



At-A-Glance

A hallway goes from institutional to inspirational and cheers up pediatric patients in the process.

CASE STORY

Phoenix Children's Hospital *Phoenix, AZ*

About the Project

Phoenix Children's Hospital treats about 70,000 kids annually in Arizona. So when the hospital's advisory board started discussing what improvements could be made to make the building more welcoming for children, they thought it was important to ask their young patients for input.

One piece of feedback was about a particular hallway that David Lenhardt, chairman of the hospital's advisory board, described as "the main artery of this hospital." Almost every patient in the hospital travels through this corridor at some point during their stay, and originally it was long, windowless, and

plain beige. For kids on their way to surgery and other procedures, being wheeled on a gurney down this bleak hall tended to increase their anxiety instead of easing it. The hallway needed a makeover. And so, the project became, as Lenhardt defined it, "all about the transformative power of art to heal children."



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Design Goals

The walls needed two things: cosmetic improvements and durable protection against bumps, scratches, and daily wear and tear. Acrovyn by Design® wall protection was the answer for both.

"[The hospital] went with Acrovyn so that it could be cleaned and it was extremely durable," said Liz Watzlavik, project manager at DPR Construction.

To brighten the hallway, the hospital tapped contemporary artist Shara Hughes, who set out drawing on more than 60 sheets of paper to create the story told by this mural. Hughes opted for crayons, markers, and watercolors because those are the mediums kids would use, and it helps the artwork feel

more accessible to youngsters. Plus, it really is accessible because with Acrovyn by Design, images are embedded behind the Acrovyn sheet and nothing can get to them, so touching the surface is fine.

Solution

The vibrant corridor today bears almost no resemblance to its dreary former self. The finished installation, titled "Wonder and Wander," is comprised of 140 panels that display more than 1,000 ft. of floor-to-ceiling, interactive artwork for visitors to touch—and with Acrovyn sheet it appears as one continuous mural on the walls.

One young girl, who has been a patient at Phoenix Children's for years, said that her

first trip down the hall after its transformation was the first time it felt fun. "From where I was sitting in the bed, all I could see were the shapes and colors and create my own story of what the mural was showing." Exactly the type of engaged, positive reaction we hoped for. "We always put art up high. We're always told 'Don't touch!' versus this one, which is 'Touch! Feel it. Experience it,'" said Leslie Beatty, CS representative. "This has been the most emotional project I've ever had."

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