

Comfort Goes Beyond Direct Medical Care

Innovative environmental program provides room temperature control at patient fingertips

The planning and creation of the newly opened North Tower at OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center, in Rockford, was centered on the patient experience.

The 78 private rooms are designed to maximize patient healing and wellness. For example, the openness of the design that allows plenty of room and comfort for the patient, their family and loved ones. as well as the care givers.

That also includes giving the patient more control over the room - and that means much more than just the adjusting TV.

Working with its partner, Environmental Control Solutions, Incorporated, OSF HealthCare designed a web temperature control system that places room temperature adjustment right in the patient's hands.

"The biggest take away for this project, in this building in particular, is that you'll have the highest impact on patient comfort inside with the lowest impact on the environment and your use of natural resources to provide heating a cooling to the space," says Erik Fehl, of project partner Environmental Control Solutions Incorporated.

While this collaborative and innovative effort cost a little more, OSF HealthCare believes the comfort of patient makes it all worthwhile.

"In the past they either had to call nursing or somebody within facility engineering and make the adjustment," says Shawn Shahgheibi, Director of Facility Planning a Operations for OSF HealthCare Northern Region. "Now they have the capability of that thing, basically, being at their fingertip without any interference from us or somebody else. They know what the temperature and the comfort is within their room, then someone, for example, from facility. We have a, basically, a set point and that's what we go by. But now, the patient has that ability to select their own comfort zone within the room."

The new technology also provide high energy efficiency, primarily because the rooms are now air cooled rather than water cooled.

"Less dependence and reliance on water and less waste on water," explains Shahgheibi. "I mean, on average, each cooling tower uses almost one million gallons per year. This one has almost twice the efficiency in terms of number of kilowatts we use per cooling tonnage for the building."

The results of this collaboration between OSF HealthCare and Environmental Control Solutions has already earned a Midwest Region "Project of the Year" recognition by Automated Logic, designers of the system.