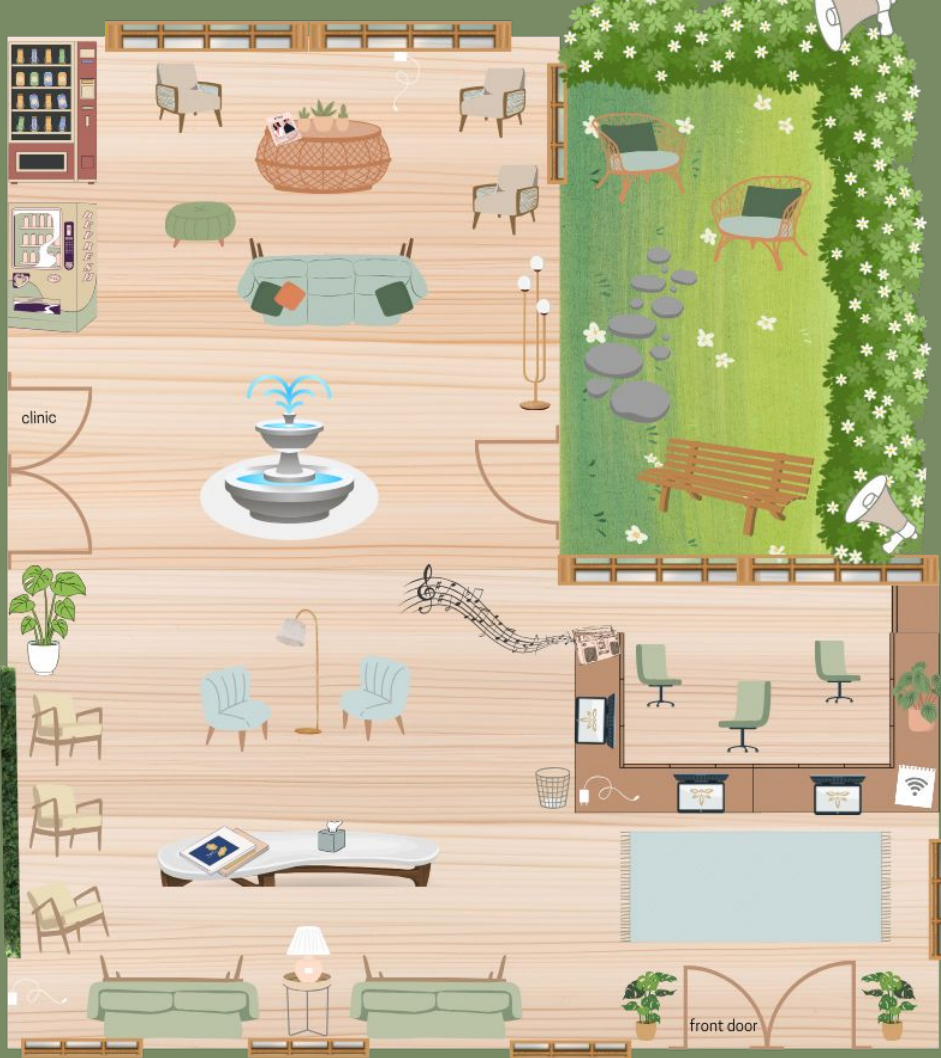


THE HEALING WAITING ROOM

IZZY FORTHAUS





WALL ART:



OTHER FEATURES:



skylight



Floor-ceiling windows



Wrapped ducts and sound-proof walls
to reduce noise

Virtual Waiting Room



 MYSPHERA

Mobile check-in/
virtual waiting room

CALM COLOR PALETTE:



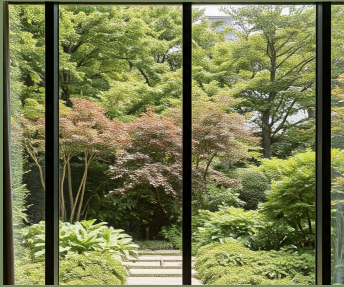
- Colors are so important because they “influence patient mood and behavior and contribute to more healing and therapeutic environments” (Provatorova, 2024). Colors can also lessen pre-appointment anxiety, “reduce perceived waiting time by 37%” (Provatorova, 2024), and prevent employee stress and burnout.
- We chose different shades of blue and green for our waiting room color palette. These colors are thought to be relaxing and soothing, which is essential for a healthcare environment. Patients should feel calm when waiting to see their provider.



- In healthcare settings, green promotes healing by helping patients unwind and connect with the outdoors.
- Blue, which reminds patients of the sky and water, reduces anxiety and can lower the rapid heart rate of a concerned patient or agitated staff member. The color blue is also linked to a sense of trust, which is vital for patient-provider relationships (Moeller, 2024).
- We utilized more neutral tones and natural materials like hardwood to create the feeling of being outdoors, which increases happiness.



NATURE ELEMENTS:



- The waiting room includes many natural elements like plants, a living wall, and a floor-to-ceiling view of the outdoors.
- Physiological and psychological evidence supports the benefit of nature views for reducing stress and aiding in a faster recovery (Rindfleisch, 2018).
- Nature window views, plants, and artwork featuring nature combat negative emotions like sadness and anger, improve employee performance, and increase employee happiness (Rindfleisch, 2018).
- Often times, patients in a waiting room are experiencing painful symptoms. Nature displays increase pain tolerance and reduce requests for pain medications (Rindfleisch, 2018).
- Plants have psychological effects like immediate stress reduction and physiological effects like lowering blood pressure and relaxing muscles (Rindfleisch, 2018).
- Natural elements help patients forget they are in a healthcare setting, which lessens nerves.



GARDEN AREA:



- We included a garden area attached to the waiting room where patients could wait and hear their name through a speaker.
- Offering direct access to nature provides all the benefits from the previous slide while also allowing a space for contagious patients to sit without feeling embarrassed for symptoms like coughing or itching. This also reduces the likelihood of other patients catching illnesses like colds or COVID-19. Limiting contagions is essential in a waiting room where many patients are already sick or immunocompromised (Grossman, 2022).
- The garden area allows patients to escape the stress and pollutants of a waiting room and get fresh air. Fresh air gives Vitamin D exposure while "cleaning your lungs, boosting your mood, lowering your heart rate, increasing energy levels, and improving digestion" (Piche & Luna, 2022).
- The garden also provides a contemplative space for patients, loved ones, and staff members who need to get away from the chaos of a healthcare environment and be alone with their thoughts.



NATURAL LIGHTING:



- The healing waiting room has ample natural lighting with floor-to-ceiling windows, a skylight, and windows on every exterior wall (Daylight Specialists, 2023).
- The waiting room is the first room patients see, so natural lighting creates a welcoming, calming space that reduces the tension of checking in and waiting for your turn. Sunlight filtering in through the window and across the room creates a positive environment that emits warmth.
- Natural light not only looks appealing to patients but also has a proven impact of reducing stress, boosting mood, soothing patients, reducing aggression, and supporting and accelerating the healing process (Collins et al., 2020).
- Daylight helps staff members as well, as it lifts spirits, heightens focus, increases productivity, and fosters feelings of friendship among coworkers (Collins et al., 2020).
- The natural lighting combined with the lamps around the room reduces headaches and aggression caused by fluorescent lighting.



ERGONOMOMIC SEATING:



- The assortment of comfortable seating in the waiting room is designed to keep patient satisfied and settled while they wait.
- The chairs and couches are scattered around the room to give patients the freedom to choose their level of interaction with others and where they'd like to sit.
- The seating choices chosen have armrests to help patients retain their personal space, lower themselves into chairs, and get up with ease (Collins et al., 2020).
- We chose padded swivel chairs for the staff members to allow mobility and reduce lumbar issues.

HEALTHY VENDING MACHINES:

- Vending machines stocked with certain healthy foods can have an immediate benefit for patients in the waiting room.
- Snacks like avocados, blueberries, nuts, and oranges can reduce anxiety quickly. Calcium-rich foods like spinach and kale have positive effects on mood and foster feelings of calmness and happiness. Drinks like chamomile tea and fruit juice aid in relaxation (Funston et al., 2024).
- Offering healthy options allows patients to curb their hunger and reap mental benefits.



FOUNTAIN:



- We included a fountain in the middle of the waiting room, as water features offer many health benefits.
- "Electronic devices release a steady flow of positive ions into the air, which can lead to anxiety and inflammation. Rushing water combats positive ions by releasing negative ions" ("The Amazing Health Benefits," 2018).
- The sound and sight of running water incites calmness and triggers the release of serotonin- the chemical that causes happiness ("The Amazing Health Benefits," 2018).
- Water is a key element of Feng Shui, which creates an ambience that boosts mood and productivity.
- Fountains restore moisture to the air and serve as a natural humidifier, which can help the plants thrive and aid patient symptoms like congestion .



WALL ART:



- There is a lot of artwork in the healing waiting room to provide positive distractions for patients and allow them to think of something other than their health.
- We chose landscapes and happy pictures because “Images of nature and smiling or sympathetic human faces work much better” for creating a relaxing environment (Piche & Luna, 2022). Natural art also gives another link to the outdoors.
- We avoided abstract art or urban landscapes, which raise stress levels and cause anxiety.
- “In 2006, a Department of Health Working Group on Arts and Health reported that the arts have a clear contribution to make and offer major opportunities in the delivery of better health, wellbeing, and improved experience for patients, service users, and staff alike” (Rindfleisch, 2018).
- Tasteful art can boost both patient and staff morale and create a stimulating environment.

WALL ART CONTD:



- One wall of the healing waiting room is filled with health brochures. These brochures give patients educational reading material while they wait and provide a distraction (Collins et al., 2020).
- Health brochures on specific conditions help patients learn more about their health and determine which questions to ask their doctor (Collins et al., 2020).
- Public health or preventative brochures teach patients healthy habits that could prevent future visits.



NOISE:



- Sound has major health effects. Loud noises cause elevations in heart rate and blood pressure that can last for hours. Noise also increases pain perception, confusion, insomnia, and dependence on pain medication (NorthShore University HealthSystem, 2018). The study by the VA shows there is evidence that noise can increase the length of hospital stays (Rindfleisch, 2018).
 - In noisy environments, staff members become less caring and engaged and are more likely to seek simple solutions instead of problem solving (Rindfleisch, 2018).
 - Waiting rooms are inherently stressful and can become noisy due to talking, ice or vending machines, and sound from other rooms.
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- Patients are already anxious about their health and symptoms, and this additional sensory input can be very overwhelming.
 - To limit external noise, we included wrapped ducts and soundproof walls in the waiting room to create a quiet space for patients to relax before they see their provider.
 - Reduced noise also helps staff members focus on patients and remain engaged and empathetic.

Music:



- To further mask the noise in the room, we added soft music at the welcome desk. Music has a huge impact on well-being. "Research has shown that blood flows more easily when music is played. It can also reduce heart rate, lower blood pressure, decrease cortisol levels, and increase serotonin and endorphin levels in the blood" (Rindfleisch, 2018).
- Music elevates mood and reduces stress by increasing the production of dopamine and biochemical stress reducers. Music can even, "provide a strong competing stimulus to the pain signals that enter the brain" (NorthShore University HealthSystem, 2018), thus causing patients to perceive their condition as less painful than it really is.
- A Cochrane review even found that "Out of all aspects of environmental design, music was the area with the best research to support its use" (Rindfleisch, 2018).

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