

SHIRLEY RYAN ABILITYLAB
CHICAGO, IL



The goal of this project was to bring people together for respite and to enhance healing through hospitality. The 12th floor foodservice location looks out to Lake Michigan, and the design team worked hard to ensure unobstructed views. Typically, we locate tall equipment on exterior walls for good internal sightlines. In this project we pulled high equipment inboard and located lower work counters along the exterior. Exterior window walls required the design team to develop special construction details for fabricated work counters with sinks to ensure that the heating system would protect plumbing from cold winter temperatures along exterior walls.

AbilityLab patients stay at the facility for extended periods, unlike typical acute care facilities. The Rippe team visited a previous rehabilitation project in Atlanta to observe how customers navigated the retail server and to talk with foodservice staff about optimal equipment and dimensions for their clientele. Based on this research, serving counter heights were set at 32" rather than the 34" ADA requirement.

Details

Opening Date: April 2017
Equipment Cost: \$1,600,000

Project Size

Production Kitchen: 8,000 SF
Retail Serving: 4,375 SF
Catering Pantry: 215 SF
162-Seat Dining Room: 3,940 SF
Occupied Beds: 242-350
Peak Meal Volume: 900

Scope

Foodservice Design

The retail servery is a foodcourt concept that uses visual displays of featured menu items to merchandise options. Since we eat first with our eyes, and since displayed items at serving counter height were not easily seen by customers in wheelchairs, the design team developed a unique design feature with BSI. A mirrored plexiglass panel was installed above the protector shelf glass, adjusted to provide a view of menu items for people who approach the counter in a wheelchair. The design team also considered how customers in wheelchairs approach counters and reach the food – hence, the lower front serving counter is angled back to the toe-kick to improve the reach from wheelchairs to menu items.

