

When Care Can't Wait: Healthcare's Next Expansion Strategy



Healthcare organizations are under growing pressure to expand access while managing rising construction costs, limited capital, and increasing demand for care.

Traditional ground-up construction is often too slow, too expensive, or too inflexible to keep pace, especially as care services must shift closer to where patients live and work. Adaptive reuse has emerged as a strategic response, allowing healthcare systems to repurpose existing retail, office, and community buildings into care settings more quickly, at lower cost, and with less environmental impact. In these environments, furnishings become the critical lever that transforms repurposed spaces into fully functional healthcare facilities that support care delivery, patient comfort, and efficient operations from day one.



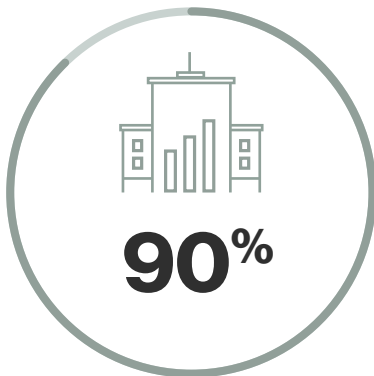
Shifting the Healthcare Expansion Equation

Adaptive reuse is emerging as a practical way to deliver care faster — bringing services closer to communities while conserving capital and achieving sustainability goals. This shifts emphasis from structural investment to interior performance, putting greater weight on how space is equipped to support care, flow, and experience.



Reuse is Redefining Healthcare Growth

As care demand increases, healthcare expansion is increasingly occurring within existing buildings rather than through ground-up construction.



of real estate growth over the next 10 years could come from the reuse of existing buildings rather than new construction

Gallagher, Buildings of Future Past: Adaptive Reuse in Construction, 2024

Nearly Half of New Construction Costs Go to Structure

A significant portion of capital investment in new facilities is absorbed before clinical or patient needs are even addressed in design.



represents the cost of the building itself in new construction for health facilities

Healthcare Brew, October 2023

What's At Stake

For patients

- **Access is compromised**

When expansion can't keep pace with demand, patients encounter longer wait times, fewer convenient care locations, and reduced access to services.

- **Experience suffers**

Care delivered in spaces that aren't thoughtfully adapted can feel confusing, impersonal, or uncomfortable, undermining trust and satisfaction.

For caregivers

- **Workloads intensify**

Skipping adaptive reuse opportunities limits options to redistribute demand, leaving staff stretched in outdated or overburdened facilities.

- **Well-being is impacted**

Adaptive reuse that improves daylight, air, and environmental performance of buildings can improve staff well-being and morale.

For organizations

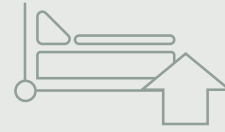
- **Capital flexibility shrinks**

Ignoring reuse opportunities can lock organizations into high-cost construction that diverts funding away from staffing, technology, and mission-driven care programs.

- **Speed to market slows**

Without adaptive reuse, organizations face longer timelines to open new care sites, delaying revenue, limiting access expansion, and reducing responsiveness to community demand.

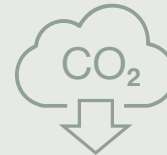
Rising Outpatient Demand Is Driving Expansion



10.6%

is the expected growth rate for outpatient volume over the next five years¹

Adaptive Reuse Reduces Environmental Impact



50 - 75%

is the carbon emission reduction from repurposing an existing building over constructing the same building new²

Adaptive Reuse Unlocks Meaningful Cost Savings



12 - 15%

is the potential cost savings for repurposing buildings over new construction²



Design Thinking:

Adaptive reuse only delivers long-term value if spaces can change without repeated construction. Modular furnishings and standardized room planning enable organizations to quickly pivot services as needs change while preserving capital.

Room-level adaptability for evolving care

- **Modular layouts and universal rooms**

Standardized, universal layouts, flexible furnishings, and modular casework enable environments to shift between exams, consultations, or specialty visits without renovation. Forge casework makes reconfiguration simple and cost-effective.



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- **Multi-use waiting/community zones**

Community spaces deliver greater value when they can flex between patient waiting, outreach, and support functions as needs change.



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Design Thinking:

Adaptive reuse often begins with shells never intended for care. Furnishings and clear visual cues establish clinical function, safety, and trust for patients the moment they arrive.

Defined clinical zones signal care in unconventional spaces

- **Reconfigurable treatment areas**
Furniture and layout can be used in open spaces to clearly define clinical boundaries and establish care credibility, while maintaining comfort and dignity for patients.
- **Flexible nurses stations**
Clearly visible caregiver work points signal active care delivery, staff presence, and operational readiness, reducing patient uncertainty.



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Design Thinking:

Converted big-box, strip-mall, or office spaces can feel overwhelming or impersonal if not thoughtfully designed. Furniture plays a critical role in breaking down scale, guiding movement, and creating spaces that feel welcoming and restorative.

Hospitality-inspired environments humanize reused space

- **Consultation spaces**

Residential-inspired furniture and layouts create calm, approachable environments for patient and caregiver interactions.

- **Dedicated staff respite and break areas**

Breakout spaces with lounge furnishings and hospitality-inspired amenities create moments of restoration and connection for staff, especially important in buildings never intended for clinical care.



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