



KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

This comparative study sought to determine whether the physical environment of a new ambulatory clinical building exerted a more positive influence on four populations (patient contact staff, physicians, patients, and family/caregivers) than existing facilities.

Effects of built-environment factors on healthcare: Satisfaction, operations, and outcomes

Etchegaray, J., Fischer, W., Sisolak, J., Lipka, S., 2006 | *Healthcare Design*. Volume 6, Issue 3, Pages 8-10

Key Concepts/Context

Reduced noise levels, pleasant distractions, safety features, wayfinding systems, support spaces, and patient/family/caregiver control reduces stress, errors, and pain, while at the same time increasing referrals and staff retention. All of which may lead to better long-term outcomes for patients.

Methods

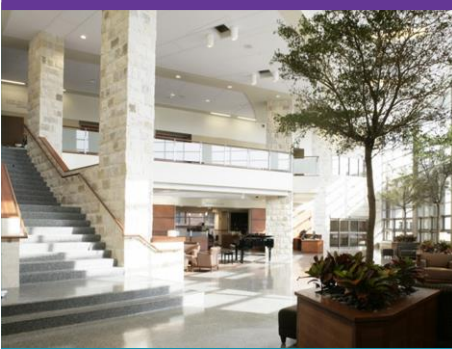
The researchers surveyed patients, staff, family members, and physicians from four multidisciplinary care centers before and after moving to a new building to examine changes in perceptions related to six design characteristics (built-environment factors): (1) noise levels, (2) pleasant distractions, (3) safety features, (4) wayfinding systems, (5) support spaces, and (6) patient/family/caregiver control.

Findings

The survey found that all respondents (except staff in one unit) had positive responses to the built-environment factors after the move. Further, all groups perceived the new environment to be safer. In addition, the researchers found that family members and patients perceived wayfinding in the new building to be more effective.

Limitations

Because the design features were not clearly identified and the survey measurement strategies were unspecified, it would be difficult to replicate the



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study. In addition, the generalizability of the findings is limited by the survey’s small sample size and unit-specific measurements.

Design Implications

When renovating or designing new ambulatory clinical buildings, capitalize upon the perceived benefits of: (1) reduced noise levels, (2) pleasant distractions, (3) safety features, (4) wayfinding systems, (5) support spaces, and (6) patient/family/caregiver control.

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