

## EVOLVING WITH THE HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENT

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Hospitals, once the mainstay for all medical services and treatments, have evolved into a multitude of various types of healthcare facilities. These facilities can provide anything from same day surgery, imaging, diagnostic and treatment to rehab, preventive care and doctor offices. The codes for these types of facilities may be a little less stringent than those that may be required in a hospital, but the MEP systems are still unique and require a certain expertise.

When purchasing off-site office building(s) for conversion to medical use, keep in mind that your typical spec office buildings generally do not have the specialized systems required. Often times they are built with little regard to efficiency and more on first cost. Major MEP system upgrades may be required to convert these types of buildings to medical use. Some things to keep in mind when performing these evaluations:

- ▶ Are the air handling units adequately sized, including outside air
- ▶ Do air handling units have final filters
- ▶ Are the ductwork mains and risers adequately sized
- ▶ Is return air ducted or by plenum
- ▶ Line supply air ducts or fiberglass ducts
- ▶ Are exhaust fans and risers adequately sized
- ▶ Does the building have emergency power
- ▶ Is the fire alarm system per code
- ▶ Is the building fully sprinklered and per code
- ▶ Are the utilities to the building adequately sized (water, sewer, electric, gas - if provided).
- ▶ Are the plumbing systems adequately sized (drainage, water)

You will also need to know what types of services are proposed for the building. Same Day Surgery has special requirements for air changes, filtration, emergency power, and medical gases to name a few. Imaging has large electrical loads. All of these things need to be evaluated when doing a building analysis.

For more information or interest in a building evaluation, MEP design services or energy analysis, contact PWI Engineering, Fran McCarron at [fmccarron@pwius.com](mailto:fmccarron@pwius.com) or 215-241-9100 Ext.203.

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