



Department of
Veterans Affairs
Office of Facilities Management

designguide

2006

NURSING HOME



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Foreword

The Nursing Home Design Guide 2006 signals a significant change in VA's approach to the environment of care for Long Term Care residents. It is an extremely important addition to the series of Design Guides for various elements of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs facilities produced by the Office of Facilities Management. This excellence was achieved with the indispensable input of: Lorraine G. Hiatt, Ph.D.; Martin Cohen, FAIA; Christa M. Hojlo, DNSc; and Dennis Hancher, RA. They gave countless unstinting effort to the creation of this document which signals the transformation of the culture of care in VA, discussed by Dr. Hojlo in the Introduction. Their extensive experience in this subject, supplemented by traveling to look at and meet with staff and residents at VA, State, and private sector Nursing Homes across the country, was further assisted by the experts in the Nursing Home Design Advisory Group and the consulting services of EBA Ernest Bland Associates, P.C.

This volume is meant to be a guide, not a code or regulation. It reflects the best practices of care and supporting facility design concepts for creating functional, pleasing, nurturing, and efficient environments for those veterans who reside in VA or State sponsored Nursing Homes, as well as for those who serve and honor the residents.

The drawings illustrate possibilities, meant to allow deviation, not always to be copied without variation. Although the guide illustrates some double room layouts, it is VA's strong preference to create only single bedrooms, except for special requirements. The dignity, privacy, and special needs of the individual residents must be paramount. Those who have served the Nation will live in these buildings, perhaps for the remainder of their lives, and deserve no less.

Lloyd H. Siegel, FAIA

Introduction

This nursing home design guide represents a unique collaborative effort on the part of architects, nursing home providers, clinicians, and others to set forth an approach to designing and building nursing homes based on a resident centered, resident focused approach to care. The guide represents the best thinking of experts who are committed to transforming the culture of care in nursing homes built on the notion that in large part, the actual facility design itself contributes to the well being and positive outcomes of care in such facilities.

The transformation of the culture of care in nursing homes is grounded in two essential principles:

1. The resident comes first, and
2. Nursing homes today and into the future are defined as a dynamic array of services when hospital care is no longer necessary and nursing home is the only option.

Nursing homes have suffered from their affiliation with the hospital model, negative press, and overall institutionalization of those who need this service. The transformation of the culture of care in nursing homes focuses attention on enhancing the resident's ability to function and live fully until he or she dies. The driver of care in the new culture is achieving "the highest

practicable quality of life" for residents rather than solely treating the medical diagnosis.

The new culture embraces the resident as the focal point of care and delivers an environment conducive to facilitating quality of life as well as quality of care while overriding the negative stereotypes. Very personal components of residing in the nursing home such as the need for privacy, the need for natural light, comfortable and safe flooring, engagement in meaningful use of time, inviting dining experiences, and living space that generates elements of the comforts of home, are characteristics of the new nursing home.

Design that enhances the physical environment to support quality of life for the resident is critical to positive outcomes of care regardless of why the resident is admitted to the nursing home.

The challenge then, from a design perspective, is to de-institutionalize the facility space in order to promote fullness of life for residents regardless of reason for admission. This guide then will serve as a resource for those embarking on the path of creating environments where residents thrive in ways never imagined possible in institutions of care.

Glossary

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Adjacency Matrix: | A diagram illustrating the relative proximity of each workspace to other workspaces. |
| Americans with Disabilities Act: | Legislates access for disabled persons in most privately owned buildings or businesses that serve the public. |
| Assignable Space: | A measurement of space attributable to a distinct function or service including support areas and intradepartmental circulation. Defines Net Square Feet. |
| Bay: | The space in a building generally bounded by four columns. |
| Biaxial: | Equal space as well as equal access to light, controls, etc. within a resident bed room. |
| Case Mix: | Case Mix categorizes patients into statistically and clinically homogeneous groups based on the collection of clinical and administrative data. Adjusting for patients of different levels of acuity forms the basis for healthcare organization comparisons and case mix adjusted resource utilization. |
| Certificate of Need (CON) | Certificate of Need (CON) is a formal statement that a health care facility, medical equipment purchase, or new medical or expanded service is needed, or that a reduction or termination in service will not have an adverse affect on health care access. |
| Circulation Area: | Entrances, vestibules, (interdepartmental) corridors, passages, elevators, escalators, stairs, etc; included in gross areas and excluded in net areas. |
| Correlated Color Temperature (CCT): | Describes the degree to which a color appears warm (reddish), neutral or cool (bluish) and is measured in Kelvin (K). |
| Departmental Gross Square Feet | The sum of gross spaces in a department. |
| Eden Concept: | A vibrant living habitat in which residents are given the opportunity to show their care, love and concern for other living things. |

Glossary (cont'd)

| | |
|--|---|
| Footprint: | Describes the actual floor area for a function or activity; it does not include circulation space. Also refers to the building floor plate. |
| Geriatric Research, Education & Clinical Center (GRECC) | The GRECC program was conceived in 1973 to focus on aging as a special interest for VA. The purpose of GRECCs is to give visibility to the study of geriatrics or diseases of the elderly, and the study of the aging process-gerontology. GRECCs support a multi-disciplinary approach to research, education, and clinical care at each center. |
| Gross Square Feet: | Total building gross areas measured from exterior faces of exterior walls. |
| Indoor Air Quality (IAQ): | Refers to the quantitative level of contaminations in the air as well as the qualitative level of satisfaction of those exposed to the air. Standards for acceptable IAQ have been developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. |
| Layout: | A floor plan showing the specific placement of walls, doors, furniture, and equipment. |
| Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED [™]) | LEED [™] includes a rating system for building design as well as professional accreditation for people working in the design and building industry. |
| Mechanical Area | Main boiler room and other mechanical and electrical areas; included in gross areas and excluded in net areas. |
| Minimum Data Set (MDS) | A standardized assessment instrument required for all Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) certified nursing homes. |
| National Fire Protection Association: | Produces a code used in many jurisdictions to define fire protection requirements of building codes. |
| Net Area | The area of rooms or spaces as measured from inside wall to inside wall and assigned to functional use by occupants. |
| Net-to-Gross: | A measure of the ratio of assignable space to total space in a building; typically expressed as a percentage. |

Glossary (cont'd)

| | |
|--|--|
| Nurses' Station | Location at which nursing staff traditionally performs charting and related activities throughout the day. |
| Off-gassing: | The release of chemicals from non-metallic substances used in construction or furnishing. Off-gassing compromises indoor air quality (IAQ). Common sources of off-gassing include interior-grade pressed wood materials and synthetic furnishings such as carpeting. |
| Resident Bed Room | A room in the facility licensed for one or more patient beds. |
| Resident Centered Care | Facility design model that focuses care resources around the individual resident. Essential services are near or are brought to the resident as compared to taking the resident to the point of care. |
| Residential Model | Design philosophy based on incorporating home like elements while minimizing institutional aspects. |
| Responsible Design: | Architecture that respects the natural environment and integrates it into building design, addresses the health of individuals and community, and is sensitive to the cultural context of the site. |
| Resource Utilization Group (RUG) | Nursing home resident categories that identify resident needs and resources for care. |
| Site: | The land parcel on which the building(s) sits or will be built. It includes the grounds, driveways, and walkways associated with the building(s). |
| Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS): | Generators, batteries, and/or associated equipment that provide continuous electrical power, preventing power loss to critical functions that rely on absolute continuity of service. |
| United States Green Building Council (USGBC) | The United States Green Building Council is a national coalition of leaders in the building industry that developed the LEED [™] system. |
| Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN): | The VA healthcare system consists of 21 integrated networks across the US and Puerto Rico that are focused on pooling and aligning resources to better meet local health care needs and provide greater access to care. |

Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|---|
| A | Amps |
| ABA | Architectural Barriers Act |
| AC/HR | Air Changes per Hour |
| ADA | Americans with Disability Act |
| ADAAG | ADA Accessibility Guidelines |
| AHJ | Authority Having Jurisdiction |
| AIA | American Institute of Architects |
| ANSI | American National Standards Institute |
| AR | As Required |
| BOMA | Building Owners and Management Association |
| CAD | Computer Assisted Design |
| CARES | Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services |
| CFM | Cubic Feet per Minute |
| CON | Certificate of Need |
| DAG | Design Advisory Group |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Agency |
| FC | Foot Candle |
| FM | Office of Facilities Management |
| FTEE | Full Time Equivalent Employee |
| GRECC | Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center |
| GSF | Gross Square Feet |
| GSM | Gross Square Meters |
| HIPAA | Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act |
| HP | Horsepower |
| HPD | Hours per Day |
| HVAC | Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning |
| IAQ | Indoor Air Quality |
| IBC | International Building Code |
| JCAHO | Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations |
| LB | Pound, Pounds |

Abbreviations (cont'd)

| | |
|--------------|---|
| LEED | Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design |
| LUX | Lumen Per Square Meter |
| MDS | Minimum Data Set |
| NFPA | National Fire Protection Association |
| NHCU | Nursing Home Care Unit |
| NHRA | Nursing Home Reform Act (of 1987) |
| NSF | Net Square Feet |
| NSM | Net Square Meters |
| NTS | Not to Scale |
| OBRA | Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (of 1987) |
| OSHA | Occupational Safety and Health Administration |
| OT | Occupational Therapy |
| PG | Program Guide |
| PT | Physical Therapy |
| RUG | Resource Utilization Group |
| RH | Relative Humidity |
| RT | Recreation Therapy |
| SF | Square Feet, Square Foot |
| SVH | State Veterans Home |
| SqM | Square Meters |
| TV | Television |
| UBC | Uniform Building Code |
| UFAS | Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards |
| UPS | Uninterruptible Power Supply |
| USGBC | United States Green Building Council |
| V | Volts |
| VA | Department of Veterans Affairs |
| VACO | Veterans Affairs Central Office |

Abbreviations (cont'd)

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| VAMC | Veterans Affairs Medical Center |
| VHA | Veterans Health Administration |
| VISN | Veterans Integrated Service Network |
| VSO | Veterans Service Organizations |
| W | Watts |