



Cochrane Community Health Services

Cochrane, Alberta



Few sectors have to be as responsive and responsible as healthcare. Its clientele ranges from newborns to seniors. It responds daily to injuries, illnesses and preventative health care.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) is a provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health services for more than 3.7 million people. The AHS manages Cochrane Community Health Services, where staff is ready for whatever incidents occur at the local oil rigs, ranches and lumber mills. The town of Cochrane also happens to be one of the country's fastest growing, meaning they provide more and more family health care.

A whole new level
of flexibility for us.



When building a new clinic, stakeholders envisioned a space to match the community's demands better than conventional construction methods and materials had previously. "We're constantly challenged with a shortage of space and evolving space needs," said AHS Project Manager, Beverly Wilson. "Demountable partitions seemed like a good long-term solution for this site." By choosing DIRTT, that flexibility extends to providing accessible wall cavities. Indoor air quality is protected whether the Facilities Team needs to fix one pipe or renovate entire offices. "If they take a room out or make a room larger they don't have to shut down a whole floor," explained the Architect, Stacy Christensen with Group2 Architecture Engineering. "They can localize the construction to a little zone. You don't get all the drywall dust and all the mess. It's a very smart solution for this type of application."

DIRTT Walls provided other benefits during initial design and construction. Off-site manufacturing combined with the instant, comprehensive modifications of ICE® software gave the design team nearly three extra months of design time. "Because of the way DIRTT works we could really narrow down and get into the nitty-gritty of each space," said Ms. Christensen. "We had time to make each space truly work for its intended use."

For the medical staff at the clinic the DIRTT Walls provide horizontal support for furniture, fixtures and equipment. This unique horizontal support method gives the medical staff the best initial placement of equipment and storage with easy, damage-free adjustability. "Instead of screwing all the fitments to the wall we can clip them in," said Ms. Christensen. "We can move them around. The spaces took on a whole new level of flexibility for us."

The community responded warmly to the new clinic's open house. "People love this space," said Ms. Wilson. "We were able to make the clinic more playful and a little bit brighter than if we were using a typical drywall solution." Ms. Christensen feels there is a lot more potential for using DIRTT in healthcare applications. "I think it's a nice solution. I'd love to see it grow in that way."