



### **Learning Objectives:**

After reviewing this lesson, readers should be able to:

1. Identify current trends in patient room design using the key indicators outlined.
2. Identify the three zones commonly used in patient room planning.
3. Analyze the impact of patient room design features on patient empowerment, using the sample plans provided.
4. Discuss patient empowerment strategies that may be incorporated into the sensory design approach.
5. Discuss patient privacy concerns and design solutions that may address these concerns.
6. List design methods for improving the patient's control of the room environment and access to necessities from the bed.
7. Analyze design methods for improving patient safety and the patient's perception of safety.
8. Identify design strategies for promoting trust between patients and caregivers.

# Article I: Designing for Patient Empowerment

A look at the inpatient room from the patient's perspective

Modern healthcare design seeks to embrace patients by replacing the previously cold, institutional setting with a warm, inviting environment. Attention is now devoted to providing pleasant spaces for patients and families with the introduction of natural elements, touchable materials and desirable views. All of these components may contribute to the "healing environment;" however, the design team may need to go a step further to facilitate patient empowerment.

When patients require inpatient treatment, often they must entrust their health to strangers. This may be uncomfortable for many. In addition, confinement to the bed makes patients dependent on caregivers to meet their most basic needs. Embarrassment, feelings of insecurity, and loss of control contribute to the negative emotions associated with seeking inpatient treatment.

How can the built environment facilitate a more pleasant healthcare experience? Through thoughtful and innovative planning, the design team may create an atmosphere that seeks to embrace patients and accommodate their special needs. This may be achieved by identifying characteristics of the patient room environment that create vulnerability, and applying design intervention to empower patients to receive positive health outcomes.

## Key Indicators of Current Healthcare Design Trends

- Amenities from the hospitality industry used in hospitals
- Natural elements incorporated into the design
- Accommodations for the families and visitors of patients

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