

# METHODIST LE BONHEUR GERMANTOWN HOSPITAL

Germantown, TN

*Edited by Beth Lorenzini*

With a rapid population growth in the Memphis area, Methodist Le Bonheur Germantown Hospital recognized a need to expand the hospital. Methodist embarked on a plan to add 100 patient beds, relocate the main lobby and retail café, and expand a new dietary department. The work had to be implemented in stages, moving departments in phases, before the new kitchen, storage, and servery could be built-out in the existing shell space.

Planning to move and replace the 20-year-old dietary department began late in 2006 with a scheduled opening in early 2008.

Since the additional 100 patient beds, occupied in 2010, are for pediatrics and obstetrics, and the existing 209 beds are for acute-care patients, the design team needed to accommodate two different service styles based upon the patients' needs.

L2M Foodservice Design Group designed a kitchen to deliver meals both through room service and through a spoken menu.

The two meal systems are assembled on completely separate tray assembly lines in adjacent areas of the kitchen, each accessible to the transport door. Room service gets plates off a short-order cook line equipped with a fryer, griddle, charbroiler, range, and convection oven. A 4-well hot table and cold cases allow staffers to dress and finish trays. Room service assembly includes heated plate dispensers and base heat activators. Employees load trays into room service carts.

The limited-selection, spoken-menu fulfillment area is set up like a Pod. One server dishes meals from a 5-pan, hot food well (supported by a base heat activator), and passes them to two tray finishers on either side of



A grab-and-go case, one of two island units, is situated near the cashiers. The other island is a soup and salad bar.

Gleaming metal, polished wood and warm stone create an inviting ambiance. The hearth oven anchors one of three service counters.

**Design Consultant:** Stephen O'Connor, FCSI,  
L2M Foodservice Design Group, Baltimore

**Project:** Main Kitchen & Retail Café

**Budget:** \$1.1 million

**Scope of Work:** Concept development, space allocation,  
preliminary and detailed design, spec writing, site and  
pre-opening inspection

**Architecture Firm:** TRO/Jung Brannen, Memphis, Tenn.

Limited space on the loading dock mandates a reduction in waste. A close-coupled pulper/extractor in the dishroom reduces waste, including retail's disposables, to a fraction of their volume.



a tray assembly table. Each assembler has a refrigerated air screen for cold items. Meals load into three, large, tray delivery carts. Both fulfillment areas share a beverage station and ice maker. On a typical day, the patient kitchen might plate up 466 patient meals, upwards of 13,000 meals a month.

In addition to the two styles of tray makeup, the kitchen includes volume production equipment such as a combi-oven, kettle, tilt skillet, steamer, and blast chiller. This equipment produces bulk items such as soups, sauces, roasts, and baked goods needed for patient meals and for meals served in the adjacent retail café.

Both meal service styles are “high touch” programs, which require additional staffing and management. As a result, the kitchen needed to include office space for six dieticians, a chef, general manager, retail manager, and administrative support.

The entire kitchen flows efficiently from receiving and storage through cold prep to either the retail serving area or hot production. Food for patient trays flows to the tray assembly stations onto carts and out to the service corridor. Soiled patient trays return directly to the dishroom for breakdown; carts are washed and returned to the location where needed for use. Clean ware exits at the clean end of the dishroom and returns to the patient tray assembly, ready for the next meal service.

The design team envisioned a retail café and dining room that would combine a dynamic culinary environment with relaxed dining. Moving from an old, tucked-away location to a spot visible below the atrium lobby, the retail component of the

dietary department is a destination dining facility for staff and visitors.

The serving area includes six stations, up from three offered before. The focal point from a design and service standpoint is a gas-fired, stone-hearth oven with adjacent prep and storage space. The front serving counter includes drop-in heated shelves to hold and merchandise baked products such as pizza, calzones, and stromboli.

The Grill area has a full cooking battery of fryer, griddle and charbroiler; adjacent reach-in coolers and freezers; and a serving counter with drop-in, heated display shelves to merchandise the product.

To keep menu offerings fresh and varied, a third station includes a flexible, display-cooking platform. The front serving counter has a 4-burner gas range, cold holding for ingredients and heated shelves for merchandising. The back counter includes prep space and refrigerated storage to supply ingredients through a meal period. Chefs produce everything from ethnics to chef's specials here.

Each of the three main serving counters includes a soda/ice dispenser. This allows customers to get their entire meal at one station and prevents the inevitable queuing issues when there is one, central beverage station. A separate coffee service bar is available all day.

An island soup and salad bar is prominently displayed in the center of the serving area, and a 60-sq.-ft., multi-tiered, grab-and-go merchandiser—offering a variety of pre-packaged sandwiches, salads, desserts, and beverages—is strategically located at the entrance to the serving area and adjacent to the registers. These three, double-sided cashier stands process payments quickly and provide an opportunity for last minute merchandising of impulse items. The success of the new designs can be counted in dollars and improved scores. Many days, every seat in the 164-seat dining room is filled and patient satisfaction ratings are at 85%, according to the client. 🍷

L2M created both a short-order line to produce room service (pictured) and a Pod set-up for spoken menu for acute-care patients.

