

# Big Sky Acoustics, LLC

## PROJECT PROFILE: CLINIC

**PROJECT:** ST. PETER'S HOSPITAL-NORTH CLINIC  
Helena, Montana

One of the goals of the Reception Area remodel was to improve the speech privacy in the space and comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA). BSA analyzed the existing conditions, and worked with the Architect to develop three acoustical renovation options.

### BSA's SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS:

- A sense of speech privacy occurs when the listener cannot typically understand complete sentences, even though they are aware that someone is speaking nearby. In an open-office setting, speech privacy depends on the:
  - ◇ Talker's voice level,
  - ◇ Background noise at the listener's location,
  - ◇ Sound-absorbing characteristics of the finishes, and
  - ◇ Effectiveness of barrier partitions between the talker and listener locations.
- BSA calculated the Articulation Index (AI) to quantify the privacy between the registration desks and at various lobby locations.
- BSA measured the background noise in the Reception Area and confirmed that the existing conditions provide no speech privacy.
- To improve speech privacy, BSA provided specifications to:
  - ◇ Install an electronic sound masking system to provide controlled, steady, raised background noise levels.
  - ◇ Add sound absorbing material to the ceiling of each Registration Desk.
  - ◇ Add acoustical panels to the Workstation walls and the wall behind the Registration Desks.
  - ◇ Construct a sound barrier between the Entry doors and Registration Desks.

BSA developed audio simulations so the Hospital could evaluate the patient privacy provided by each of the three renovation options.

