The Holistic Lobby:
A Healing space for Sociability, Safety, and Serenity

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The Problem

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, approximately **4 in 10 US adults** have reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder.

This is a large *increase* compared to the **1 in 10** adults who reported symptoms January - June 2019.

Beyond the pandemic context, healthcare environments can induce stress amongst patients, staff, and caregivers.
Mission Statement

To provide a healing lobby environment that creates opportunities for safe socialization for individuals who are experiencing any measure of distress in their lives seeking counseling and mental health services.

"The most successful lobby designs carefully balance visual impact with optimum functionality."

Hotel Business
Evidence-Based Design Principles

THOERY OF SUPPORTIVE DESIGN
To promote wellness and reduce stress environments should be created to enhance efficacy, promote social support, and provide positive distraction (Ulrich 1991).

THOERY OF COMPETENCE PRESS
People’s ability to adapt and function is determined by how well their needs match the offerings their environment (Lawton 1983).

BIOPHILIA HYPOTHESIS
Humans have a natural inclination towards nature and other living organisms (Wilson 1984). Thus, access to nature and positive distraction reduce patient stress, pain, prescriptions, and recovery times (Ulrich 2008).
Guiding Design & Programmatic Principles

For the Benefit of Patients and the Community

- Curving lines and design features mimic elements of nature
- Windows increase access to nature and natural light
- Nature-themed artwork relieves stress
- Plants serve as natural barriers and improve air quality in the space

- Wood floors connect users with feelings of home and provide comfort and familiarity
- Warm, calming color scheme evoke feelings of serenity
- Multi-level reception desk creates an inviting atmosphere

- Full-spectrum and natural lighting balances circadian rhythm and positively influences mental health and well-being
- Increased natural light reduces infections as sunlight is a germicidal factor

- Flexible furniture, air purifying plants, and artistic movable partitions balance privacy with safe interaction, promoting distancing and peace of mind

- Sanitizing stations and elevated cleaning procedures promote hygiene and peace of mind
- HEPA air filters and infection control technologies improve ventilation and promote sanitation

- Detailed signage promotes strong wayfinding to reduce stress and improve flow
- Informational graphics draw attention to new sanitizing stations and highlight practices for safety and wellbeing
Target Population

Individuals seeking mental health support

Hypothetical Persona

Student Patient

Age: 20

Description: Seeking mental health support at her university health facility after experiencing heightened anxiety due to Covid-19.

Needs

- Opportunities for counseling
- A clean environment to ease anxiety associated with the Pandemic
- Accessible opportunities for additional sanitization

Wants

- Opportunities for safe socialization
- A private space to relax from everyday stress
- Materials to learn more about lifestyle choices that promote well-being

Experience Map

Arrives at the holistic lobby filled with natural light

Observes the central green area while waiting for services

Socializes at seating area while observing interactive wall

Checks in at the welcome desk to ask for counseling services

Reads signage about healthy lifestyle habits

Uses sanitation station and relaxes in meditation space

Meets with counselor for her appointment
Design Application
The Holistic Lobby: Floor Plan

Inspiration
Design Application

The Holistic Lobby: Main Area

A Curving lines mimic forms found in nature and evoke feelings of serenity

B Access to natural light through central green space and full-spectrum, multi-level ceiling lights support mental health

C Wood floors provide a feeling of homeliness and comfort

D Flexible furniture allows for safe interaction or restful isolation

E Durable materials are easily cleaned & plants draw on the benefits of biophilic design, create natural barriers, and improve air quality in the space

F Interactive screen wall, central green space, and plants provide positive distraction
Design Application

The Holistic Lobby: Meditation Space

A. Green wall decal connects users with nature and allows for a sense of peace.

B. Accessible sanitation station promotes cleanliness and eases potential anxiety.

C. Signage informs users about the importance of cleanliness & well-being.

D. Soft and natural lighting supports stress relief and mental ease.

E. Partition walls support cleanliness, as well as the ability to find private space in a public setting.
Evaluating Success

Whole Human Post-occupancy Patient Survey

Sent through digital channel after appointment

Likert scale with an “N/A” choice and optional comment boxes promote patient comfort & privacy

Questions analyze how the space influences patients:

- Socially
- Mentally
- Physically

Sample Survey Questions

1. How did the space promote your ability to interact safely and comfortably with others?
2. How did the space influence your psychological well-being and peace of mind?
3. Did you feel safe in the space?
4. Were your expectations for distancing/infectious disease protocols met/exceeded?

Similar survey sent to staff working in the space to investigate if their physical, psychological, and social needs were supported & collect feedback.