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CASE STUDY

Ochsner Medical Center | New Orleans, Louisiana

BILCO Roof Hatch Paves Way For Delivery of Important Medical Device

The options for maneuvering a 21-ton, multi-million piece of life-saving medical equipment within a medical facility are quite limited. The team at Woodward Design+Build found its solution with a custom size roof hatch manufactured by BILCO.

The Louisiana-based construction company recently completed renovation of a 9,000 square foot space for an oncology suite at Ochsner Medical Center in New Orleans. The suite is linked to the Gayle and Tom Benson Cancer Center, which opened in 2020 after the completion of a two-year, \$56 million expansion. The oncology suite expansion occurred in a building that dates back the mid-20th century.

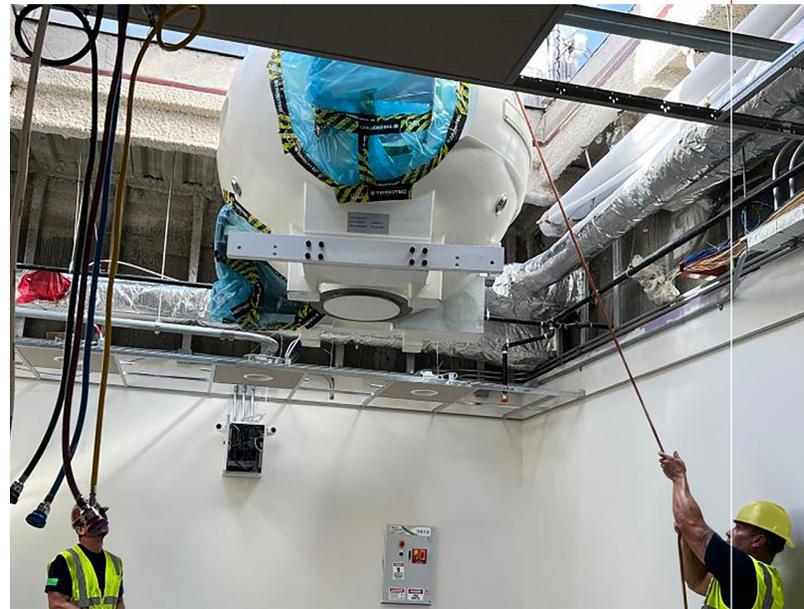
One of the most significant challenges for Woodward centered on installing a Gamma Knife into the building. Only about 300 facilities worldwide have the \$7 million device, which uses radiation and computer-guided planning to treat brain tumors, vascular malformation, and other abnormalities of the brain.

The device was lowered into the building by cranes through a custom 12-foot x 9-foot BILCO Type D roof hatch. The roof hatch features engineered lift assistance to allow for easy, one hand operation in spite of its large size, and most importantly, weather tight construction given the exorbitant cost of the medical equipment directly below the hatch.

"We needed a customized hatch solution for the size of the opening," said Ryan Kersten, Project Manager for Woodward. "BILCO really fit the bill and was able to accommodate the varying sizes that we looked at. The size of the hatch grew in design as we completed the design phase."

BILCO's equipment access roof hatches are frequently used in applications such as Ochsner Medical Center. The hatches are manufactured with corrosion-resistant materials and can be custom fabricated to meet virtually any access requirement. The hatches feature heavy gauge construction, a positive two-point latching mechanism to maintain building security and are fully insulated and gasketed for energy efficiency.

Medical workers will need to access the Gamma Knife unit periodically for maintenance and repair. The radiation source in this sophisticated medical device, cobalt-60, has a half-life of 5.3 years. The roof hatch will allow workers to replace the



radiation source as necessary, without having to remove the equipment. "They will have to replenish the radiation source by going in through the roof, so this hatch allows them access to do that," Kersten said. "There isn't any other way to do that."

Treatment with the Gamma Knife is a non-invasive alternative to traditional brain surgery. In the procedure, high-dose beams of the cobalt-60 radiation converge on selected areas deep within the brain to treat the patient.

The Gayle and Tom Benson Cancer Center is a linchpin to cancer patients in New Orleans, and offers holistic, patient-centered approach that is among the most advanced cancer treatment centers in the nation.



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