



JOHN W. BAUMGARTEN ARCHITECT, P.C.

Adding a Pharmacy to Your Health Center Is Good Medicine



At JWB we have been involved with the design of Community Health Centers for over 20 years. Over these two decades we have seen both Evolution and Revolution in terms of regulation and innovation.

Most of our clients build diagnostic and treatment centers which bill Medicaid and as such are mandated by law to comply with more robust physical plant standards than a private medical practice that does not bill Medicaid.

As government at every level is seeking to drive down the cost of healthcare the focus has shifted to community medicine as a vital link in state healthcare systems.

A more recent philosophical policy shift towards the integration of services has led to the co-location of mental health, primary care and dental services “under one roof”. A natural off shoot of this has been the addition of on-site pharmacies and more on-site laboratory services.

For the most part, our clients align themselves with regional or national pharmacy providers who occupy a designated suite of 600 to 800 square feet within the overall clinic floor plan. For obvious reasons, it is logical to situate the pharmacy near the clinic's main entry where it can share a central waiting area with the clinic's intake/reception areas.

This is consistent with the natural flow of a medical practice; check-in, assess, treat, prescribe, check-out. In the integrated model, a patient picks up their medication “on the way out” of the medical center.

As the clinic's Architect, we delineate the pharmacy's footprint, its ceiling plan/lighting arrangement, plumbing/electrical/HVAC infrastructure, transaction counter design and the integration of security features such as rolling gates and shutters.

We work closely with the pharmacy vendor on the layout of the pharmacy floor plan & casework, integrating the support of cabinetry and the placement of power/data/telephone outlets with the clinic's construction documents. In most cases, the pharmacy vendor provides the cabinetry and the contractor building the clinic installs it.

In Medicaid reimbursed clinics, the pharmacy design is subject to the Federal Guidelines Institute's “Guidelines for the Design and Construction of Outpatient Facilities” (FGI). FGI space requirements for satellite pharmacies include; receiving/inventory control, dispensing areas, reviewing/recording area, storage, refrigerated storage, provision for cross-checking patient drug profiles, office space, consultation area/counter and sterile work areas. Other required spaces such as staff toilets, staff lockers, educational training area etc. can be shared with the parent clinic.

If you would like more information regarding on-site pharmacies, contact our expert team at JWB. We are here to help!



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