Ormskirk’s new Obstetric and Paediatric Centre
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The ProCure 21 initiative is designed to deliver healthcare facilities of the highest quality at the best possible value with price and programme certainty by embracing the principles of partnering, openness, innovation and best practices. The Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust selected ACM as their PSCP to plan, design and build a new Obstetric, Paediatric and Diagnostic & Treatment Centre on the Ormskirk site, phase 1 of the Trust’s forward-thinking Zenith project.

Achieving GMP

The task facing the team was to create a first-class facility constrained by a tight budget without compromising on design, floor space and build quality. ACM’s approach was early involvement of the whole supply chain; each member was challenged to draw on its previous experience to provide innovative, value-engineering solutions.

Every aspect of the project was considered. The construction solutions adopted included; modular prefabrication, off-site, of M&E pipe work, innovation in the uses of structural steel, an alternative approach to the foundations due to the unique geological structure of the site, the elimination of the need for a floor screed by tight quality control over concrete pouring and evaluation of a variety of cladding materials, furniture, flooring and finishes.

The staffing issues were key, through openness and trust between the client and the contractor, it was agreed to dispense with the need for a Clerk of Works. By increasing the number of managers from 4 to 6, ACM was able to adopt and manage a complex rolling trades phasing operation to generate improvements on programme and cost saving opportunities.

"ACM have done an excellent job with the ‘Maternity and Paediatrics’, the energy center was a hard road for us all and I was delighted with the modular theatres at Southport. Now the work really starts. The Strategic Intent Works are definitely going to test our strengths, but as we all have the same goal I have no worries.”

Steven Taylor
Director of Facilities South & Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust
Early and continuing user-group involvement

Consultation with the Trust’s estates and facilities user-group was fundamental to help minimise the whole-life cost of the new facility. Involvement at the early stages has resulted in the installation of flexible piping for taps making moving them, as needs change, quick and easy. It was requested that greater number of isolation valves was installed. To make maintenance easier, a 3D model of the services infrastructure has been created along with a photographic record of the ‘hidden’ services to provide a complete reference.

The clinical user-group expressed difficulty in interpreting architectural drawings and relating to the scale and layout of the completed facility. To help with realising the spatial relationships within the building, a tour for the clinical user-group was arranged for every Friday, allowing input and minor design changes to be undertaken. In addition, the clinician’s views on finishes and fixtures could be incorporated.

Eliminating programme risk

In traditional contract procurement there is always potential for tension and conflict between client and contractor. While provision exists for compensation in the event of poor quality, any corrective work that needs to be undertaken can put the programme at risk and result in overruns. On this project, the Trust and ACM worked together to embrace a ‘right-first-time’ approach. By cooperating closely and monitoring the standard of work as it progressed, any issues could be quickly identified and corrective action taken.

A case in point was the brickwork on the project. The initial standard of bricklaying was below par. In traditional procurement the ‘trade contractor’ being removed from the project. ACM decided a supportive approach was more appropriate for the good of the project. Through a combination of close supervision and training combined with positive reinforcement, the quality of brickwork was rapidly raised to an acceptable level. This being in the ethos of Egan, as a consequence the no extra cost was incurred but more importantly, quality and the construction programme were not compromised.

As part of the ‘right-first-time’ approach, a full size mock up was created to show the Trust personnel the proposed finishes and fixtures. The mock up contained areas of office, ward and theatre. This gave the clinical user-group an opportunity to provide input on usability and how well the finished environment would perform. As part of this feedback, an issue was identified with the installation of the bed head unit. The positioning of the arm used to hold the unit meant that when it was folded out, it snagged on the ceiling. By identifying this design weakness at an early stage in the process, the modification could be made and avoid any delays in the programme.

“I have spent 20 years in this industry, I have never been asked for my opinion before, Stuart and his team have my greatest respect, the canteen and toilets were always clean, an the job well organised. It was a pleasure to come to work.”

Brian Townsend
MEC Brickwork
The Trust and ACM worked to complete the facility. This developed a feeling of project ownership and increased desire to perform well. White overalls were provided with co-branded ProCure 21/ACM hard hats. The site offices and canteens were of a high standard and regularly cleaned by the Trust’s cleaning staff. Construction personnel were allowed to use Trust catering facilities to further promote the inclusive culture.

Infection control

The cleanliness consciousness of the team was put to the test when the new unit was connected to the rest of the hospital; the Trust has the best record in the North West for control of infection, particularly MRSA. When ‘breaking through’ it was critical to minimise dust and the potential risk of Aspergillosis. Airlocks were created with tack mats to collect dust and all management and personnel working on the ‘break through’ were fully briefed and issued with new, clean white uniforms.

Exceeding expectations

As a result of close management, supervision and innovation in agreement with the Trust, it became possible to reduce the projected construction programme by 10 weeks. The cost saving generated allowed the quality of the fixtures and finishes to be increased including the ceiling tiles, wooden finishes and upgraded flooring. Also there was more time available for installing equipment and commissioning the areas.
Exemplary partnership

The tight integration of the Trust, ACM and the supply chain has developed a strong partnership that has worked together to overcome all the challenges it has encountered. The Trust is about to take over a new Obstetric, Paediatric and Diagnostic & Treatment Centre that provides a first-class environment for healthcare delivery and that meets or exceeds all the NHS guidelines and the spirit if the Patient Charter. Both the Trust and ACM have gained valuable experience that can be put to good use on future projects, indeed the partnership has already co-operated on another project on the Ormskirk site.

Extending beyond the project

Midway through the Maternity and Paediatrics project in November 2003, the Trust was faced with a challenge. To improve service to its local community, the Trust had secured the services of an Orthopaedic surgical team, the challenge was that a completely new surgical unit had to be constructed from scratch by June 2004. The Trust turned to the ACM team on-site to see if they could meet the challenge. ACM rapidly moved into action and through early involvement of the supply chain, were able to develop a modular theatre solution that was delivered on time and within budget.

Local Pride

ACM believes in engaging local resources wherever possible. This gives a true sense of pride in the project because the team involved in construction are also stakeholders. Dennis O’Brien, Commercial Manager’s son was born at the hospital over 20 years ago, Stuart Brown, the Project Manager’s daughter was born at the hospital this February and Carl Pilkington, the Senior Site Manager’s son was born at this hospital this April.

Project highlights

- Construction reduced from 94 weeks to 84.
- Direct out-turn cost saving of 7% plus exceeded the original scope such as enhanced finishes, flooring, fixtures and lighting.
- Only 2 notifiable accidents, the project received a RoSPA Bronze Award.
- No claims received from sub-contractors.
- Client satisfaction reports, consistently good.
- Best client reports, consistently good.
- Internal audit results, Safety 97%, Quality Assurance, 96%, Environmental 93%.
- Considerate contractor, 87%.

The score would have been higher except links to local schools were not in place. 4 key members are currently attending the construction ambassadors scheme that will allow them to enter schools.