



HCREA Represents Large Orthopaedic Practice's Interests Through Complicated Build Out and Move In

THE CHALLENGE

Coastal Orthopaedics is one of the oldest orthopaedic practices in Fairfield County, CT, comprised of 12 top-rated orthopaedic specialists who see patients in four offices across the county. Since 1998, their headquarters had been located in Norwalk. While well located near both Yale-New Haven and Norwalk Hospitals, the 10,000 square foot space was far from ideal, having been melded together from two separate spaces. By 2012, the partners wanted a more functional space and with a December 2013 lease expiration date looming, brought in HCREA to help them either make the space and lease they already had more efficient, or lead them to a new location.

"The team at HCREA brought impressive credentials to the table," says Richard C. Lyon, MPH, Executive Director of Coastal Orthopaedics. "Their dual expertise in architecture and real estate law made them uniquely qualified to understand, analyze and explain all elements of space selection and build out." While the practice was considering alternative spaces HCREA had vetted, their existing landlord continued to negotiate, offering additional concessions to try to convince them to stay. HCREA handled these multiple negotiations simultaneously; even securing a reduction in holdover penalties at their current location as Coastal Orthopaedics extended the process after their lease expired at the end of 2013. The decision was ultimately made to move to a 15,000 square foot space in Norwalk, a high tech, 30-acre office campus north of their current location. Norwalk Hospital already had a large lease there and many medical practitioners had offices in the building, making it well located for referrals.

THE SOLUTION

After Coastal signed a lease for their new space in February 2014, HCREA immediately ran a competitive process to help hire a contractor for a gut rehab of the new space Coastal Orthopaedics would occupy. "Because they specialize in medical space, HCREA knows what is going to be important to a medical practice," Lyon says. The new space would combine all the functions at the previous location under one roof with a better internal workflow as well as conference rooms, new staff facilities, and a specialized surgical room. HCREA also negotiated sizable additional concessions in signage and landlord maintenance. An expedited build out began in June 2014.

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Richard Lyon
Executive Director
Coastal Orthopaedics



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Construction rarely goes as planned and numerous challenges arose as Coastal Orthopaedics embarked on creating a custom clinical facility out of raw space. “There are always problems with construction, but we had HCREA there to solve them,” says Lyon. The first issue was the dimensions of the new suite. It was a long rectangle with few windows and lots of interior space. HCREA worked with the contractor and Coastal to best utilize the limited number of windows. “We ended up flipping the design several times until we found a layout all the physicians liked,” Lyons says. Second were problems with the HVAC, which fell under the landlord’s responsibility. “HCREA spent a lot of time going back and forth on our behalf to get the landlord to fix the issues with the HVAC, which included removing old ductwork and providing efficient rooftop heating and cooling units,” Lyon says. “HCREA went to bat for us, armed with their knowledge of the intricacies of commercial heating and air conditioning and what was typical in the industry. They continued working with the landlord until they got the HVAC issues resolved.”

In November 2014 the construction was complete enough for Coastal to move into their new offices. However, as is usually the case with construction, there was an extensive punch list of outstanding items left to resolve. “Thanks to HCREA, I didn’t have to worry about following up with multiple parties to get all the final details completed to our specifications,” says Lyon. “HCREA took ownership of the punch list and stayed on top of the contractors and landlord until all the outstanding items were done. They had it under control and kept these projects off my already full plate.”

One very time consuming issue was securing the final Certificate of Occupancy. Coastal Orthopaedics’ new location actually straddles two jurisdictions, Norwalk and Wilton. Towns will not issue final certificates of occupancy until the town planning board approves the site plan, which includes parking ratios based on square footage. When HCREA negotiated the lease, they negotiated for additional parking, including designated parking and visitor parking close to Coastal Orthopaedic’s first floor entrance. While the practice was occupying their new space under a temporary certificate of occupancy, they were told that with the current parking layout, the landlord was not in compliance with the site plan. For months HCREA negotiated with the landlord, owner, and towns, coordinating with numerous people representing different interests. At the end of this long process, Coastal was given its permanent Certificate of Occupancy in March 2015.



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

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THE RESULTS

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HCREA guided Coastal Orthopaedics through a very complicated negotiation and decision-making process while maintaining credibility with all involved parties. But they continued to represent the medical practice's interests long after the lease was signed. As construction problems arose, HCREA was there to find solutions, working with contractors, owner, landlord and towns until the punch list was completed in May 2015. “HCREA kept the project moving and got us over the hurdles so we could move into our new space and do what we do best... take care of patients and their orthopaedic problems,” Lyon says.