ENVIRONMENT
PATIENT ROOM
HEALING YOURSELF IS CONNECTED WITH HEALING OTHERS.  ~ Yoko Ono
Let’s think about the patient room from the patient’s perspective. It’s more than just a room with a bed and some medical equipment. The patient room is a recovering room, a healing room, a treatment room, a visiting room and an I’m-waiting-to-go-home room. Its primary function is to support the patient, but it’s also used by caregivers and partners in care. It’s a room with many different functions, serving people with very different needs.

The patient room must accommodate all. It should give patients access to the things that help them feel in control. It should offer caregiver access to the tools they need to deliver care. And for partners in care it should promote easy access to the things that make their visit more comfortable. It must be designed with all three users in mind, towards the ultimate goal of patient healing and care.
UNDERSTAND

How do you come to understand the needs of those who use a patient room? Many of us have experienced a patient room firsthand and know how stressful it can be. This uncertainty can be elevated by poor accommodations. But there are many different patient experiences to consider, so observation is key to understanding the varying needs and encounters. Our researchers focus on ethnographic research. Take George, for example, who just had hip replacement surgery. This is his story.

"My wife and kids can’t stay in one place for very long since they always have to get out of the way of the nurses. It really bothers me that they can’t just sit and relax. There’s no place to put the flowers and cards people have sent me and there’s not even room for my things. I can’t easily reach the switch to adjust the lights and my reading glasses always seem to be out of reach. I just feel like I have no control over anything."

Accounts like George’s, and hundreds of others, aid in our attempt to understand the expectations placed on the patient room. More importantly, these stories further the understanding of the users’ needs within their environment.

We cannot see the whole picture without first looking at the details.

CLEANLINESS
observed caregivers not washing their hands between patient room visits. materials were being transferred between several areas. no designated area for cleansing.

EFFICIENCIES
overbed table is used as a flower stand, meeting space, medicine rack, reading table, dining table and charting desk. surface shares space with medical records, communication binders and laptops.
**Observe**

Seen through the researcher’s perspective.

**Comfort**

Patient spends more time worrying about family’s comfort than his own. No view out window, no bariatric options, no positive distractions. Not enough seats.

**Clutter and Chaos**

The room is cluttered with bulky furniture and medical equipment, making it difficult for the caregiver to work, move about the room and discuss instructions with patient.

**Control**

Patient looks stressed. He is constantly searching for his belongings. Doesn’t have any control over his daily schedule or environment.

**Space**

In small quarters, many objects pose problems and barriers for all users.
PROCESS
After returning from the field, researchers and designers work together to turn observations into insights. Insights into ideas. And ideas into reality.

SYNTHESIZE

CONTROL
Providing responsive solutions such as accessible lighting and easily adjustable overbed tables gives control back to the patient.

FLEXIBILITY
By using modular options and mobile technology, the patient room can transform to accommodate the changing needs of the patient, caregiver and partners in care.
STRESS REDUCTION
Providing opportunities that introduce natural elements into the room reduces stress and promotes healing.

REALIZE

TECHNOLOGY
Providing solutions that are integrated with new and emerging technology keeps the patient informed and caregivers in touch.

COMMUNICATION
Considering spaces for whiteboards allows the patient to easily see instructions and notes from partners in care and caregivers.

COMFORT
Ensuring that the partner in care has ample space to stay with the patient helps them both remain comfortable, physically and mentally.
Let’s build it. Creating a patient room that accommodates all the different uses and users must, at some point, go from ideas to paper to prototype. And this is that point. Together, we build the space and put it to work in a real world setting. Then take a close look at how specific products perform, how specific users interact with the environment and how specific product solutions can bridge the gap between needs and wants.

A patient room needs:
- To reduce stress of patient and partners in care
- To provide distinct spaces and support for the three users
- To maximize the use of a small space with constantly changing needs
- To accommodate technology and people simultaneously
- To meet safety and medical regulations

**THE PATIENT**

How does a patient use the space? Does the space help them relax and promote healing? Is it easily organized? Is it comfortable for them and their friends and family? Does it allow caregivers to easily access the patient for consultations and treatment?

In a patient room, patients need:
- Comfortable surroundings that accommodate and adjust to their needs
- Ample accommodations allowing loved ones to stay close
- Natural elements to promote healing and reduce anxiety
- A place to secure their belongings

**OPUS™ OVERBED TABLE**

The Opus collection, recognized as an industry breakthrough product solution, combines the convenience of traditional freestanding casegoods with the flexibility of modular furniture. A great example of this flexibility is the overbed table, which accommodates the needs of each user in a simple, but thoughtful way. The design features two top surfaces. One is stationary at standing height, ready for caregivers as they walk into the patient room. The other is a height adjustable patient surface featuring a concave shape that can be brought closer to the patient, an integrated spill-retaining edge, integrated cup holders and easy-to-access storage compartments creating a multipurpose table for multiple users.
Special considerations for special environments:
Thoughts that help us explore the big picture.

BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS
Although the main objectives of a patient room are healing, recovery and care, there are several business implications to be considered. Is the overall space well received by patients and guests, contributing favorably to future occupancy rates? Does the environment promote cleanliness and infection prevention? And is efficiency taken into account, which promotes the reduction of medical error and saves time?

SAFETY & REGULATIONS
With so much happening in a patient room, safety is a big priority. Is the transfer from bed to bathroom designed with fall prevention in mind? Is lighting provided to promote patient safety and caregiver accuracy? Are HIPAA guidelines being taken into consideration? And is waste management and cleanliness accounted for in order to reduce hospital-acquired infection?

EXPERIENCE
A patient’s and partner in care’s experience in the patient room is directly related to healing, so it’s important that every effort is made to help that experience be a positive one. Are there views of natural elements and positive distractions like art? Are there convenient places to accommodate personal belongings? Does the environment reinforce a sense of control over a patient’s schedule or wait time? Is the room quiet enough to rest? Overall, does the room feel more welcoming and less cold and clinical?

TECHNOLOGY
From EMR and patient Internet connectivity to sound masking, technology can make the patient room more comfortable, more efficient and less stressful. With product solutions like the smart room and Opus, we continue to think not only about today, but tomorrow, too.

MEASURE
When so much is invested into an effort, it is natural to want to make sure that what you are doing is working. That’s why evidence-based design is taking a front-and-center position in almost everything we do. And as its role evolves, so does the concept of measurement.

Our toolkit of qualitative and quantitative approaches include the disciplines of anthropology, environmental psychology and sociology. Measurement happens in natural work settings, simulation exercises and controlled randomized trials. We use surveys, interviews, behavioral and workflow analyses, time-motion studies and productivity studies.

No matter the approach, we are drawing from – and adding to – a wealth of valuable knowledge. And are continuing to work towards environments that best promote healing.

In a patient room, consider:
• Patient and family satisfaction
• Increase/decrease of falls
• Variations in dosages of pain medication from room to room
• Infection control
PLANNING IDEAS
From research to realization, it’s time to create. Here are a few planning ideas, thought starters and plans to inspire your next project.

PRODUCTS FEATURED
Cubical Curtain by Designtex
Preference Casegoods
Sieste® Sleeper Sofa

PRODUCTS FEATURED
Opus Casegoods
Sieste Sleeper Sofa
PRODUCTS FEATURED
Cesar™ Casegoods
Overbed Table
Preference Headwall

PRODUCTS FEATURED
Double X-Tenz™ Sleeper Sofa
Cubical Curtain by Designtex
Opus Headwall
Opus Overbed Table
Outlook Patient Chair
THE 30-YEAR PLAN

Think back 30 years. Many of the healthcare facilities in this country were built even longer ago – in the fifties and sixties. And many of these facilities haven’t changed. Even though much about healthcare and the way it’s delivered has.

So here we stand, once again trying to predict a future of healthcare 30 years from now. Not only do we need to predict this uncharted territory, we need to plan for it. Mentally, physically and spatially. Growth and change are inevitable. And there are no crystal balls. So this anticipated change demands flexibility.

While we know we can never predict the future, we understand the need to create spaces that enable ways of healing that are flexible, and anticipate growth and change over time. This is not only to achieve caregiver’s efficiency, but to manage the experience of patients and partners in care.

Our goals are not unattainable. Or outlandish. They are to improve on the intangibles. To improve the delivery of care. And at the heart of all of this, to promote healing and help patients get better faster.

This is why we do it. And we know this is why you do it too. Together we can make the difference today, tomorrow and for the next generations.

Let’s take this opportunity together and make the most of it.
THERE'S POWER IN NUMBERS

Nurture would like to thank our many partners for their continued dedication to promoting healthy environments. A special thanks to design collaboratives such as the Center for Healthcare Design and Planetree, technology partners like Cerner and patient-centered design firms across the nation. These are the strong connections that continue to change healthcare for good.