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Francis Cauffman Designs MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper

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-By Holly O'Dell



MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper in Camden, N.J., designed by architecture firm [Francis Cauffman](#), has opened as a collaboration between the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center and Cooper University Health Care.

Francis Cauffman designed the \$100 million treatment center as a healing environment tailored to patient needs. Patient feedback informs the facility's look and feel, as the design team collaborated with cancer patients during the design process. During focus groups, patients and designers discussed design elements such as infusion environments, patient room layout, furniture, and finishes.



"Our meetings with former cancer patients and caregivers gave us a heightened sensitivity and purpose that allowed us to design a facility that truly meets the needs of patients receiving treatment in a challenging physical condition," Kenneth Kramer, AIA, Francis Cauffman principal for healthcare, said in a statement.

The calming atmosphere starts in the lobby, where a piece called the "Tree of Life" serves as the technological representation of a tree, featuring branches and resin cube leaves in soothing, shifting colors. This sculptural element reflects studies that have shown that representational nature in art has positive benefits on patient outcomes.



The serenity carries to outdoor spaces as well, including plantings and flowers surrounding the building, walking paths, a courtyard, and a tranquility garden accessed from a second-floor waiting area.

Seeking LEED Silver certification, the project features sustainable elements such as furniture made from natural and recycled materials, energy-efficient equipment, and low-VOC construction materials.