

Transformation through Partnership

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Ten years ago, Rush University Medical Center decided to bring its facilities into the 21st century. The partnership with Siemens played a key role in the success of this transformation.



The butterfly-type shape of the hospital's new tower follows functional aspects of care. The hospital's CEO Larry Goodman (above) made sure that employees were involved in the hospital planning from the very start.

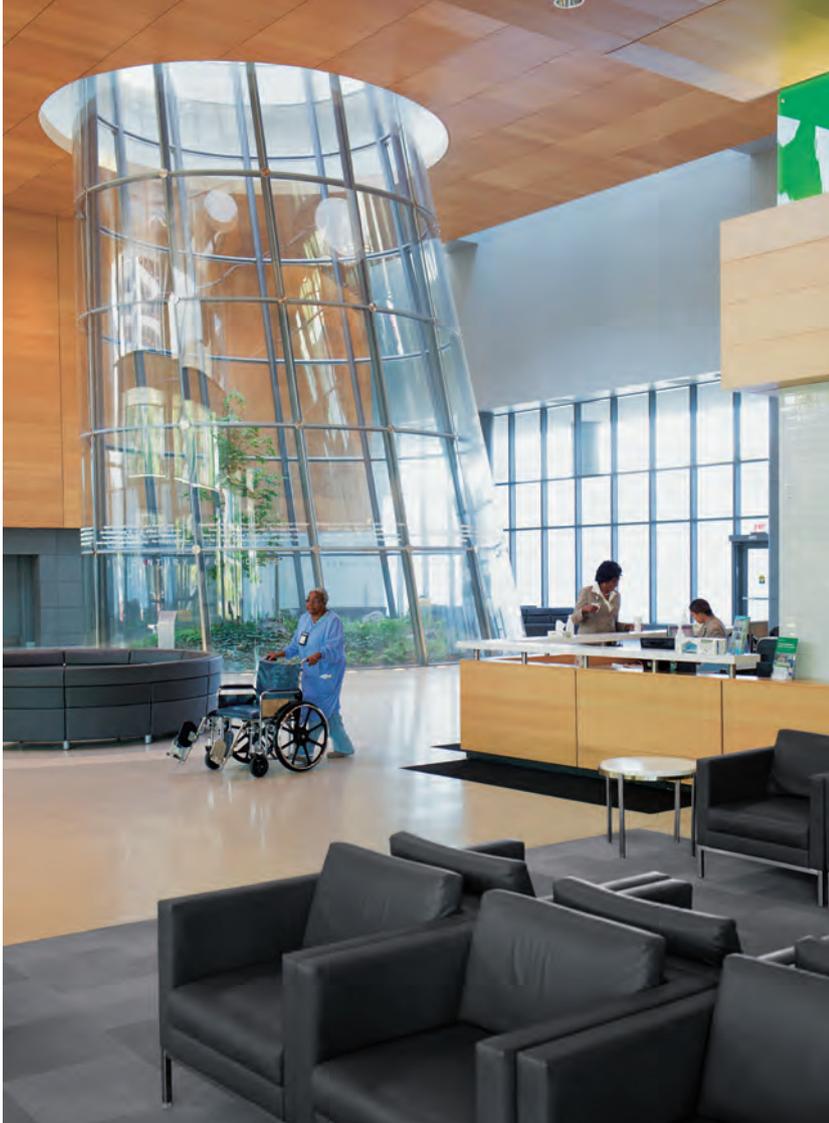


For Dr. Sharon Byrd, the 21st century began in 2004: “We were still in the 19th century as far as our imaging technology was concerned,” the Chairperson of the Department of Diagnostic Radiology and Nuclear Medicine at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago openly admits. Even Professor Peter Butler, who as the Medical Center’s President is responsible for the operational and administrative aspects and procedures, recalls dark times when he thinks about the last renovation, which was completed in 1982: “I was here when we opened the then brand-new clinical facility, and I remember patients being rolled down the hall with paper charts on their chests.” The patient folder has since given way to electronic medical records that can easily be transmitted wirelessly between departments and

referring physicians, and thanks to an innovative layout for the new main wing, the distances in the corridors have become shorter – Rush is one of the leading and most modern hospitals in the United States.

Brainstorming with Employees

And this required more than a renovation – “transformation” is the term chosen by Rush management, headed by Professor Butler and Larry Goodman, Chief Executive Officer. The idea that the newly created “Office of Transformation” was intended to implement was not limited to expanding the capacities or purchasing new equipment; the primary goal, according to Goodman and Butler, was to integrate ideas and suggestions from the employees ▶



Administrator of Diagnostic Services, Bernard Peculis (above) was looking for a partner to support the hospital not only in clinical applications, but in research and educational tasks, as well.

Management Summary

Challenge:

The Rush University Medical Center was not only interested in upgrading; it was looking for a partner in a comprehensive transformation process.

Solution:

The Medical Center found Siemens to be a vendor that understood the hospital's needs and responded to its specific requirements.

Result:

The upgrade simplified processes, made the employees' jobs easier, and led to higher patient satisfaction scores – even in departments that were not directly affected by it.

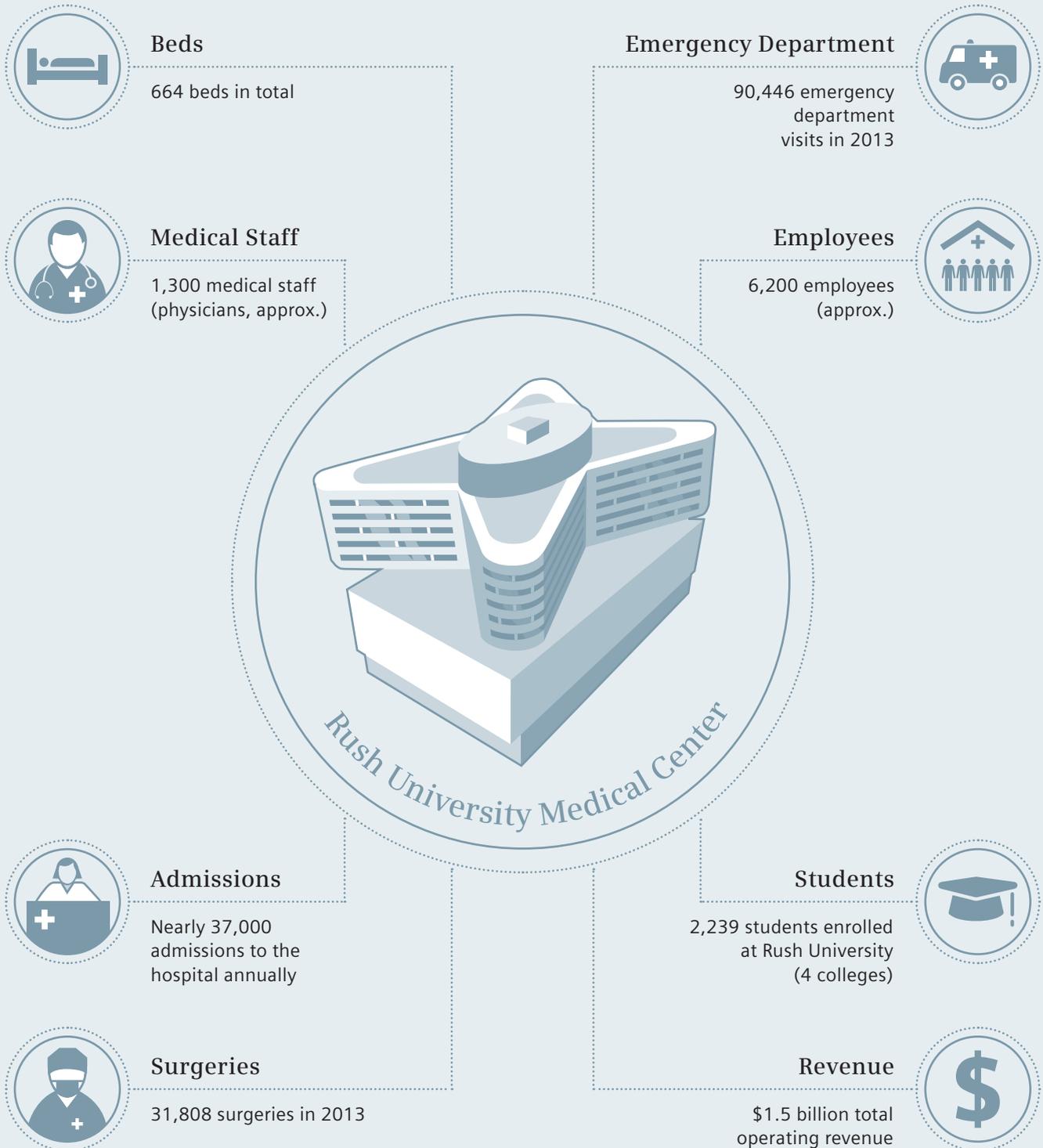
on how patient care could look in the future into the concept of the transformation. The shape of the hospital's striking new tower, which opened in January 2012, did not come from the creative ideas of an architect team, but rather from the practical suggestions of employees: "Our nursing staff thought that a butterfly-type shape would actually create hospital wards that have better sightlines and shorter distances," explained Goodman.

Encouraging Collaboration

Rush was one of the first hospitals in the United States to implement the concept of an "interventional platform." 40 operating and treatment rooms for interventional radiology – as well as for interventional cardiology, electrophysiology, and surgery – are concentrated on three floors, which not only shortens the distances for patients but also encourages cooperation between the specialists. For example, a hybrid operating room is also equipped with interventional radiology imaging equipment. "It has really revolutionized the things we do," states Dr. Byrd. The technology for the treatment of stroke patients was also stuck in the 19th century, to stay with her analogy. The Siemens experts have been able to raise the standard with the Act on Stroke analysis tool so that Rush is now one of the top emergency centers for stroke patients in Chicago. In ▶

Facts and Figures

Rush is a not-for-profit healthcare, education, and research enterprise. It is also one of the biggest hospitals in Chicago and one of the top-rated hospitals in the United States. The facts below outline the hospital's outstanding character.



particular, the expanded capacities for magnetic resonance imaging should be mentioned, says Bernard Peculis, Administrator of Diagnostic Services: "MRI has really become the primary modality for supporting our physicians in diagnosing stroke."

One important step in this transformation, which everyone agrees on, was the decision to concentrate on a single partner when purchasing the medical – and particularly the imaging – technology. "I can't imagine doing this with 85 different partners at once," says Butler. Goodman insists that it is not just about the technology, but the fact that it is combined with the experience and care of a skilled team of experts. "We were looking not only at the technology that's available," explains Peculis, "but also at who can be the partner as we move forward, to support us in not only our clinical applications but our research and educational missions, as well." Moving from an environment of running two 1.5-tesla MRIs to two 3-tesla devices and expanding the dual-energy CT capacities gave Peculis some cause for concern, because the X-ray technicians had to be cross-trained as CT technicians.

Contagious Enthusiasm

Dr. Byrd, who had the final decision with regard to the imaging technology, therefore wanted to make certain that the staff's training program for the new equipment was flexible enough to deal with all the different levels of knowledge as well as the resulting and unavoidable scheduling problems arising from the hospital's 24/7 operations. "We looked for a company that could not only offer all the equipment we needed, but also respond to us and our requirements," she explains. "Siemens offered us all of that." The training concept was a three-pronged approach. In addition to several days of workshops in a Siemens training facility in the suburbs, the employees also received one-on-one training and could access an online course specially tailored to their needs and available 24/7. "We didn't make it easy for Siemens," stresses Dr. Byrd: "I was skeptical in the beginning, and the Siemens people knew that they had a lot of work to do – but they did a tremendous job."

The enthusiasm that the construction project inspired in the employees has apparently also spilled over to the patients – and not just those who get to enjoy the new facilities. "The increase in patient satisfaction has occurred across the institution, also in the older facilities," states Butler. "The new facilities suggest to the world that we are moving forward not backward."

At a time when "healthcare reform" is primarily discussed as synonymous with "cost reduction," positive signals like this for the future are essential for the patients as well as the employees. "None of us are in healthcare just to balance the budget at the end of the year," says Goodman as he explains that it is not all about finances – even if they are unavoidable. The University Hospital is on the West Side



President Peter Butler (above) and Chairperson of the Department of Diagnostic Radiology and Nuclear Medicine Sharon Byrd (far right) see the results of their hard work: satisfied patients.



of Chicago, a region, according to Goodman, that has "significant disparities in healthcare, where many people use an emergency department as a primary care place." The pressure to cut costs makes several amortization calculations look different today than they did ten years ago, Butler admits. "But there are certainly far more people with insurance coverage than used to be the case, and that's a positive thing. For example, in the Department of Radiology, we have seen an increase in the number of patients of between 7 percent and 20 percent, depending on the modality [CT or MRI]," states Peculis.

And even if the economic conditions have altered since the transformation process started, the basic idea of the new hospital has not changed, claims Peculis: "The driving objective from the beginning was to be focused on the needs of the patient, so regardless of what developments there were in the market, we focused specifically on creating an environment that best supports the needs of the patients and their families. And having that as the driving objective would not have changed." ■



Becoming a Hospital of the Future

How did Rush University Medical Center transform into a hospital of the 21st century? Learn more in this short documentary.



To watch the video, scan the QR code using the reader app on your smartphone or enter the URL into your browser.

www.siemens.com/rush

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Publisher:
Siemens Healthcare GmbH
Henkestraße 127
91052 Erlangen, Germany
Phone: +49 9131 84-0
siemens.com/healthcare

Responsible for Contents:
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Publishing House:
C3 Creative Code and Content GmbH
Heiligegeistkirchplatz 1
10178 Berlin, Germany

Shareholders of C3 Creative Code and Content GmbH are Burda Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung (Limited Liability Company), Offenburg, and KB Holding GmbH, Berlin, to 50% each. Sole shareholder of Burda Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung is Hubert Burda Media Holding Kommanditgesellschaft (Limited Partnership), Offenburg. Shareholders of KB Holding GmbH are Lukas Kircher (Managing Director, Berlin) and Rainer Burkhardt (Managing Director, Berlin) to 50% each.

Content and Journalistic Network,
p. 4-19, p. 30-60:
C3 Creative Code and Content GmbH,
Munich, Germany

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(freelancer)

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C3 Creative Code and Content GmbH,
Munich, Germany

Art Direction: Michael Helble

Layout: Christian Kühn, Sabine Skrobek
(freelancer)

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UNIWORKS, www.uni-works.org

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Schornbaumstrasse 7,
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Printer: G. Peschke Druckerei GmbH,
Schatzbogen 35, 81829 München, Germany

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Print | ID: 53152-1506-1001

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