

# Researchers find room design can enhance patient care

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The design of a consultation room can improve the quality of a visit to the physician's office. A collaborative research study developed by Nurture by Steelcase and Mayo Clinic, was conducted to understand the extent to which a consultation room designed to support present-day clinical encounters could affect the consultation between patients and clinicians. The results of this randomized trial, the first of its kind, will appear in the October issue of *Health Environments Research and Design Journal* (HERD).

"This study supports the notion that the space in which people meet can influence how they work together," says Victor Montori, M.D., the lead Mayo researcher. He also says more studies in other health care systems are needed to confirm these findings. You can view Dr. Montori discussing the study below.

"Helping to build a body of evidence that leads to better health care outcomes and experiences is foundational to our mission," says Joyce Bromberg, director of Workspace Futures Research for Steelcase. Nurture is Steelcase's healthcare division — a company focused on space and environments and how products within those environments can make them more comfortable, efficient and conducive to the healing process.

The Space and Interaction Trial (SIT) consisted of 63 pairs of patients and doctors. The pairs were assigned by chance to either a conventional

office or to an experimental one. The experimental office placed the patient and the clinician side by side facing the computer screen while seated at a semicircular desk. The researchers found that patient and clinician satisfaction with the conventional office was very high. In the experimental room, however, researchers determined that clinicians could share more information with patients while both viewed the computer screen. And, they noted, patients felt they had more and better access to information, including their own records, test results, images, and online patient education material. These findings are the result of a post-visit follow-up survey with the participants.

Researcher Julka Almquist says, "This study provided an excellent opportunity to advance not only knowledge in the field of health environments, but it also demonstrated how this type of research can be conducted in an authentic clinical setting." The study took place during usual patient visits at Mayo Clinic.

Source: Mayo Clinic ([news](#) : [web](#))

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