Clinic Exam Room Design: Present and Future
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The continual advancement of technology and activities performed in exam rooms has drastically changed design characteristics of exam rooms such as size, interior layout and relationship to adjacent spaces. Furthermore, activities performed in and the flexibility of exam rooms differ based on a clinic's care model and specialty. Exam rooms are where a majority of patients' clinic experiences and interactions occur. Therefore, the interior environment and design of exam rooms contribute to the overall satisfaction and success of patient care.

This article addresses key design qualities of exam rooms that can affect delivery of patient care, and influence interaction and behavior within the space. Relevant literature supporting advantages and disadvantages of each design quality is presented; however, this article will demonstrate that not all qualities are thoroughly researched.

This article does not discuss the material or finishing selections of interior design elements, but rather planning-related details. In addition, various examples of annotated exam room prototypes are provided to demonstrate different design strategies discussed. These prototypes are referred to throughout the text. The article concludes with a discussion of future trends of exam room designs.