

Asante wayfinding project comes into focus

You may have noticed something different when visiting some Asante buildings recently. The familiar gray signs have been replaced with a soothing brown, the most visible part of a large-scale project to improve wayfinding for patients, visitors and even employees.

Work began in early November to make wayfinding — how people navigate from one place to another — intuitive and easy, starting with external signage. Crews have replaced the signs for off-campus buildings, including APP clinics, and began exterior work on the ATRMC campus. Signs inside the hospital will be replaced between mid-December and early January.

AACH internal and external signage will be replaced in mid- to late-January. Work at ARRCM begins in February and is expected to go through the first two weeks of March.

The new external signs carry more universal symbols such as the encircled “P” for parking. Addresses are larger to be seen by passing cars, and the overly detailed text that used to appear on some clinic signs has been simplified. Instead of an outdoor sign that lists all clinic names and providers, the new signs simply indicate that the visitor has reached a primary or specialty care clinic. Once inside, patients get further direction from internal signs and wall directories.

“It’s the breadcrumb method,” said Matt Axness, a consultant with Asante Communications and Marketing,

which is leading the project with wayfinding expertise from Michigan-based Corbin Design. “You lead them there and then move them internally through the campus.”

Although the signs are the most visible changes so far, they represent only part of the ambitious project. Other changes involve renaming campus entrances, hospital entrances and parking lots.

For instance, when giving directions to buildings on the ARRCM campus, employees will tell visitors to enter the campus from the “Siskiyou Entrance” (so named because of the closest access street) and enter the hospital at “Entrance A” (now called the North Entrance). Likewise, elevators will be labeled by letters, with Elevator A being the one nearest to Entrance A, and so on.

Similar changes are taking place on all hospital campuses, including changing the first-floor inpatient room numbers at AACH, which currently start with a “2,” leading visitors to think the rooms are on the second floor.

At ATRMC, the hospital will have a large hospital entrance sign to distinguish it from the Asante Center for Outpatient Health. That building will be identified on signs as “Outpatient Center,” along with other simplified signage.

All campus and location maps will be updated to reflect the new wayfinding language. As the project progresses, employees will receive education through an ALEC module about the changes so they can help guide patients. There also will be educational sessions and updates in Asante News.

When complete in the spring, the project is expected to improve the patient experience, particularly for first-time visitors; cause fewer delayed appointments and even boost productivity among employees who are less likely to be stopped for directions.



What’s happening where

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