

Interior *focus*

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Developing Interior Standards for Health Care Facilities

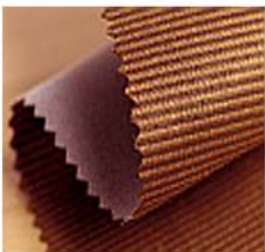
In the field of health care design, it is becoming a noted trend for health care facilities to set interior standards when selecting interior finish materials. These materials must be functional, cost-effective, and easily maintained. Developing interior design guidelines will ultimately save time and reduce costs while ensuring a coherent and consistent image.

One of the first steps in developing an interior design masterplan is to coordinate the activities of the various departments and communicating with each to understand their technical concerns about certain finishes, products, and furnishings. One will often find that the lack of communication among the groups

is a major issue and will help to eliminate repeating details that are already considered problematic. Once the information is gathered, a health care organization should develop an approval process for interior finishes and materials that involves decision-makers and end-users from the various departments.

Many manufacturers of interior finish materials and products are willing to provide "test areas" and sample furnishings to help implement these new standards.

Implementing these guidelines will help control cost, develop a basic palette of color and materials while also creating an overall philosophy for the image of a health care organization.



Upholstery in Health Care

When purchasing new furniture for a health care facility, it is important to consider upholsteries that will withstand the abuse of high traffic. High performance upholstery should be able to offer stain resistance, durability, fluid barriers, and anti-microbial properties, yet still be aesthetically pleasing for patients and visitors. In today's market, there are many options available to designers such as vinyl, Crypton Technology, and Gore-Tex. For more information and resources on health care upholsteries visit these two websites: www.dtex.com and www.cryptonfabric.com



Health Care Furniture Issues:

In today's health care interior environments, there are many things to consider when selecting furnishings. Health care facilities have become far more customer service-oriented due to the high competition among health care providers. For example, there is a growing trend towards health care environments resembling hotels, therefore furniture manufacturer's have incorporate this into their designs. Health care furniture must be built to withstand high-use and address issues such as cleanliness, protection, and ease of exit. When selecting healthcare furniture, one should keep in mind the special needs of the elderly, disabled, and obese patients. Most healthcare furniture manufacturer's have designed patient specific furniture including bariatric furniture lines specifically for the growing population of obese patients. Designers can specify multiple furniture manufacturers that specialize in health care furniture and should be considered when selecting furniture for a facility.



For your review ...

Healthcare Design

Healthcare Design examines all of the basic elements necessary to create physical environments that enhance the quality of healthcare delivery. This book is written by practicing professionals, educators, and other experts in the field. It is a comprehensive source of information for designing quality healthcare spaces.

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