 respite beds) on the third floor.

Beautifully landscaped and alive, the courtyard is the ever-present symbol of life-affirming green, water, and light and is visible from every corridor and in-patient room.

Bridge
Emphasizing the relationship between the new and the old, a bridge connects the heritage and addition on the second floor. This allows for clear sight lines and seamless transition between the original house and the new space.

Light
The central gathering space on the main floor features a 2 story atrium that ensures that the common area is awash in natural light. The materials and furnishings were all selected with the goal of creating a warm and intimate atmosphere. The full height fireplace crafted from Algonquin Limestone anchors the room.

SLIVER COURTYARD AT DUSK
STACKED VOLUMES OPENING TOWARDS SKY

CONNECTION TO OUTDOORS

SLIVER COURTYARD AT DUSK
STACKED VOLUMES OPENING TOWARDS SKY

GREENERY IN THE COURTYARD

COURTYARD FROM INTERIOR GROUND LEVEL CORRIDOR

CONNECTING INTERIORS

STRAND OF SUNLIGHT COMING THROUGH ATRIUM AND WASHING THE ALGONQUIN LIMESTONE FIREPLACE

EARLY LIGHT STUDIES

OPEN SIGHT LINES FROM THE HERITAGE THROUGH THE NEW EXTENSION
Casey House
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Case Study Format Developed By:

AIA Academy of Architecture for Health | Research Initiatives Committee


Sources: Drawings from Hariri Pontarini Architects
**Casey House**  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

**SECOND LEVEL**

**EXISTING BUILDING:** Therapy Support

**NEW CONSTRUCTION:** Outpatient Clinic

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**KEY SPACES:**
- Day Health Program (68-548 sf)
- Shared Activity (143-183 sf)
- Support (33-403 sf)

**TRAVEL DISTANCE ANALYSIS**
- Patient: 16ft - 193ft
- Family: 16ft - 193ft
- Staff: 25ft - 233ft

**EXISTING BUILDING:** Therapy Support

**NEW CONSTRUCTION:** Outpatient Clinic

**EXISTING BUILDING:** Therapy Support

**NEW CONSTRUCTION:** Outpatient Clinic

**DEPARTMENTAL GROSS SQUARE FOOT TAKE-OFFS**

- Existing Building: Therapy Support
  - Net: 2160 SF
  - Gross: 2511 SF
  - N/S ratio: 1.17
- New Construction: Outpatient Clinic
  - Net: 5745 SF
  - Gross: 8638 SF
  - N/S ratio: 1.50

Sources: Drawings from Hariri Pontarini Architects

Note: "Departmental Square Footages take-off based on Analysis of Departmental Area in Contemporary Hospitals calculation methodologies & Design Factors Report, 2014"
Casey House
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Third Level

**Case Study Format Developed By:**
AIA Academy of Architecture for Health | Research Initiatives Committee

**Day Health Program (153 sf)**
**Shared Activity (143-304 sf)**
**Patient Rooms (289-343 sf)**
**Registration/Waiting (100 sf)**
**Support (26-369 sf)**
**Nurse Stations (30-66 sf)**

**KEY SPACES:**
- Day Health Program
- Shared Activity
- Patient Rooms
- Registration/Waiting
- Support
- Nurse Stations

**EXISTING BUILDING: FINANCIAL OFFICES & SUPPORT**
**NEW CONSTRUCTION: INPATIENT BEDS**

**EXISTING BUILDING: FINANCIAL OFFICES & SUPPORT**
**NEW CONSTRUCTION: INPATIENT BEDS**

**TRAVEL DISTANCE ANALYSIS**
- Patient: 17ft - 189ft
- Family: 17ft - 166ft
- Staff: 16ft - 182ft

**EXISTING BUILDING:**
- Financial Offices & Support

**NEW CONSTRUCTION:**
- Inpatient Beds

**DEPARTMENTAL GROSS SQUARE FOOT TAKE-OFFS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Existing Building: Financial Offices &amp; Support</th>
<th>New Construction: Inpatient Beds</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net</td>
<td>833 SF</td>
<td>6272 SF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross</td>
<td>1137 SF</td>
<td>9157 SF</td>
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<tr>
<td>N/G ratio</td>
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<td>1.46</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Departmental square footages take-off based on "Analysis of Departmental Area in Contemporary Hospitals: calculation methodologies & design factors report, 2014"

**Sources:**
- Drawings from Hariri Pontarini Architects
Casey House
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

**Case Study Format Developed By:**

- **KEY SPACES:**
  - Outdoor Space (691 sf)
  - Reception/Waiting (17-110 sf)
  - Support (25-197 sf)
  - Support: Large Meeting Room (923 sf)

**TRAVEL DISTANCE ANALYSIS**

- Staff 17ft - 214ft

**NEW CONSTRUCTION: STAFF OFFICES & SUPPORT**

- **GROSS SQUARE FOOT TAKE-OFFS**
  - Net: 2646 SF
  - Gross: 3761 SF
  - N/G ratio: 1.42

*Note: "Departmental Square footage take-off based on Analysis of Departmental Area in Contemporary Hospitals' calculation methodologies & Design Factors Report, 2014*

*Source: Drawings from Hariri Pontarini Architects*
**Casey House**

**Toronto, Ontario, Canada**

**DESIGN INTENT**

**CARING AND COMFORT**

The design intent was to create a functional facility that was infused with the atmosphere of caring to honor the incredible legacy of Casey House’s founder June Callwood. A caring that can be felt throughout—every detail—the patient rooms, the materials, and the gathering spaces. Patient rooms feature comforts of home—a wood headboard with swiveling panels that conceal medical equipment, faux-fireplace mantels, and operable windows that help to de-institutionalize the patient experience.

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

Project: Casey House
Project location: Toronto, Ontario Canada
Owner/Client: Casey House
Architect: Hariri Pontarini Architects
Landscape architect: Mark Hartley Landscape Architect
Heritage consultant: ERA Architects
Code consultant: David Hine Engineering
Structural engineer: Entuitive
ME engineer: WSP Canada
Acoustics: Swallow
Security: Mulvey & Banani
Food Service: Kaizen Foodservice Planning
Photographs/Illustrations: Doublespace Photography
Construction cost: $30 million
Building area GSF: 59,000
Cost per square foot: $508.47
Construction start date: March 2015
Substantial completion date: September 2017

**AIA/AAH DESIGN AWARD WINNER**

Category B: Built, More than $25 million in construction cost

**JURY COMMENT**

▶ The concept of ‘embrace’ was resolved well with the garden space and the existing buildings.
▶ There is an integration with the context.
▶ It was described as a great project that goes beyond the stigma of AIDS.
▶ It is a project that celebrates a life giving space that is about community.
▶ It is thoughtful, empathetic and dignified.
▶ Detailing is beautiful and well crafted.
▶ Layers of materiality and tactility make it very warm.
▶ There is a great use of light.
▶ The building is uplifting yet grounded.
▶ The interiors are well done with a simple palette making modern, yet very warm and human spaces.
▶ The presentation was put together well and built upon a story.
▶ Key words—Empathy, Healing and Dignity.

**Text adapted from: Casey House Entry for AIA Award; AIA Website (https://www.aia.org/showcases/6173750-casey-house)**

**Image Credits:** Doublespace Photography © Hariri Pontarini Architects

**Sources:** 2019 AIA/AAH Healthcare Design Award Winner submission files / Hariri Pontarini Architects