

**THE MOST EFFECTIVE CHOICE  
HOSPITAL DESIGNERS CAN MAKE  
TO IMPROVE PATIENT SATISFACTION**



800.543.0550 | [info@ghent.com](mailto:info@ghent.com) | [ghent.com/healthcare](http://ghent.com/healthcare)

Interior designers and architects that work in healthcare know the many challenges facing them when starting a project. There are hundreds of articles and blogs released daily that discuss color, accessibility, and comfort, among other design specifications that affect a patient, the care team, and families in a hospital. Whether you are trying to learn more about healthcare design or are familiar with the design sector, it's important to understand how design can affect patient satisfaction hospital reimbursements. Designers and architects are challenged with delivering eye-catching and functional patient room designs complete with equipment that helps care teams provide the best treatment, and service to patients. The patient care environment must promote best practices in communication, treatment and customer service. This all stems from one crucial goal: increasing patient satisfaction.

## Creating Hospital Rooms That Improve Patient Satisfaction

Since the 1980s, more than 600 studies have been conducted that strongly link hospital environments to patient satisfaction, stress, health outcomes, and overall quality of care<sup>2</sup>. Making healthcare environments more comfortable, aesthetically pleasing and informative have been found to reduce patient stress and increase overall satisfaction in their care<sup>1</sup>. This leads researchers to infer that the design of the patient room is an indicator in how favorably patients rate their overall satisfaction with a hospital. Even though only two questions on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey directly ask about the built environment, evidence suggests that it plays a big role on how all questions on the survey are rated. A large investment is being made in healthcare, giving designers a chance to rethink how form meets function in this environment. Proper design can improve staff effectiveness, decrease patient falls, and increase patient engagement and communication<sup>8</sup>.

While there are many factors to consider when designing a patient room, one proven design choice that increases patient satisfaction is a custom patient room whiteboard. Studies have shown that whiteboards can significantly improve patients' overall satisfaction<sup>3</sup>.

Customizable patient room boards have become an integral part of the treatment process because they foster communication and give patients a better understanding of their care. Including whiteboards in every patient room delivers a helpful and interactive communication tool that increases patient satisfaction, health, and happiness. Patient room boards alone have been linked to full six-point increases in HCAHPS scores<sup>4</sup>.

### PROPER DESIGN OF PATIENT ROOM LEADS TO<sup>8</sup>:

#### Reduction of Stress and Fatigue of the Staff

Reducing stress of the staff will ultimately lead to better care and increase effectiveness of that care.



#### Improvement of Patient Safety



61% of executives say they implement design to prevent patient injury. Safety increases when people, items and furniture are in appropriate places.

#### Reduction of Patient Stress

When patients are more satisfied and confident in their care, their 30-day risk-standardized readmission rates decrease.



#### Improvement in Healthcare Quality

Properly designing the facility will ultimately lead to improvement of the quality and reviews of the facility and caregivers themselves.



When choosing the right patient room boards, it's important to keep in mind how they will:

- 1 Provide a pleasing aesthetic experience.
- 2 Be placed in the room so it is easy to see and read.
- 3 Be properly cleaned for infection prevention.

Choosing the right finishes is integral to achieving a pleasing aesthetic experience as healthcare design continues to blur the line between hotel and hospital. The right finish for each element can make or break a space. Custom sizing, frames, colors and graphics allow custom patient room boards to complement any design and hospital branding.

Viewing natural scenes has been shown to promote a healing environment and improve patient outcomes. Even a fairly brief encounter with nature or a natural scene has been shown to reduce stress and also improve how well a patient perceived their pain was managed during their stay. However, incorporating natural elements into a room may not always be easy given wall space is at a premium. Allowing for graphics of any kind to be incorporated into patient room boards accomplishes multiple goals and adds to the environment. Backgrounds with healing colors, natural landscapes, and crisp, clear writing aid in healing and communication between patients and employees.

The image shows a patient room board from Windham Hospital. It contains various fields for patient information and care. Five callouts are placed over the board to highlight specific features:

- 1. Logo:** The Windham Hospital logo is located in the top right corner.
- 2. Current Date:** The 'DATE:' field is located in the top left corner.
- 3. Care Team:** The 'CARE TEAM:' section is located in the middle left, listing the nurse and doctor.
- 4. Daily Goals & Discharge Info:** The 'GOALS FOR TODAY:' section is located in the middle left, with a 'Next Dose if Needed' field below it.
- 5. Pain Management:** The 'PAIN' section is located in the bottom left, featuring a visual scale from 0 (happy) to 10 (sad) and a 'Call, Don't Fall!' warning.

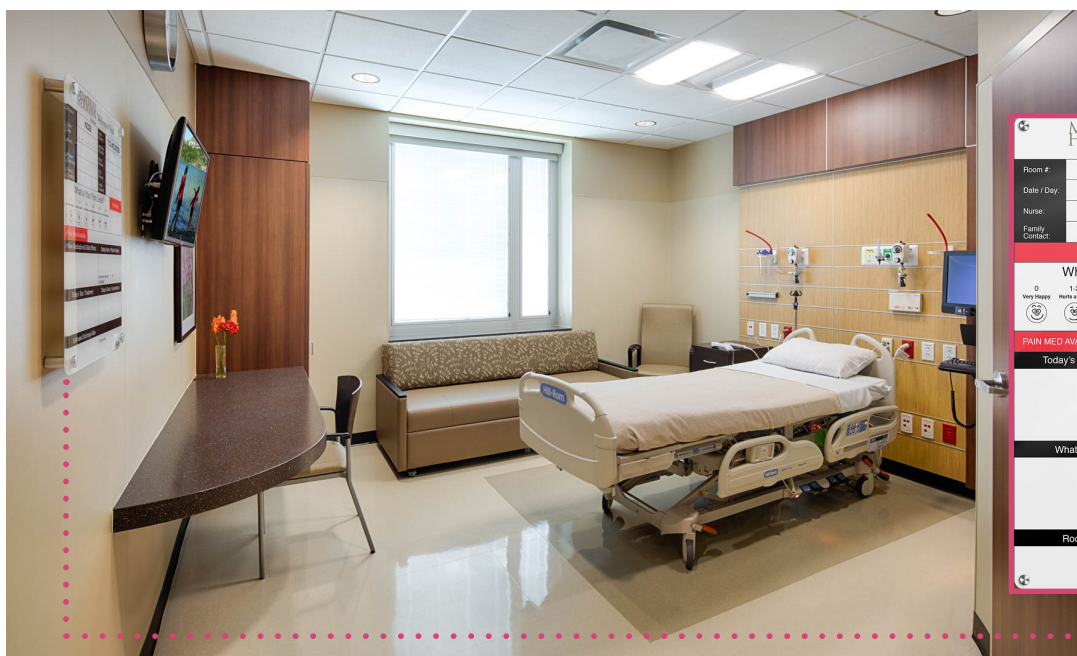
1. **Logo** - Not only for facility branding, but also to ensure the patient knows where they are.

2. **Current Date** - Awareness of the date reduces anxiety.

3. **Care Team** - Easily accessible and visible so patient and family get to know the care team and know how to contact them.

4. **Daily Goals & Discharge Info** - Seeing daily activity and discharge information creates focus and reduces anxiety.

5. **Pain Management** - Families and staff can quickly know how the patient is feeling without interrogation.



MEMORIAL HERMANN Northeast Welcomes You			
Room #		Room Phone #	
Date / Day		Doctor(s)	
Nurse		Nurse Phone #	
Family Contact		Charge Nurse	
<b>Please Call, Don't Fall!</b>			
What is Your Pain Level?		MANAGEABLE PAIN LEVEL	
0 Very Happy	1-2 Hurts a Little	3-4 Hurts More	5-6 Hurts Even More
7-8 Hurts A Lot	9-10 Hurts Really Bad		
PAIN MED AVAILABLE:		Last Dose Given: Next Dose:	
Today's Test / Treatments		Today's Goals / Expectations	
What Matters to Me		Safety Alert / Patient Needs	
Room Service #		Estimated Discharge Date	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Ride Home	

## Placement

While the overall graphics and finishes are important for the look and feel of the space, placement in the room is integral to boards achieving communication initiatives and being incorporated into the clinical care pathway. Versatility of size and shape allows custom whiteboards to be placed where patients can easily see and read them. This is ideally no more than 10-12 feet away from the bed and on the footwall or sidewall near the computer.

Nurses and doctors also need to have easy access as they are often writing on them while interacting with patients. Similar to having sinks placed where caregivers can keep eye contact, placing boards in a place where they can easily talk while writing can have a positive impact on patient satisfaction scores<sup>2</sup>.

Font size is also important when designing your whiteboard. You must make sure the information is legible from the distance the board is placed from the patient's bed. The font size should be at least 25 pt.

## Cleanability & Longevity

Patients' perception of cleanliness can be improved with lighting, decor choices and furniture selection<sup>2</sup>. With patients spending the majority of their time in their room, the littlest details become noticeable. With proper placement, a patient room board will be the most visible feature in the room. Staring at a dirty board will have a direct reflection on how well the patient scores that part of the HCAHPS.

The HCAHPS surveys specifically ask questions about the cleanliness of patient rooms, making it a key factor in improving patient satisfaction<sup>7</sup>.

Hospital whiteboards should be easy to clean using hospital grade cleaners, allowing staff to keep patient rooms free of bacteria without worrying about damaging or reducing the life of their whiteboards. Choosing a surface that is easy to clean and also protects against ghosting, fading and other defects will allow nurses to write clearly and erase completely. By doing this, nurses will keep sensitive patient information private.

Ghent Healthcare simplifies the design and procurement process by providing a onestop shop for patient room boards. Different areas of hospitals serve different types of patients, so the information and type of board may not be the same in each area.

With whiteboards in patient rooms, nurses' stations, and hospitals in 500 facilities nationwide, we understand how to design for specific areas of the hospital effectively. Our communication experts work with you to create the perfect tool to enhance any hospital space and improve provider and patient communication, increasing patient satisfaction.

We know what should go on each board and how each piece of data helps ease patient anxiety and improve hospital stays for patients, family and staff. Since each facility is unique, one size or design does not fit into all environments. With a variety of options including classic whiteboards, glassboards, and changeable glassboards, offered in standard and custom sizes, Ghent Healthcare is able to provide the perfect board for exact specifications of a facility.

With our made-to-order process, facilities can specify colors, designs, images, and logos, making sure your boards follow brand standards and blend with the existing aesthetics of your hospital. As an industry leader, we make it easy and intuitive for your designers to specify a customized whiteboard that provides outstanding design, detail, and quality.



## Sources

1. A Review of the Research Literature on Evidence-Based Healthcare Design  
[http://hcleader.healthdesign.org/HCLLeader\\_5\\_LitReviewWP.pdf](http://hcleader.healthdesign.org/HCLLeader_5_LitReviewWP.pdf)
2. Improving the Patient Experience Through the Health Care Physical Environment  
[http://www.ashe.org/management\\_monographs/pdfs/HPOE-Guide-on-the-Patient-Experience.pdf](http://www.ashe.org/management_monographs/pdfs/HPOE-Guide-on-the-Patient-Experience.pdf)
3. Patient Whiteboards To Improve Patient-centred Care In The Hospital  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23922397>
4. It's the Writing on the Wall: Whiteboards Improve Inpatient Satisfaction With Provider Communication  
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1062860610376088>
5. Using Clinical Space to Shape Patient-Provider Communication  
<https://www.healthdesign.org/insightssolutions/using-clinical-space-shape-patient-provider-communication>
6. Building patient satisfaction: Physical environment improvements can lead to better patient experiences and HCAHPS scores  
<https://www.hfmmagazine.com/articles/2314-building-patient-satisfaction>
7. Coming Clean on the Link Between Perception of Cleanliness and Patient Satisfaction  
<https://www.healthdesign.org/insights-solutions/coming-clean-link-between-perception-cleanliness-andpatient-satisfaction>
8. The Role of the Physical Environment in the Hospital of the 21st Century: A Once-in-a-Lifetime Opportunity  
[https://www.healthdesign.org/sites/default/files/Role%20Physical%20Environ%20in%20the%2021st%20Century%20Hospital\\_0.pdf](https://www.healthdesign.org/sites/default/files/Role%20Physical%20Environ%20in%20the%2021st%20Century%20Hospital_0.pdf)



## About Ghent Healthcare

For more than 15 years, Ghent Healthcare has been leading the way in high quality, custom whiteboards that help care providers effectively communicate with their patients. Our whiteboards are easy to read, clean, and make communicating with your patients simple. Contact our team to learn more about how our custom whiteboards can be an effective solution for your project.