The lobby waiting room of the satellite outpatient clinic of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center has a calm ambiance and original artwork.

For Hospital Services, Pleasant Settings

As satellites expand in Manhattan, they make comfort a priority.

By JOHN HOLUSHA

THE Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center is world famous for its research and treatment of the disease. But at 6th Street and York Avenue on Manhattan's East Side, it is distant from subway lines and can be difficult for patients to reach.

The hospital opened an outpatient clinic on June at 53rd Street and Third Avenue in 100,000 square feet of space on the lower floors of what had been an office building. In doing so, it was following the trend to deliver more care to patients on an ambulatory rather than an in-patient basis, rather than admit them to hospitals.

It was also seeking to extend its share of the medical services market by establishing a more conveniently located clinic, with a friendlier atmosphere than is usually found in a typical hospital setting.

The lobby of what is formally known as the Lawrence S. Rockefeller Outpatient Pavilion resembles the entrance to a good hotel rather than a hospital waiting room. Original artwork decorates the walls, soft music plays in the background and small pools with waterfalls add to a calm ambiance.

Uptown, the diagnostic and treatment areas have been decorated in subdued tones and designed so that changing rooms are adjacent to imaging equipment, meaning that patients in skimpy gowns do not have to walk hallways.

"We tried to create an environment that was as warm and comfortable for patients as we could," said Dr. Paul A. Marks, president of Memorial Sloan-Kettering. "We wanted to make a statement that we can provide high-quality care in a warm environment."

The establishment of satellite facilities by hospitals is

instead to join groups, such as the HOSP's chain in New York and Westchester County, to share costs and reduce overhead. The Memorial Sloan-Kettering treatment center now serves 800 patients a day. In a few years, St. Vincents Hospital Center will be opening its own cancer-care center in the old Port Authority building on the block bounded by 10th and 11th Streets and Eighth and Ninth Avenues.

Earlier, Beth Israel Medical Center established a broader-based treatment center in what had been commercial space in midtown. Last winter, on the site of Union Square, the Columbia Presbyterian-New York Presbyterian Hospital satellite opened its doors to serve people who find it difficult to remain in their regular hospital facilities.

Hospitals in uptown areas other than Manhattan and its suburbs are establishing satellite facilities as well, but tight market conditions in Manhattan make finding a feasible location more daunting.

Hospitals are setting up these satellite operations for a variety of reasons, according to Kenneth H. Raske, director of the Greater New York Hospital Association, which represents 173 health-care facilities in the metropolitan area.

The most important is cost pressure. It is said that "the payers are looking for lower-cost alternatives to inpatient treatment. Meanwhile, technological innovations like laser eye surgery, and new types of chemotherapy are enabling treatments on an ambulatory basis for a far smaller cost than the required hospital stays." The association says that there were 11,404 million inpatient days at hospitals in New York City in 1990. The number declined to 10,514 million in 1992. The last year for which statistics are available. At the same time, the number of outpatient treatments grew to 18,116 million in 1990, 14,766 million in 1991.
For Hospital Satellite Services, Pleasant Settings

Commercial Property

Stories to hold on to for their existing patients and perhaps, take a few from their competitors. St. Vincent is opening its new cancer treatment center in partnership with Sloan-Kettering, another multispecialty organization and leader in the field of oncology.

Everything agrees that cancer care is a growing market with significant growth potential. The managers hope that a new center plus the Sloan-Kettering cancer care is in business now would otherwise not immediately think of St. Vincent when diagnosed with the disease.

We were a small player in oncology, only the 11th largest market in the hospital's system, said Walsh, the vice president for operations for St. Vincent. "I'd be happy to push that up to No. 3 or 4." Finding space for treatment centers is a crowded Manhattan has not been easy, but it has been necessary, as several other hospitals have become inundated with patients.

In a way, the Sloan-Kettering officials have the last laugh. With the new center open, they no longer have to look to the Maclean Building when Mr. Davie's publishing arm goes down. Centennial, the hospital's publishing arm, is now in a better position to compete.

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The Sloan-Kettering cancer center is a 12-story building with 293,000 square feet of space, including 120,000 square feet of clinic space. The center is located on the 10th floor of the new building, and is open to patients from the entire hospital system.

The center, which was designed by the architecture firm of Davis Brody Bond, is a state-of-the-art facility. It features a new clinic space that includes a 120-bed inpatient ward, a 200-bed outpatient clinic, and a 120-space parking garage.

The center also features state-of-the-art medical equipment, including a 32-bed ward, a 12-bed intensive care unit, and a 24-bed emergency department. The center is open to patients from the entire hospital system, and it is expected to open in the fall of 2023.