

The Alzheimer Centre of Excellence (ACE): Bringing greater freedom and peace of mind to Alzheimer's patients and their families.



The Alzheimer Centre of Excellence (ACE) Project at the Riverview Hospital in Winnipeg is the first of its kind, providing state-of-the-art long-term care for people living with Alzheimer's. This facility is specifically designed to stimulate cognitive function, maximize patient independence and improve quality of life for its residents.

The design of the 60-bed ACE project disrupts traditional approaches to Alzheimer's care. Unlike traditional facilities where residents are typically confined to a small dining and living room area, this space enables its residents to explore 9,000 sq. ft. of living space freely and safely. Cindy Rodych, Principal at Rodych Integrated

Design, and Lead Designer for the project explains, "our challenge is to balance resident safety with quality-of-life. We want to create family-like settings that replicate the home environment." Pictures of family and pets on iPads outside every room serve as stimulants for memory. Additionally, every room features a differently styled "front door." Not only does this help residents identify their rooms, it also promotes a feeling of home and comfort. Included in the space is a Pavilion that features seven interactive stations where residents can enjoy themselves safely: they can go to an office to work, into a nursery to care for a baby, sit in or polish a vehicle, to name a few. The building is outfitted with circadian lighting that simulates natural outdoor light and helps residents sleep better at night. Key to resident safety and independence is wireless geolocation technology that enables staff to know where all patients are at any time.



“We have heard from the families of the patients that when they come into this facility, they feel like a burden is lifted.”

Andrea Meakin,
Director of Resident Care Services

The furniture for the Centre needed to be sturdy enough to protect the residents but be easily moved and reconfigured daily to satisfy staff and family preferences. Height adjustable table options were a key addition to the dining area, and sturdy high-back armchairs with flexible backs that can rock back and forth help soothe residents safely. “Furniture has to be both safe and flexible, but perhaps, most importantly support a sense of connection and place,” says Cindy. Riverview worked within the Global healthcare product portfolio to find furniture and finishes that met all functional requirements while still feeling familiar and home-like. Andrea Meakin, Director of Resident Care Services, ACE, comments on one

seemingly small but powerful aspect of the furniture. She explains, “the fact that Global provided us with couches that are built for a healthcare setting, yet provide residents and loved ones with a place to sit in contact with each other is huge! Small things like this bring great comfort to our residents.” When asked, “How can you tell that the space is working?” Andrea responds, “we have heard from the families of the patients that when they come into this facility, they feel like a burden is lifted. They say the space is gorgeous, and that they can walk away feeling a sense of ease and peace that they have done the right thing.”



