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Mid Ohio Oncology designed its new center to give patients a calming environment for their treatment.

## New cancer center puts patients in forefront of building's design

BY BRENT LALONDE | FOR BUSINESS FIRST

A \$42 million private, outpatient cancer-treatment center that is about to open near Port Columbus promises to revolutionize the way patients are treated in Central Ohio.

The Mark H. Zangmeister Center, set to open May 29 at 3100 Plaza Properties Blvd. near Cassady Avenue and Interstate 670, was designed to make the patient experience as easy as possible, said Glenn Balasky, executive director of Mid Ohio Oncology/Hematology in Columbus. The practice developed the center and its four cancer and blood disorder treatment facilities will be consolidated into the new complex.

It has features such as separate entrances for different treatment areas to make shorter walks for patients to reach their needed areas, he said.

"The building is designed with the patient in mind," Balasky said. "Especially for the type of care that we provide, it is very cutting-edge. As opposed to traveling to a small office in a large office building or in a hospital setting, our patients are able to drive up, park and quickly get access to the

building and to the physician or other care provider that they need. You do not have to start off the process by navigating a complicated building or campus."

### SOOTHING COLORS

The center features views of the outdoors from its 90 infusion chairs; a lobby with live plants, two large aquariums and other water features designed to calm patients; and a healing garden. The use of natural light and warm, earth-tone colors are also used, with all the features designed to put patients at ease.

Andrews Architects, a Dublin-based firm that specializes in health-care facilities and hospitals, designed the center.

"This is going to be held up in the oncology community as the place to be in the country," said firm President Bill Andrews. "There is nothing at this point in time that is better than this facility."

Andrews is proud of the subtle design features that make the facility feel smaller than its 110,000 square feet.

"The key to all of this is to make sure the patients don't feel overwhelmed by the scale of the center," he said. "Once you en-

ter the building, you want to break the building down into smaller spaces."

Many of the personal touches would not have been considered when cancer treatment centers were built even five or 10 years ago, he said.

"Because now there are more cancer patients, we can build a specialized facility to meet their needs," said Balasky, who said he believes the Zangmeister Center is part of a national trend toward larger and more patient-friendly treatment centers. "With the growth of the Columbus metro area and the aging of the baby boomer era, the number of cancer patients is only going to increase. Right now the average age of our patients is 53 to 55, and as that goes up, there will be even more patients for facilities like ours to treat."

The center's features will put patients in the right frame of mind when going to get chemotherapy and other treatments, Balasky said.

"It most certainly helps the healing process by lifting the spirits of the patients and helping them have a positive attitude when they come to see their physicians," Balasky said.

### EXPANSION OF SERVICES

The center will also provide a variety of services under one roof, including a specialty pharmacy, infusion services, expanded diagnostic imaging, radiation oncology, surgical oncology, clinical space and psychosocial services. Patient education and an educational library are also included.

Mid Ohio has operated in Columbus since 1982. The new center can serve about 16,000 patients a year, up from the 9,809 treated at its eight Central Ohio locations in 2006. In addition to four Columbus offices that will consolidate into the center, Mid Ohio also serves patients at facilities in Chillicothe, London and Delaware. The 16,000 patients would make the center the busiest in Central Ohio.

The center is named after Dr. Mark H. Zangmeister, whose son, Dr. Jeffrey Zangmeister, is an oncologist with Mid Ohio and will work at the new center. The elder Zangmeister worked at Mid Ohio for much of his 35-year career specializing in cancer treatment. He died of cancer in 2001.

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