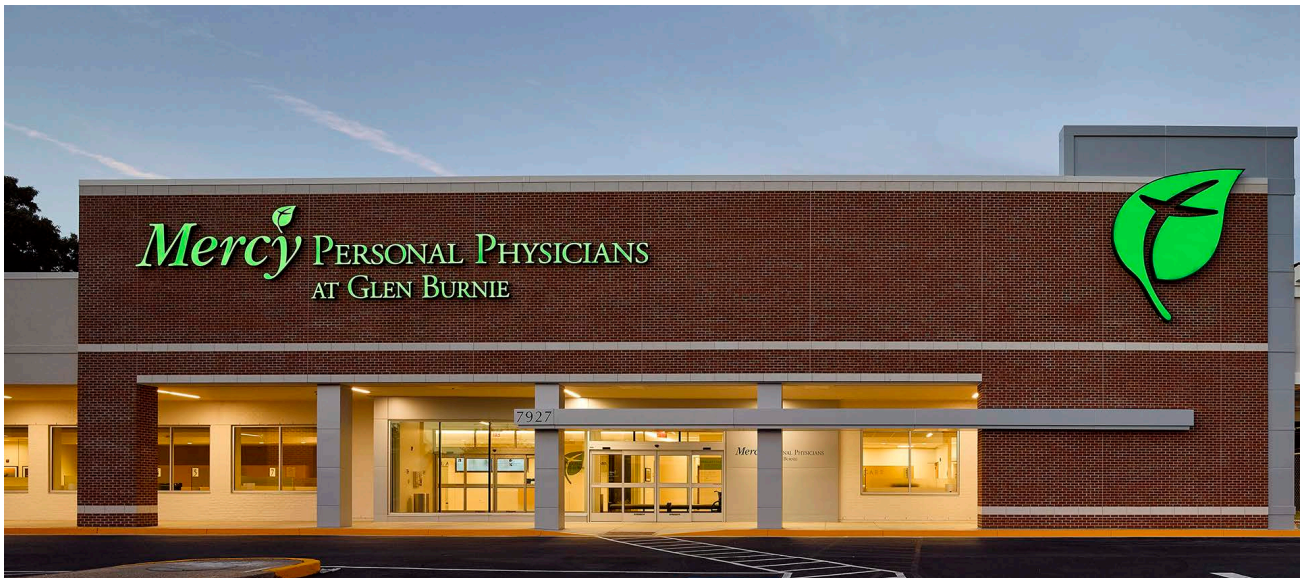


# Mastering the Patient Experience with Branding and Wayfinding

SEPTEMBER 2018



View of the front entrance to Mercy Personal Physicians at Glen Burnie

To compete and excel in the increasingly congested and competitive healthcare industry, the need for outpatient centers to differentiate themselves from the pack is more important than ever. For Hord Coplan Macht client Mercy Health Services, who opened an outpatient center, Mercy Personal Physicians at Glen Burnie in 2017, the answer was increased branding and improved patient experience.

Mercy, like many healthcare systems, is moving away from acute care sites and branching out into communities, creating one-stop-shops for patients to see primary care providers and specialists, as well as take care of imaging and lab work. But as providers move away from their main hospital sites, they risk sacrificing name recognition. This, combined with the challenge of ensuring Mercy's signature superior service in a retail environment, was the challenge Mercy brought to HCM.

#### **SPECIALITIES INCLUDE:**

- Primary care
- Specialty care
- Imaging
- Lab/blood draw
- Infusion
- Pulmonary, Stress/Echo and Vascular Labs

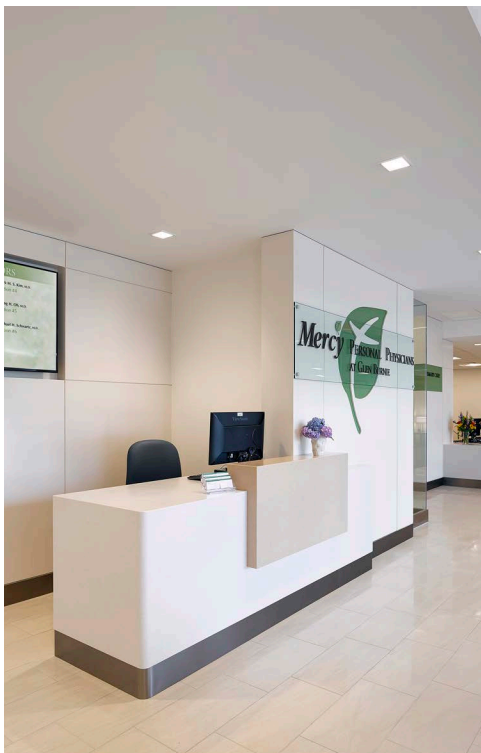
In recent years, Mercy had replaced and rebranded their main site and wanted the new hub in Glen Burnie, MD, the first to be built after the rebrand, to follow the same model and standards. To accomplish this, HCM began with the exterior of the facility. The building, formally a grocery store, was surrounded by a large parking lot. While positive in terms of accessibility and capacity, it presented a branding challenge. To ensure recognition of the Mercy brand from the farthest reaches of the parking lot and from the street, HCM redesigned the front façade to match that of the main Mercy hospital in brick and panel color, and added an entrance canopy with the Mercy leaf.



Mercy's signature leaf

The branding continued on the interior of the building. In addition to the brand-recognizable colors and designs, the patient experience was that of a Mercy-quality facility. While many hubs like Mercy Glen Burnie are in very large buildings and often house numerous physicians, causing confusion and frustration for patients, the flow and layout of this hub puts the patient experience first.

"In other hubs, patients are barraged by, in one glance, 10 to 15 8x11 pieces of paper trying to tell you what to do, where to go, asking you if you brought your insurance card, etc." said Rick Abbott, AIA, EDAC, a Principal in HCM's Healthcare Studio. "It makes it very difficult for a patient to figure out what they need to do and they end up spending all their time reading pieces of paper rather than experiencing the space."



View of the reception desk in the lobby

To avoid frustration and confusion, patients are presented with a technological approach to wayfinding with a reception desk backed by large flat screen TVs that show the name and picture of physicians at the center, along with directions for how to find them.

"You look up and almost immediately know what direction you need to go," Abbott said. "I can look up at the screen, see Dr. XYZ is at Pod 3 today and then follow an arrow to that station where I can start the registration process."

These stations and the physician pods are a part of the broader effort to improve patient experience. Many hubs have different doctors on staff each day, making it difficult to provide space for each and oftentimes forcing multiple physicians to share the same area or move around constantly. With the pod model, primary care physicians are allotted their own, customizable space. This makes physicians more comfortable and, in turn, better able to provide quality service to their patients.

**OVERALL  
FACILITY SIZE**

→ 26,800 SF

**NUMBER OF  
EXAM ROOMS**

→ 38



View of the registration area

Not only is wayfinding important upon entrance, it's also important for exiting. HCM designed the building with single corridors that all funnel back toward the waiting room. One whole wall of the waiting room is made of glass so when a patient exits a pod, they can follow the natural light from the waiting room back towards the door. The incorporation of daylight into the design offers an inherent wayfinding tool that doesn't require excessive signage in the hallways leading to the exit.

At Hord Coplan Macht, our goal is not just to design buildings – it's to improve the lives of those who live, work, and get care within them. Through our partnership with Mercy Health Services, HCM was able to design a patient- and physician-friendly outpatient center that lives up to the renowned Mercy name.