

## South Wind Hospice provides a home-like feel for patients

South Wind Hospice personnel knew what they wanted when they began planning a new building to replace the three-patient capacity house they were using in Pratt. Their goal was a place that would feel like a home – not a medical facility – for the patients who would stay there and their families.

South Wind Hospice Director of Development Sharon Will said a trip to Hutchinson to look at the hospice under construction there convinced them to look elsewhere for a floor plan, but led them to the general contractor for the project – Fuqua Construction, the general contractor for the Hutchinson hospice facility.

“We were impressed with how clean the work site was and the look and feel of the people working on the site – it was a comfortable, good feel,” Will said. “We felt an immediate trust with Max (Fuqua) and his crew. We knew he would pay attention to the details.”

Fuqua Construction and architect Dan Link of Landmark Architects of Hutchinson would form the core of the design build team for the project, which evolved into a comfortable 16,350 square foot, 12-patient facility designed to pay equal attention to providing quality of life for the patient and a comfortable atmosphere for visiting family members. Each private patient room has a family room attached, a bathroom and its own patio. The hospice also features a family kitchen, library, chapel, family rooms, children’s play rooms, a patient spa and a bath complete with bathing facilities for families who may be staying with their loved ones. Patients and family members may dine in sev-



### PROJECT PROFILE Southwind Hospice

**Owner:** Southwind Hospice  
**Location:** Pratt, Kansas  
**Project Scope:** New Facility  
**Project Type:** Hospice  
**Square footage:** 16,350  
**Design Build Team:** Fuqua Construction & Dan Link, Landmark Architects

eral areas within the facility or in their rooms. A courtyard provides another area to enjoy the outdoors.

The building is modeled after a facility in Iowa that provided the amenities and ease of care features desired by the South Wind Hospice staff. Fuqua and Link accompanied hospice staff on a visit to the Iowa facility early in the design



**Comfortable communal sitting areas provide a relaxed atmosphere for patients and family members at South Wind Hospice and add to the home-like feel of the facility.**

process to have a first-hand look at what they were hoping to achieve. That willingness to understand the needs of the client carried through the entire design and build process, Will said. Communication between herself, the architect and

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Fuqua was a frequent and positive experience throughout the project.

“I would ask lots of questions. Max was always accessible and answered everything,” Will said.

Accessibility and desire to understand the client’s project goals are important qualities for a successful project outcome. It’s also necessary to be a problem solver throughout the process, according to Link.

“Every single project is unique. The process of getting to completion isn’t easy. The (design build) team is constantly modifying and adjusting to make it go smoothly,” Link said. “You can’t address owner’s concerns without walking in their shoes. Max bends over backwards to make the owner happy. He’s one of those contractors who is inclined to go the extra mile. When we work with Max we know it’s going to be a good job.”

Will and her staff were not disappointed in the work quality and project coordination provided by Fuqua Construction, she said. The initial impression received on the Hutchinson construction site was reinforced when the Fuqua crews began work in Pratt.

“They were wonderful to work with,” Will said.

She added that all the employees were considerate and the sub-contractors hired displayed the same courtesy. The work continued on schedule and on budget with few glitches. One potentially delay causing problem – the bankruptcy of an electrical contractor hired for the project – was handled smoothly by Fuqua. He solved the problem by hiring the electrician working on the job on his own payroll. The electrical work went on with little interruption to the building schedule.



**Nurses station at South Wind Hospice.**

Fuqua also knew what was required for licensure by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, maintaining contact with the agency to answer any questions as they came up. If there was something in the plan that wasn’t quite what the department wanted, it was corrected during the construc-

tion phase, Will said, which made for a smooth inspection process when the project was completed.



**Kitchen facilities are available for families visiting their loved ones.**

Link believes that planning and constructing a project with the design build model leads to a smoother construction process because the contractor and architect can “pick their team.” With the team approach, the process tends to be more enjoyable and smooth running because the entire design build team is concerned about working together to obtain a good result, rather than just completing the component for which they are responsible. When a good team is assembled, a quality outcome can be predicted. It’s all about trust between all the people involved — owners, architect, general contractor and subcontractor, Link said.

“If a contractor or subcontractor wants to cheat you, you can’t watch them close enough,” Link said. “With someone like Max you can have confidence you will have a quality result. We all make mistakes, but Fuqua Construction is like our firm. Max will bend over backwards to provide the job you want. In this business, you live and die by your reputation.”

Will and the South Wind Hospice staff have been pleased with the finished project, which was completed in 2005. The building’s design is working well and the construction has met expectations. Will said there have been a few little things that needed attention on the building after it opened and Fuqua has been great with follow through, fixing what needed to be done in a timely manner.

“If you are looking for a general contractor for a project, I would tell you that Fuqua Construction will provide a smooth construction process, that Max will stay in touch with you throughout the project, and the job will get done right,” Will said.

South Wind Hospice of Pratt provides services for residents in a 20-county area of west-central Kansas.

*Written by Cindy Baldwin, Baldwin Creative Services*