Designing Outpatient & Community Health Centers to Support Population Health

Facility Evaluation Tool

The Center for Health Design (CHD) developed a standardized design and audit tool for the evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of outpatient and community health centers in supporting population health. Supported by a grant from the Kresge Foundation, the tool was built upon a post-occupancy evaluation (POE) toolkit developed by CHD, as well as input from a comprehensive literature review, case studies of pioneering facilities, and experts in the industry. It is organized around four main goals of population health, an optional category of additional design considerations, and five main spatial components of a typical outpatient health center.

Population health design goals:

Healthy Behaviors
Activity, Nutrition, Green Spaces

Physical Environment
Air & Water Quality, Noise, Environmental Impact, Transit

Social-Economic Factors
Education, Community/ Personal Safety, Socio-demographic Balance

Clinical Care
Access to Care (location), Co-located Services, Team Care, Technology

Other Design Considerations
Improve quality and safety of primary care

Main spatial components for outpatient care:

Building exterior

Interior-Overall

Waiting/Check-in

Patient-clinician interaction spaces

Staff spaces

Each of the following tabs corresponds to one major spatial component of an outpatient health center. Please walk through each component of space and mark on the tabs whether (1) the design features listed are a priority (when used as a design audit) or (2) how well the implemented design features achieve the design intent, using a 5-point scale (for a POE).

The tool is recommended to be independently used by a team including designers, facility managers, and frontline staff during a walkthrough audit, followed by a focused discussion to resolve any possible conflicts in ratings.

THE CENTER FOR HEALTH DESIGN®

More detail in user manual

START

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Building Exterior

Under each population health design goal, there is a series of design considerations and more detailed design features. When using this tool as a design audit, indicate the priority level of the design feature (high, medium, or low). When using this tool as an audit, rate how well implemented design features achieved the design intent, using a 5-point scale. Choose N/A if the design feature is not implemented/observed.

Design goals, considerations, and features

Healthy Behaviors: Activity, Nutrition, Green Spaces

Facilities supporting physical activity

There are visible and accessible facilities that support physical activity (e.g., well-maintained walking paths, biking trails, bike racks, exercise stations, playgrounds) in outdoor areas. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Barriers to physical activity (e.g., grade changes/steps in walking path) are minimized. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Amenities (e.g., seating, resting places, protection from adverse weather) enhance comfort of outdoor physical activity to promote use. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Outdoor areas support a variety of amenities to support passive and active use (e.g., playground, exercise stations, artwork). Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

There are visible and salient motivational signs/educational materials with contents promoting physical activity (e.g., distance markers, trail maps). Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The area surrounding the facility is perceived as safe (e.g., well-maintained, well-lit at night, opportunities for natural surveillance). Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Landscaping/Gardens

Therapeutic gardens are visible, easy to access, visually diverse, predominantly plantings vs. paving, and provide seating are used for respite. (See OPTIONAL category for additional design details). Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Community gardens are used for active growing of plants (physical activity) and crops (diet and nutrition). Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

The landscape design enhances the aesthetic quality of the surrounding outdoor areas (promotes physical activity). Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Outdoor areas support community events, activities, and/or education. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Next Tab
Interior-Overall

Physical Environment: Air & Water Quality, Noise, Environmental Impact, Transit

Facility location

There is no air pollution detectable (e.g., odors of diesel fumes, factory emissions, visible smog) in the surrounding areas of the facility. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

There is no loud noise (e.g., traffic, factories) in the surrounding area. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

LEED

The facility shell/site was designed with LEED principles in mind for sustainability, water efficiency, energy use, material resources, and indoor environmental quality in mind (e.g., Platinum = 5, Gold = 4, Silver =3, Certified = 2, designed with selected principles, but not certified = 1). Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Transportation choices

The facility is located close to public transit (0.25 miles/5 minutes = 3), but preferably onsite (=5). Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Next Tab
Interior-Overall

Social-Economic Factors: Education, Community/ Personal Safety, Socio-demographic Balance

Community engagement in design

Include the local community in design to target the meaning and relevance of place (fosters awareness of services, goodwill, and possible engagement for future activities). Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Site safety/security (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)

The parking is easy to navigate with a feeling of safety. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The parking and other areas surrounding the building are well lit at night. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The building perimeter is secured (e.g., locks, alarms) to prevent unauthorized entry. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Video monitoring system provides continuous coverage over all surrounding areas including parking lot. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The adjacent outdoor areas offer high visibility to enable natural surveillance (e.g., outdoor lighting, sidewalk-facing porches, windows facing streets to allow observation). Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

All activities in front of entrances are visible to staff members inside the building. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Connectedness

The facility is one of many mixed-use destinations (e.g., retail, daycare) within the area (0.5 miles), offering the opportunity to combine trips. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

The location of the facility is within a 3-minute walking distance to other community services (e.g., childcare) for the same population so that patients can do one-stop shopping at one site. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Facility is located in high-density areas with interconnected streets and walking trails for route choice. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Traffic safety

Traffic calming features (e.g., speed bumps, stop signs) are integrated to protect pedestrians from traffic. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Next Tab
Interior-Overall

Clinical Care - Access to Care (location), Co-located Services, Team Care, Technology

Convenient geographic location

The facility is located so that the majority of patients can arrive in 30 minutes from home, work, or shopping. (Rural areas may accept more travel time than dense urban areas but may have lower utilization rates.) Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Co-location of community and healthcare services

The facility is a hub within a "health village" or medical city. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The facility provides multiple healthcare services (e.g., medical, dental, lab, pharmacy) for convenient integrated care. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Vehicle access

Parking spaces are always available for patients so that there are no vehicles waiting for parking space at any time, even during peak hours. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Parking is directly accessible to the building (at grade or via a structure with access into a designated entrance lobby). Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

The vehicular circulation and parking spaces are sufficient to accommodate mobile health clinic vehicles. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Wayfinding

Languages used on signage are easily understandable by patients. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Symbols used on signage are standard and easily understandable by patients. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Next Tab
Interior-Overall

OPTIONAL: Other Design Considerations to Improve Quality & Safety of Care

Entrances

The building entrances/exits are well covered, protecting patients/staff members from rain, sun, snow, and wind. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Building entrances are located and orientated to enhance the facility's connection to the community (e.g., facing main access road; connected to public transportation, cycling, and pedestrian networks). Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Separate entrances/exits are visually salient to patients who are suspected to carry certain infectious pathogens, to prevent cross-transmission. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The locations of entrances help prevent certain special patient populations from possibly interfering with other patients. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Separate entrances are available for providers and other staff. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Flexibility that allows various use of spaces and future

Open spaces are available on the site for future expansion. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Building exterior facade design (e.g., modular standard design, simple shapes) allows for future expansion or renovation. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Parking

The parking lot/garage has plenty of designated parking spaces for staff members so that no vehicles are waiting for parking space at all time. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Pleasant-looking building exterior

The appearance of building exterior including style, color, and materials is designed specifically to the majority of the patients/staff members. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

There are no elements that may evoke negative feelings in patients/staff members with different cultural backgrounds. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

There is a full spectrum of natural, warm, and neutral colors with cool accents. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The building exterior has a non-institutional appearance. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Nature elements in surrounding area

Trees, plants, water, and other natural elements around the parking and areas surrounding the building contribute to the attractiveness of the building exterior. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Trees, plants, water, and other natural elements around the parking and areas surrounding the building are well maintained. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Gardens

Estimate the percentage of garden grounds covered by vegetation. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

There are a variety of trees and other plants in the gardens. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Pedestrian access to gardens is good. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The garden is accessible from spaces where time is spent (e.g., cafeteria, waiting). Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Vegetation is selected for seasonal change. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

There is a combination of social and private spaces. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Unique focal points are included (e.g., sculpture, water). Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Design elements offer control of sun and shade (e.g., umbrellas, trees, shelters). Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Wayfinding

Clear and salient signage stands out from the background and can be easily seen by patients. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Illumination increases visibility of signage and facility at night. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Next Tab
Interior-Overall

Sustainability (alternate considerations to LEED)

Shading

Proper shading (interior, integral, and exterior shading devices) helps minimize direct sunlight and solar exposure in the main indoor spaces. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Daylighting

Narrow floorplan (including courtyards) maximizes daylight coverage. Estimate the percentage of rooms where there is enough daylight to reduce electricity for artificial lighting. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Light shelf maximizes daylight penetration so that electricity for artificial lighting is reduced and comfort is improved. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Insulation

Estimate the percentage of building envelope area with insulating materials that meet Energy Star-recommended levels to reduce heat transmission. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Estimate the percentage of doors and windows with sealing that improves air tightness and minimizes air leakage to reduce heating or cooling load. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Glazing

Glazing with high visual transmittance is used to maximize daylight penetration in the building without significantly increasing heat transmission. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Estimate the percentage of exterior glazing that provides UV protection to reduce staff and patient UV exposure. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Building orientation & entrances

The building orientation facilitates passive conditioning and reduces air conditioning load. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

The vestibule is designed (e.g., L-shape) to prevent thermal loss/gain at entrances during extreme weather. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Heat island effect

The pavement reduces heat island effect and improves comfort. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Vegetation in and around the parking, roofs, and adjacent site areas reduces heat island effect, improves insulation (in the case of vegetated roofs), and mitigates stormwater runoff. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Material selections

Estimate the percentage of building exterior materials (paints) that are low VOC. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Estimate the percentage of exterior materials that are rapidly renewable or contain recycled content. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

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Interior-Overall

Interior-Overall

Under each population health design goal, there is a series of design considerations and more detailed design features. When using this tool as a design audit, indicate the priority level of the design feature (high, medium, or low). When using this tool as a post-occupancy evaluation (POE), rate how well the implemented design features achieved the design intent, using a 5-point scale. Choose N/A if the design feature is not implemented/observed.

Design goals, considerations, and features

G 1

Healthy Behaviors: Activity, Nutrition, Green Spaces

Stairs

There are visible and salient motivational signs/educational materials with contents promoting physical activity (e.g., footprints leading to the stairs to promote stair use). Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Stairs (if present) are located in central location, easily accessible by patients and staff (e.g., distance and number of turns from building entrance), and visible from elevator lobby and circulation system. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Stairs have pleasant and attractive features (e.g., music, artwork, natural light, and lighting) to encourage stair use. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Physical exercise facilities and equipment

Physical exercise facilities (e.g., gym, shower) and equipment (treadmill, weights) are available for patients and staff. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Physical activity facilities and equipment are visible for patients and staff (e.g., accessible location, views into gym from circulation system). Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Decentralization of shared staff service spaces

Various shared staff service spaces (e.g., meeting, copy, restrooms) are decentralized and scattered close to individual workstations. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

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Waiting/Check-in

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Physical Environment: Air & Water Quality, Noise, Environmental Impact, Transit

LEED

The facility interior was designed with LEED principles for sustainability, water efficiency, energy use, material resources, and indoor environmental quality in mind (e.g., Platinum = 5, Gold = 4, Silver =3, Certified = 2, designed with selected principles, but not certified = 1).

Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Amenities

Drinking water is easily accessible to all patients.

Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Next Tab
Waiting/Check-in

Social-Economic Factors: Education, Community/Personal Safety,Socio-demographic Balance

Health education

There are TVs, brochures, art, and other visual displays of age-appropriate health education materials including healthy lifestyles, healthy food, etc. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Multipurpose rooms are available for community services (e.g., health education, meetings, social gathering, Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

After-hour public access is provided to community service areas, with clinical areas secured to prevent unauthorized entry. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Food and nutrition

A cafeteria, kitchen, or food pantry is available to offer healthy food choices, recipes, and cooking education. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

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Waiting/Check-in

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Clinical Care - Access to Care (location), Co-located Services, Team Care, Technology

Mobility

Spaces provide sufficient clearance (e.g., wide corridors, space between furniture) for wheelchair use. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Pod design/Clustering of interaction spaces

High-patient-volume pods/departments are located close to main entrance and lobby. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Women's and children's services (if provided) are located close to each other. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Technology

Secure patient portal is easy for patient use for scheduling appointments, check-in, and communication with providers. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

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Waiting/Check-in

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OPTIONAL: Other Design Considerations to Improve Quality & Safety of Primary Care

Wayfinding

Natural light, views of outside, and landmarks provide visual aids for wayfinding. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Languages used on signage are appropriate for the patient demographics. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Symbols used on signage are standard and easily understandable by patients. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Maps (floor plans) of the facility are provided at easily accessible locations. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Maps (floor plans) of the facility are easy to understand. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Spatial hierarchy

Circulation system consists of primary spine and secondary paths and nodes for easy understanding of the layout and navigation. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Spatial hierarchy is indicated through ceiling height changes, dropped soffits, flooring change, lighting, etc. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Monitoring and security system

Video monitoring system provides continuous coverage over all public areas without blind spots. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Attractive/inviting colors/materials

High-quality home-like or natural materials were used as interior finishes, creating an attractive non-institutional ambience for patients and families. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Daylight

Windows and/or skylights provide plenty of direct or indirect natural light. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

HVAC

There is no unpleasant odor, including institutional smell, smoke, stuffy/stale smell, irritating smell, etc. Where used, deodorizers should be clean and functioning. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Ventilation system provides negative air pressure relative to corridors in rooms where odors are generated (e.g., endoscopy scope processing, toilet, cast room, lab, staff Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Air temperature, relative humidity, and flow speed are maintained at comfort levels without dramatic difference between nearby spaces. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Ventilation system includes HEPA filters or uses 100% outside air or other methods so that there are no visible particles in the air. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Easy-to-clean/maintain surfaces

Easy-to-clean or antibacterial finish materials help reduce surface contamination so that all surfaces look clean without visible dirt. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Flexibility that allows various use of spaces and future

Building shell and core design that facilitates the potential changes in functional space layout (e.g., structural bay size; modular layout; locations of stairs/elevators, electrical rooms, mechanical shafts, restrooms; window modules). Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

The building design related to technology is flexible to accommodate potential changes in medical and communication technologies. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

The technology rooms are either easy to expand or set aside extra spaces to accommodate additional equipment. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Easy-to-reconfigure/roll-away modular furniture and partitions are used to allow for multipurpose functions. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Barrier-free/Universal design

Handrails support patient mobility. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

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Waiting/Check-in

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6

Sustainability (alternate considerations to LEED)

Water-saving measures

Estimate the percentage of faucets and toilets that are low flow and use relatively less water. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Water recycling system facilitates water reuse (e.g., stormwater, gray water, air conditioning condensate) and reduces water consumption. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Energy-efficient lighting fixtures

Estimate the percentage of lighting fixtures that use high-efficiency fluorescent lamps and LEDs that use relatively less energy. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Estimate the percentage of rooms or spaces where occupant sensors/daylight sensors are used to control lighting fixtures (i.e., artificial lighting is turned off automatically when there is enough daylight or no occupant in one room/space). Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

HVAC systems

Estimate the percentage of high-efficiency HVAC equipment that uses relatively less energy for ventilation and air conditioning. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

Appropriate size of equipment is used to increase efficiency and reduce energy consumption. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Separate control of ventilation and air-conditioning provides the flexibility of using only part of the building. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

The building layout, operable windows, and other design features enable effective natural ventilation. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Estimate the percentage of HVAC equipment that is mercury-free and CFC-free to minimize potential health risks and environmental impacts. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

High-performance ventilation (e.g., high ventilation rate) minimizes VOC level in indoor air so that no VOC odors exist. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Interior materials

Estimate the percentage of interior materials that are rapidly renewable materials (e.g., bamboo flooring, straw & wheat board, cotton batt insulation, etc.) or contain recycled content when possible. Priority ▼ Rating ▼

Notes

Estimate the percentage of interior materials that are low VOC or contain minimal hazardous content (e.g., phthalates). These include carpet, fabrics, resilient flooring, paints, coatings, adhesives, sealants, insulation, acoustical products, and so on. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

There is not an irritating VOC-like odor in interior spaces including less ventilated areas. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Estimate the percentage of interior materials that require less harsh chemicals during installation, cleaning, maintenance, and replacement than typical materials. Priority ▼ Rating ▼ reference

Notes

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Next Tab Waiting/Check-in

Waiting/Check-in

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Design goals, considerations, and features

Healthy Behaviors: Activity, Nutrition, Green Spaces

Facilities supporting physical activity

There are visible and accessible facilities that support physical activity (e.g., well-maintained walking paths, biking trails, bike racks, exercise stations, playgrounds) in outdoor areas.

Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Therapeutic gardens that are visible, easy to access, visually diverse, predominantly plantings vs. paving and provide seating are used for respite. (See OPTIONAL category for additional design details.)

Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Nutrition

There is access to healthy food options (e.g., café, vending stocked with healthy choices, farmer's market).

Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Next Tab
Patient-Clinician Interactions

Clinical Care - Access to Care (location), Co-located Services, Team Care, Technology

Wayfinding

Signage clearly indicates the locations of registration, waiting, and the direction to other destinations in the facility. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Privacy

Physical separation (such as solid or glass walls) in registration/waiting areas prevents conversations at the registration from being overheard by other patients in registration and waiting area. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Sound masking and/or music prevents conversations at the registration from being overheard by other patients in registration and waiting areas. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Physical separation (such as solid walls or patterned/etched glass) and space between seating reduces nearby patients' visibility of patient information forms. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Technology (kiosks)

Self-check-in kiosks are available to streamline patient registration process (reduce time for patient wait). Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Kiosks are available to enable patient self-assessment of symptoms and provide essential information relevant to patient visits. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Waiting/Check-in

Enough spaces are available to accommodate kiosks or other displays for patient information access. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Lighting (natural and artificial) is designed so that there is no glare or reflection on the screens. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

The information shown on kiosk screens can only be viewed by person standing directly in front of the display. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Next Tab
Patient-Clinician Interactions

OPTIONAL: Other Design Considerations to Improve Quality and Safety of Primary Care

Appropriate size of check-in/registration

There are enough registration spaces so that typically there are no more than five patients waiting for registration at any time. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

At any time, the waiting line is not extended outside the building. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Convenient location of equipment, supplies, and workstations

Printers and supplies are close to registration staff so that staff do not need to frequently stand up and travel to retrieve supplies and printouts. (This is an efficiency tradeoff for activity.) Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Appropriate size of waiting room

There is enough seating in the waiting room so that patients do not need to stand or walk away during peak hours. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Waiting areas are decentralized and located close to individual departments/pods to break the "bus station" appearance of large waiting rooms. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Clear physical boundary

Clear boundary exists (walls, etc.) between waiting/registration area and the main circulation hallway so that activities in the hallway or other areas do not cause interference to waiting/registration. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Amenities

Plenty of spaces are available for storage of patients' personal items (e.g., coats, umbrellas) during waiting. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Pager system allows patients to engage in educational and entertainment activities when waiting. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Wireless signals are strong so that patients in waiting areas have easy access to Internet. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Access control system

Appropriate access control system prevents unauthorized entry into clinician-patient interaction spaces and staff spaces. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

stored. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Infection control

Separate waiting areas are designated for patients who are suspected to be infectious. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Alcohol gel dispensers are located within easy reach from patient path (e.g., door, registration window). Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Easy-to-clean hard toys (as opposed to soft toys) are provided in children's play areas to reduce risks of contamination. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Visibility of waiting and entrances

All waiting areas and entrance(s) are visible to staff members located in the registration office. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Reception desks are visible from main entrances and lobby. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Cleanliness

The layout and fixture design prevents patients from directly viewing trash. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

The available storage space reduces clutter. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Noise-reduction measures

Sound-absorbing ceiling tiles and other noise-reduction measures are used so that the waiting area is quiet. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Measures include reduction of noise sources that potentially may interfere with communication between patient and staff, and between staff members. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Size/layout to accommodate for different group sizes

Plenty of seating is available for different groups of patients and their family members. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Every patient is properly seated during peak hours. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Positive distractions

Indoor plants, outside nature/gardens, artwork created by local artists, or other pleasant stimuli are visible for most patients. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Patients have easy access to magazines, information booklets, TV, or Internet. Soothing music and nature sounds are accessible to patients. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Hard toys, books, and play areas are available for children of different ages. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Comfortable furniture

Furniture is comfortable to use for the majority of patients (e.g., armless chairs for pregnant, obese, or disabled patients). Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

users. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

A variety of furniture arrangement is available to support both social interaction (for sharing knowledge and emotional support) and solitude. Priority ▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Information regarding time/waiting time

Clock is in direct view of most patients. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

Display of expected waiting time is available and in direct view of most patients. Priority ▼ Rating▼

Notes

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Interior - Overall

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Patient-Clinician Interactions

Patient-Clinician Interactions

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Design goals, considerations, and features

Social-Economic Factors: Education, Community/ Personal Safety, Socio-demographic Balance

Health education

Rooms are available to accommodate group visits and education (for chronic disorders, pregnancy, diabetes, smoking cessation, family planning, etc.)

Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Exam rooms include access to health education materials (e.g., brochures, video, touch screen).

Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Next Tab
Staff Spaces

Clinical Care - Access to Care (location), Co-located Services, Team Care, Technology

Pod design/clustering of interaction spaces

The exam rooms and other patient-staff interaction spaces are grouped in clusters, or a pod design is used to make the layout easier to understand, monitor, and reach individual interaction spaces. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Pod size and composition match patient panel size and needs of care team. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Pods are self-contained with all necessary functional spaces to enable independent operation during slow hours when other pods are closed. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Various

Seating is available for patients and their family members. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Consultation/talking rooms are interspersed with exam rooms for patient visits when disrobing is not required. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

An appropriate number of larger rooms are available to accommodate visits of large families or visits requiring the presence of interpreters. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Universal rooms or one-stop care rooms accommodate a wide variety of care activities (e.g., registration, blood draw, checkout) to reduce patient movement. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Staff work areas in interaction spaces

Open collaboration/workstation spaces increase the visibility of the presence and status of staff members. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Workstation design facilitates care tasks to be performed (e.g., surfaces for jotting notes when standing, under-counter refrigerator). Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Nursing staff members have a clear view of interaction spaces and corridors from the nursing station(s). Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Furniture layout facilitating communication

The layout of furniture allows patient and staff equal access to the computer screen with minimal differential between patient and provider to maintain good eye contact. Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Sufficient seating is available for individuals (including families, interpreters) who accompany the patient. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Consultation rooms (if included) are designed to support patient-provider conversation (e.g., deemphasizing exam tables and medical instruments for stress reduction, spaciousness). Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Telemedicine room

Specially designed rooms are available for clinicians to conduct teleconferences with remote patients. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Where provided, background wall for telemedicine has neutral color without busy patterns or direct light reflections. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Where provided, electric and data outlets are located close to the telemedicine equipment to mitigate clutter of electrical cables. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Lighting (natural and artificial) in telemedicine rooms is designed to optimize color rendition and minimize shadows and glare. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

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Staff Spaces

OPTIONAL: Other Design Considerations to Improve Quality and Safety of Primary Care

Standard room layout

Exam/consultation room layout is standardized (e.g., standardization of supplies stocked, same-handed rooms). Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

The layout of pods, workstations, supplies, and equipment is standardized (e.g., consistent layout of workstations). Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Lighting

Movable and adjustable exam lighting is available when needed. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Lighting sources provide good color-rendering capacity for physical examination. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Illumination level is sufficient to minimize errors in medication safety zones (where medication is prepared or administered). Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Sharps safety

Sharps containers are within arm's reach and below eye level at point of use. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Infection prevention

Finishes are smooth, with minimum perforations or crevices. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

There are minimal horizontal surfaces, ridges, reveals, or seams that could serve as dust collectors. Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Where surgery and procedures are performed, space is available to accommodate equipment for supply sterilization. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Storage for clean and dirty supplies is separate. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

At least one sink and one alcohol gel dispenser are located within easy reach in each clinician-patient interaction space. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Sinks and/or alcohol gel dispensers are located within easy reach from patient and staff walking paths. Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Special isolation rooms are designated for patients who are suspected to be infectious. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Cleanliness

The layout and fixture design prevent patients from directly viewing trash and medical waste. Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

The available storage space (e.g., cabinets concealing medical gear) reduces clutter. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Acoustics

Sound-absorbing ceiling tiles and other noise-reduction measures are used so that the rooms and corridors are quiet. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Noise sources that may interfere with communication between patient and staff or between staff members are reduced. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Noise and reverberation do not hinder verbal communication. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Positive distractions

Patients have easy access to magazines, information booklets, TV, or Internet. Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Soothing music and nature sounds are accessible to patients. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Hard toys and books are available for children of different ages when waiting. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Comfortable furniture

Furniture is comfortable for the majority of patients to use (e.g., armless chairs for pregnant, obese, or disabled patients). Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Furniture design features enhance staff comfort (e.g., enough legroom for computer desk, left-handed staff). Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Furniture is easily adjusted to improve the comfort of various users. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Information regarding time/waiting time

Clock is in direct view of most patients. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Daylight

Window glazing facilitates skin color assessment (e.g., no bronze or green color). Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Amenities

Mirror is convenient for patients to check clothes before leaving the room. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Plenty of spaces are available for storage of patients' personal items (e.g., coats, umbrellas) during waiting. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Privacy

Solid doors and walls (e.g., full-height partitions, materials with high noise-reduction ratings, noise-reduction coefficient (NRC), sound transmission class (STC), and ceiling attenuation class (CAC) sufficiently prevent conversations in one room from being overheard by patients in neighboring rooms/corridors. Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Each room has ventilation supply and return to avoid sound transmission through door undercutting. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Potential acoustic "holes" (e.g., pocket doors, gaps between window mullions and partition walls, receptacle boxes at same location on both sides of a partition wall) are minimized. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Solid doors, walls, curtains, and window design (e.g., blinds, sill height) prevent patients in rooms from being seen from outside the rooms. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Curtains protect patient privacy by screening views from accompanying family members and interpreters during physical exam. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Curtains and other visual barriers prevent patient-sensitive information (such as measurements of weight) from being viewed by other patients or staff. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Sound masking prevents conversations from being overheard by patients in nearby areas. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

The location and orientation of the exam table and room door are designed so that there is minimal possibility of patient's body parts accidentally being viewed by patients and staff outside the room. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

There are screened dressing spaces with lockable storage for personal items. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Clear physical boundary

The patient and provider flows are separated (e.g., separation of on-stage service areas (waiting, reception, exam rooms) from off-stage work areas) so that back-stage staff work is not exposed to patients. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Patient control of window blinds, air conditioning, music, TV, etc.

Air conditioning temperature, window blinds, music all can be adjusted by most patients. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Controls of air conditioning temperature, window blinds, music are within reach of most patients. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Controls of air conditioning temperature, window blinds, music are easy and intuitive for patients to use. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Barrier-free/Universal design

Exam tables are adjustable for use by special patients (e.g., low-height motorized exam table for obese patients). Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Patient lifts (portable or ceiling mounted) are available for patient handling if needed. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Sufficient patient-clinician interaction spaces

Sufficient spaces at patient flow points (vitals, exam rooms, procedure rooms, etc.) are available so there are no apparent bottlenecks. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Convenient location of equipment, supplies, and workstations

Medications, supplies, and equipment are conveniently located close to exam rooms so that unnecessary travel by nurses and other staff is minimized. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Exam room layout facilitates physical exams and other procedures (e.g., exam table angled away from walls, physician at patient's right side, physician has easy access to diagnostic instruments). Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Electrical outlets are easy to access for using/charging equipment, diagnostic instruments, and portable devices. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Wireless/wired communication infrastructure

Each exam room or other interaction space is equipped with wireless or wired connectivity to facilitate electrical medical records and telemedicine. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Visual indication of room status

Visual indicators such as color flags and lights clearly communicate to staff the presence of patient and staff in each room and type of service needed. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

Wayfinding

The rooms or cluster of rooms are color coded (e.g., floor, wall color, etc.), together with lighting, landmark, and view of exterior, to make wayfinding easier for patients. Priority▼ Rating▼ reference

Notes

Window design for security

All windows that open to building exterior are secured and protected with entry alarms or other devices. Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

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Waiting Check-in

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Staff Spaces

Staff Spaces

Under each population health design goal, there is a series of design considerations and more detailed design features. When using this tool as a design audit, indicate the priority level of the design feature (high, medium, or low). When using this tool as an audit, rate how well implemented design features achieved the design intent, using a 5-point scale. Choose N/A if the design feature is not implemented/observed.

Design goals, considerations, and features

Healthy Behaviors: Activity, Nutrition, Green Spaces

Supplies

Equipment and supplies are located close to staff workstations to reduce the need of excessive staff travel, but facilitate some activity.

Priority▼ Rating▼

Notes

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Results - Checklist

Clinical Care - Access to Care (location), Co-located Services, Team Care, Technology

Wireless/wired communication infrastructure

Wireless signals cover the entire facility so that individual staff members can be immediately reached. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Workstations

If the workstation is located centrally, it provides visibility to the status of interaction spaces (e.g., exam rooms). Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Decentralized workstations are located close to interaction spaces (e.g., exam rooms), providing visibility to the interaction spaces and reducing staff travel. Priority▼ Ranking▼ reference

Notes

Staff workstations are located close to each other so that staff can easily communicate with each other. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Meeting spaces

Informal meeting spaces (e.g., alcoves with work surfaces, seating with movable furniture) are located near primary circulation to encourage informal conversations and teamwork when needed. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Formal meeting or team rooms are located close to individual workstations to improve problem-solving effectiveness. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

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Results - Checklist

OPTIONAL: Other Design Considerations to Improve Quality and Safety of Primary Care

Cleanliness

Sufficient storage spaces are available in convenient locations so that no equipment clutters corridors or other staff work spaces. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Clear physical boundary

Physical separation minimizes interruptions and distractions that may interfere with clinical care tasks that require concentration (e.g., medication dispensing). Priority▼ Ranking▼ reference

Notes

Visual displays of work information

Whiteboards and other visual displays of work information facilitate ongoing awareness of other staff location, activity, and intention. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Visual connection between different spaces

Visual connection between different spaces (e.g., windows in doors or walls) increases the visibility of workstations and reduces the sense of isolation. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Noise-reduction measures

Sound-absorbing ceiling tiles and other noise-reduction measures are used so that rooms and corridors in staff areas are quiet. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Noise sources that may interfere with communication between patient and staff or between staff members are reduced. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Positive distractions

Soothing music and nature sounds are accessible to staff. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Comfortable furniture

Furniture is comfortable and adjustable to support workers with various needs and tasks of different durations. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

The design of work spaces (workstations) facilitates care tasks to be performed (e.g., surfaces for jotting notes when standing, under-counter refrigerator). Priority▼ Ranking▼ reference

Notes

Amenities

Drinking water, microwave, refrigerator, and other amenities are easily accessible to staff. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Plenty of spaces are available for storage of staff's personal items (e.g., clothes, umbrellas). Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Staff Spaces

Privacy

Physical separation (such as solid or glass walls) exists in staff interaction spaces so that staff conversation about patient-sensitive information may not heard by patients nearby. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Physical separation (such as patterned/etched glass) and layout of the workstation prevent viewing of computer screens and documents by patients walking by. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Physical separation prevents patients from viewing the inside of staff breakroom and staff personal items. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Soundmasking helps to prevent private conversation between staff or private calls from being overheard by others. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Changing spaces

Sufficient spaces are available for staff changing. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Staff changing spaces are not visible to patients. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Sufficient spaces are available for staff to securely store personal items. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Breakroom / staff resting spaces

The breakroom is designed for staff temporarily escape, separated from the rest of the facility. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

There is a outdoor garden close to the breakroom designated for staff use. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

The overall atmosphere of the breakroom is quiet and relaxing. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Medical records office (optional only for facilities with paper medical records)

The paper medical records are easy to retrieve. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

The counters are adjustable for staff to read and write comfortably when standing. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

The medical records office is located close to both the check-in and interaction spaces. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Information security

The storage of patient confidential information (physical and/or virtual) is secured. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Convenient location of equipment, supplies, and workstations

Providers' workstations and supplies are located conveniently close to exam rooms so that unnecessary travel by nurses and other staff is minimized. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Wireless tracking/locating system

Wireless tracking/locating system (such as radio frequency identification (RFID) and infrared (IR) tracking badges and tags, displaying and notifying of the location and status of people and equipment on a computer screen) minimizes the time patients spend waiting at different stages. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

Wireless tracking/locating system minimizes the time staff members spend looking for equipment. Priority▼ Ranking▼

Notes

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Patient-clinician Interactions

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