

# Healthcare

## DESIGN GUIDE

Designing  
healthcare  
spaces with  
empathy

INTERACTIVE PDF





# DESIGNING HEALTHCARE SPACES WITH EMPATHY

The COVID-19 pandemic has led us to reassess care pathways into and out of hospital to ensure both patient safety and continuity of care. It has also provided an opportunity to put the patient experience at the heart of our healthcare strategies. Patients no longer come to the healthcare system as mere supplicants. Now well-informed, patients expect to be involved in the decision-making about their pathology and their patient journey. They also expect to be in control when it comes to their stay in hospital. Finally, with the patient experience and personnel engagement being linked, it is also time to make the hospital a great place to work.

Although primarily aimed at helping and inspiring you in your colour choices, this guide is based on the findings of our research study 'The Hospital of the Future: Challenges and Issues'. It addresses some of the questions raised in the study, such as:

- How to promote mobility within hospitals?
- How to reduce the distance nurses have to walk?
- How to better engage the patient and their family?

The whole community has a role to play, whether it be architects, construction managers or manufacturers, in providing practical answers to these questions.

[Read more on our website](#)



# SUMMARY

## INSPIRATION GUIDE

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## USING COLOUR IN HEALTHCARE SPACES

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# COMMON AREAS

In a human-centric approach to common areas in healthcare premises, key priorities involve creating welcoming and comfortable spaces.

This includes designing accessible waiting areas with ample seating, natural light, and aesthetically pleasing surroundings to reduce stress.

Emphasis should be placed on privacy and dignity in these shared spaces, and clear signage should be used to help patients navigate the facility easily.

Additionally, efforts should be made to control noise levels, ensuring a calm environment.

The inclusion of natural elements, flexible design, and attention to aesthetics will contribute to a positive atmosphere in these communal spaces.

Overall, these areas should prioritise patient well-being, promote clear communication, and create a supportive environment for all individuals utilising the healthcare facility.





# RECEPTION



“

Optimising mobility within the hospital, managing waiting lines at some treatment facilities, (...), these are essential challenges for the hospital of the future.

**Pr Philippe Gabriel Steg**  
Cardiology Department Head

# RECEPTION

In reception areas in healthcare premises, a primary focus should be creating welcoming and efficient environments.

Designs should prioritise accessibility, ensuring that the reception desk is easily approachable, and that there is clear signage to guide patients.

Comfortable seating, well-lit spaces, and aesthetically pleasing decor will contribute to a positive waiting experience.

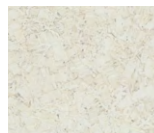
Privacy considerations should be integrated into the reception design, allowing for discreet interactions between reception staff and patients.

Ultimately, reception areas must aim to make the initial point of contact welcoming, efficient, and supportive for all individuals.

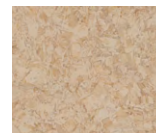


## FLOORS

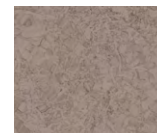
Homogeneous Vinyl / iQ Megalit



iQ Megalit White  
Ref: 3390605

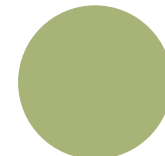


iQ Megalit Beige  
Ref: 3390611



iQ Megalit Grey Beige  
Ref: 3390607

## SHADES



S2040-G90Y



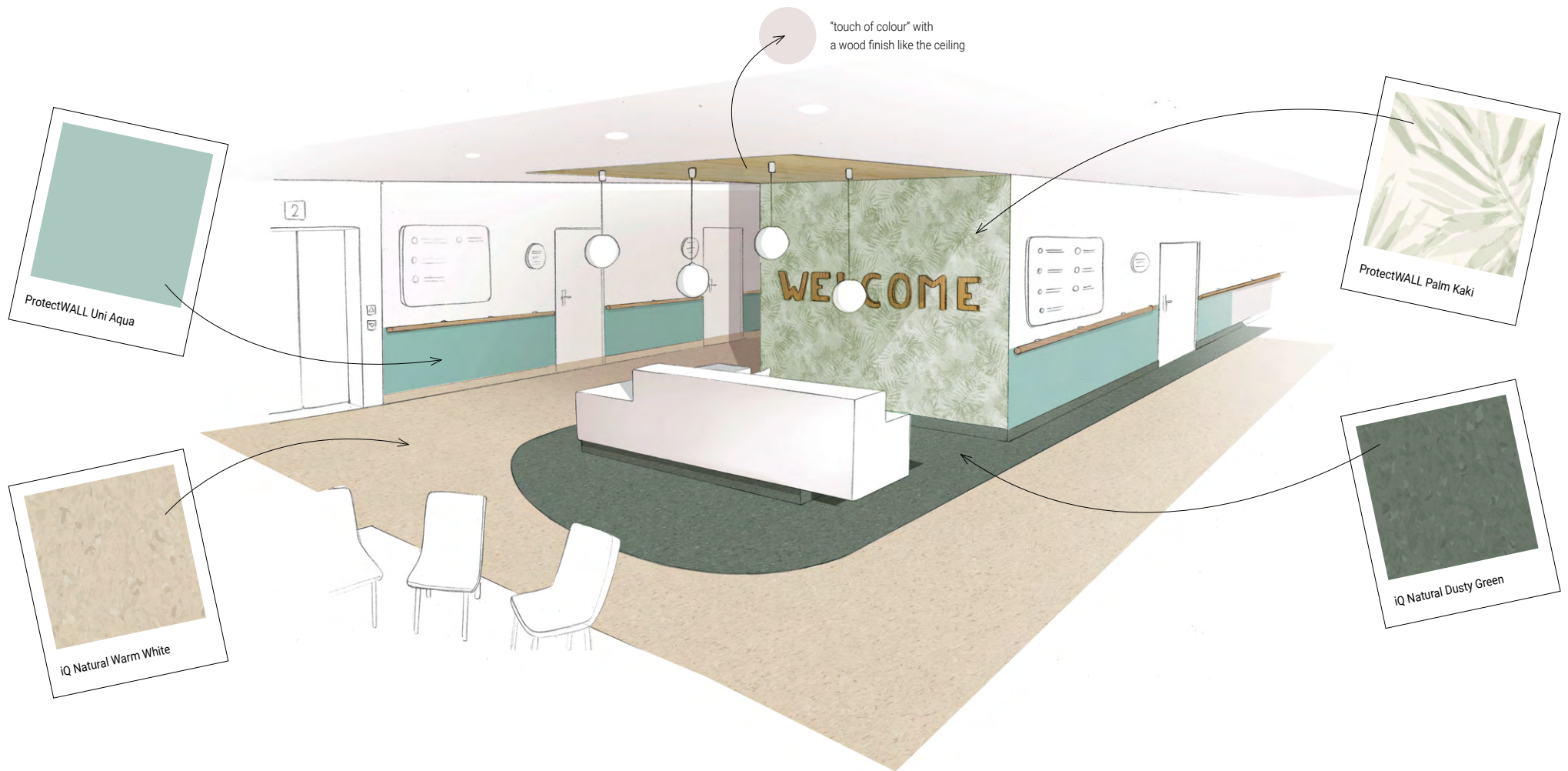
S1002-Y50R



## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# BIOPHILIC DESIGN

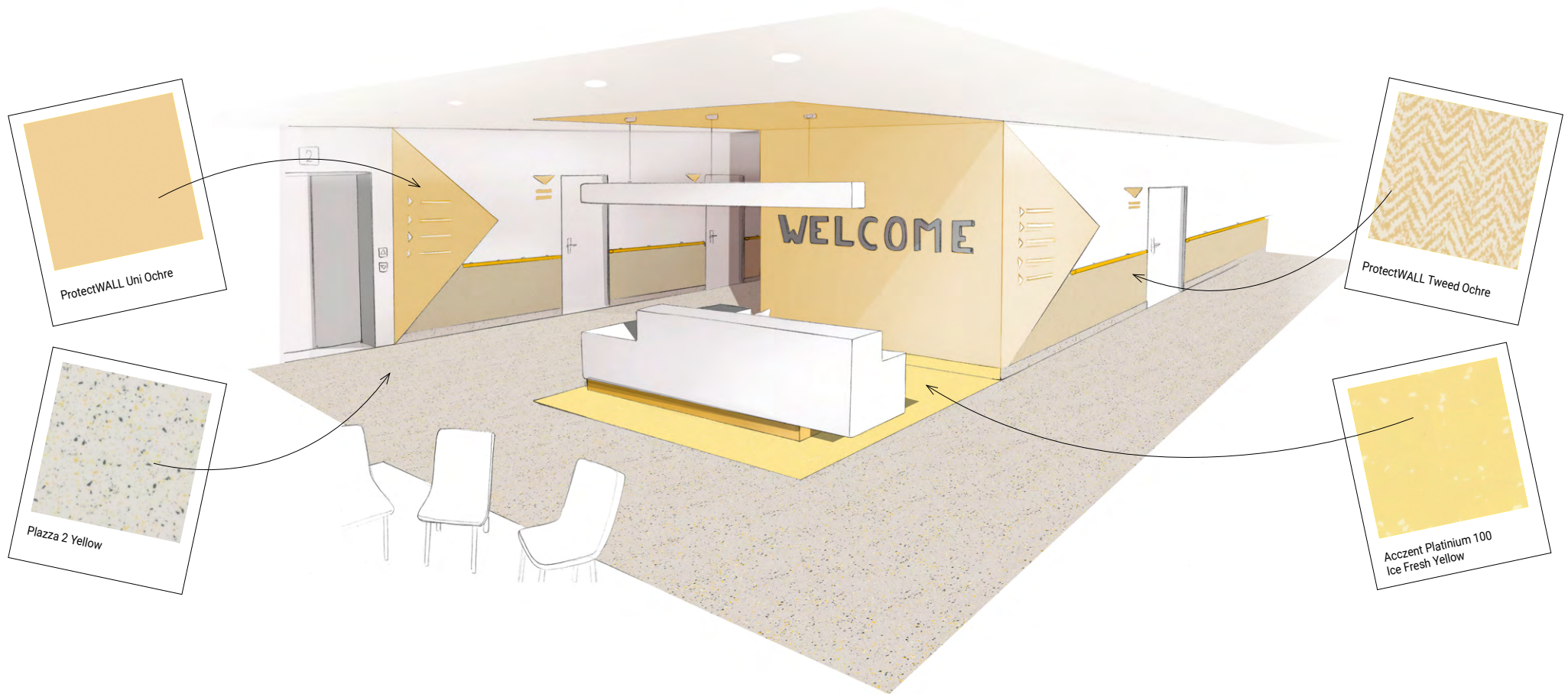
- Colour-coded walls, floors and furniture
- Visual prompts for social distancing
- Local lighting unit



## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# GRAPHIC DESIGN

- Colour-coded walls, floors and furniture
- Visual prompts for social distancing
- Local lighting unit





# CORRIDORS





# CORRIDORS

Corridors should enhance the overall well-being and experience of individuals navigating through the facility.

They should be well-lit with natural light where possible, providing a visually pleasing and comfortable pathway. Artwork or visual elements can be strategically incorporated to create a calming and aesthetically pleasing atmosphere.

Signage should be clear, informative and intuitive aiding in wayfinding and reducing confusion.

Noise control measures are crucial to ensure a quiet and peaceful environment, promoting a sense of calm for patients, staff, and visitors passing through.

Corridor design should also consider accessibility, with ample space for individuals using mobility aids or wheelchairs.

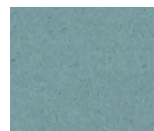
Additionally, flexible seating areas or alcoves can be integrated to provide moments of rest or private conversations.

By following these suggestions, your corridors can become more than just transitional spaces.

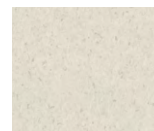


## FLOORS

Homogeneous Vinyl / iQ Natural



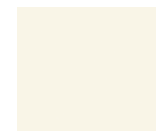
iQ Natural Aqua Blue  
Ref.: 21103096



iQ Natural White  
Ref.: 21103491

## WALLS

Heterogeneous Wall / Protect Wall



Uni Super White  
Ref.: 26500221



Uni Aqua  
Ref.: 264991083

## SHADES



S 1005-Y10R



## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# HOMELY DESIGN

- Making access to care easy
- Reduce patient and visitor stress
- Increase operational efficiency by increasing patient autonomy



## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# GRAPHIC DESIGN

- Making access to care easy
- Reduce patient and visitor stress
- Increase operational efficiency by increasing patient autonomy





# WAITING ROOMS



# WAITING ROOMS

Waiting rooms should be spaces that promote comfort, reduce stress, and enhance the overall patient experience.

Layouts should prioritise ample and comfortable seating arrangements, that consider the diverse needs of patients, including those with mobility issues. Waiting rooms can be designed with a variety of seating options, such as individual chairs, group seating, and possibly private areas to accommodate different preferences and situations.

Natural light, soothing colours, and aesthetically pleasing decor will contribute to a calming atmosphere.

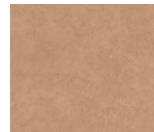
Providing educational materials and health-related resources can engage patients and help pass the time productively.

Efficient and clear signage should guide patients to and within the waiting area, minimising confusion.



## FLOORS

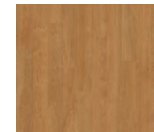
Heterogeneous Vinyl / Acczent Excellence Compact+



Concrete Brick  
Ref.: 206012023



QR CODE Soft Brick  
Ref.: 206012041



XXL Oak GOLDEN  
Ref.: 206046094

## WALLS

Heterogeneous Wall / ProtectWALL



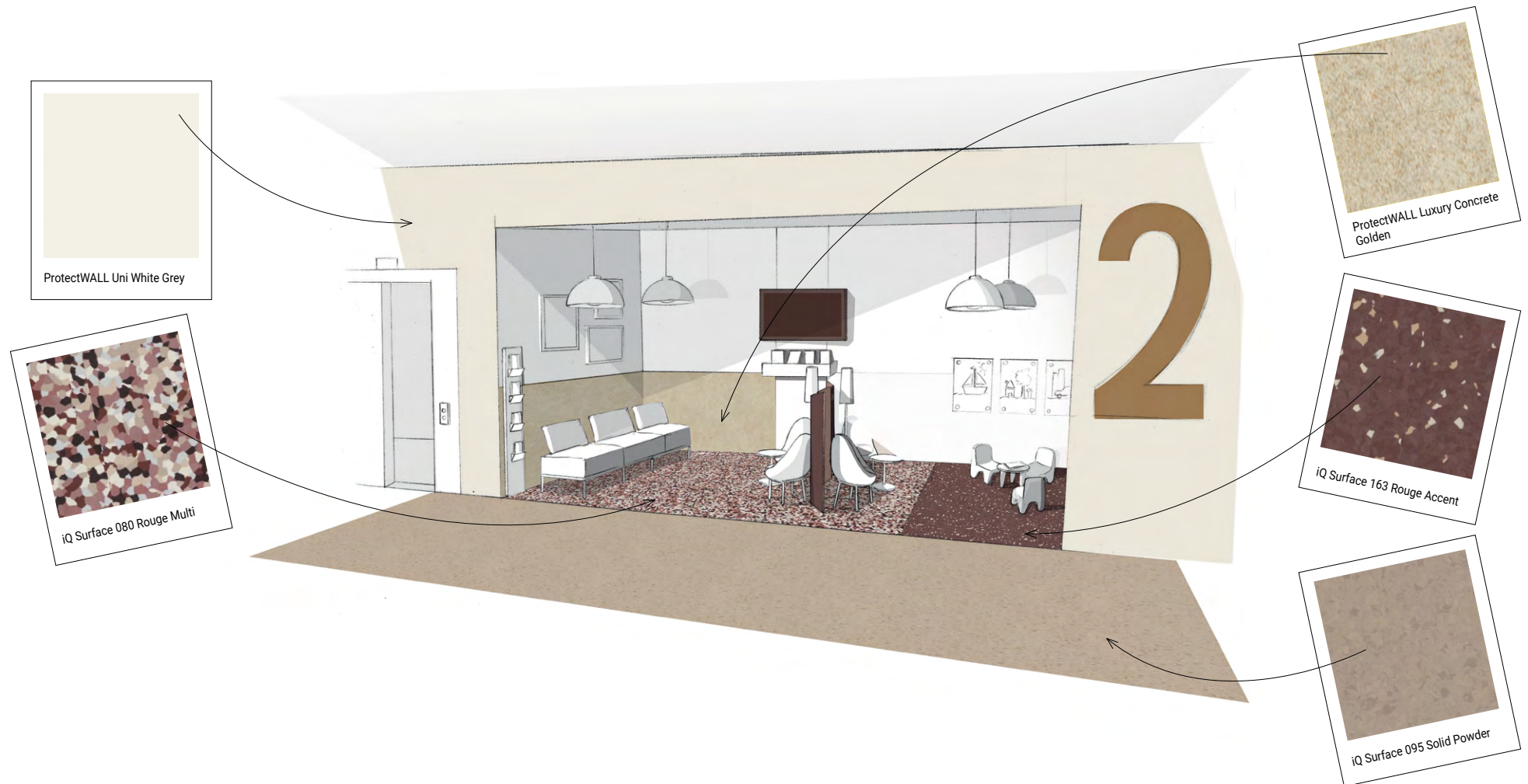
Tissé Grey Beige  
Ref.: 264991057



## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# HOMELY DESIGN

- Intimate configuration for privacy and flexibility to sit alone or with loved ones
- Positive distraction: WiFi, sockets, artworks, children's play areas
- Patient education: posters, videos, and tablets with interactive access to healthcare information



## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# GRAPHIC DESIGN

- Intimate configuration for privacy and flexibility to sit alone or with loved ones
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- Patient education: posters, videos, and tablets with interactive access to healthcare information





# PATIENT CARE

Patient care spaces should focus on fostering a healing and supportive environment that prioritises patient comfort, privacy, and dignity.

The layout and design should allow for ample natural light and outdoor views to contribute to a positive atmosphere.

Privacy oriented layouts and soundproofing measures would help to ensure confidential discussions between patients and healthcare providers.

Flexibility in the design of patient care areas is also important to cater to various medical needs and adapt to evolving healthcare practices.





# OUTPATIENT CARE



“

Patients really want transparency around their care. To know what the steps will be, how they are connected, when and how it will end, these are the key factors in a successful patient journey.

**Lucile Hervouët**  
Health Sociologist



# OUTPATIENT CARE

Create an atmosphere that inspires confidence.

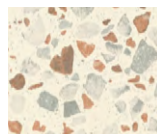
Reduce patient and visitor stress while ensuring operational efficiency. It's all about the thoughtful balance between medical functionality and a supportive, comforting atmosphere that promotes well-being and patient recovery.

Comfortable and adjustable furnishings should be provided to accommodate patients and their families, with intimate and soothing spaces that give the patient a sense of control.



## FLOORS

Heterogeneous vinyl / Acczent Excellence Compact+



Terrazzo Grande Brick  
Ref.: 206012051



Oak Tree Golden  
Ref.: 206012091

## WALLS

Heterogeneous vinyl - ProtectWall



Uni Light Beige  
Ref.: 26500122

## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# HOMELY EXAMINATION ROOM

- Intimate configuration for privacy
- Cleanliness and tidiness: clutter-free space
- Comfortable, modular furniture encouraging interaction

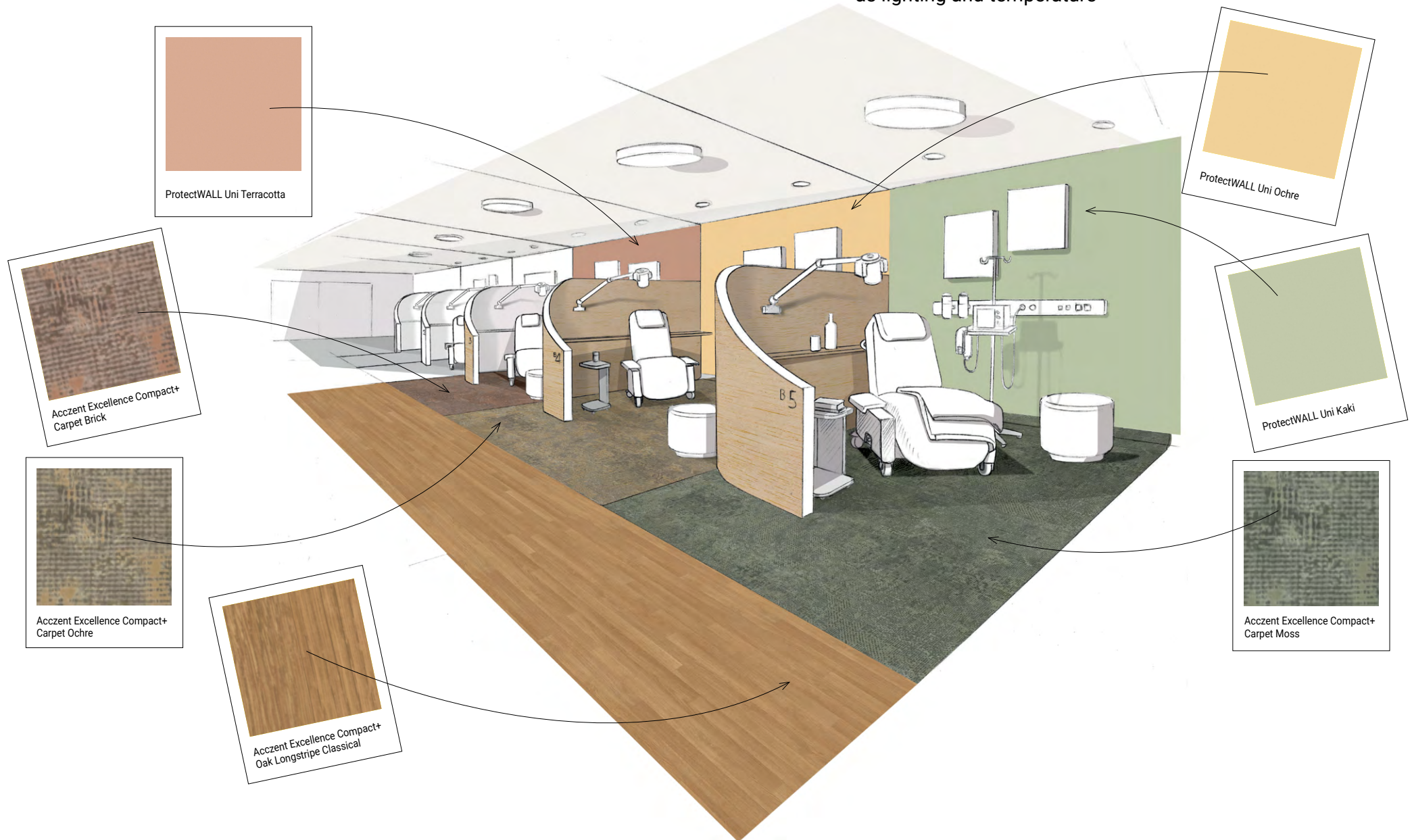




## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# HOMELY TREATMENT ROOM

- Positive distractions: views of the outdoors, displayed artwork, WIFI, charging sockets etc.
- Control over environmental conditions such as lighting and temperature





# OPERATING ROOMS





# OPERATING ROOMS

In operating theatres, the focus is on creating a hygienic and efficient environment that ensures patient safety, while also considering the well-being and comfort of the surgical team. Infection prevention control measures, including advanced air filtration systems, strict hygiene protocols, and easy to clean materials are paramount to reduce infection risk.

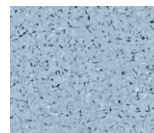
The design of operating rooms should also prioritise optimal layouts for medical equipment, ensuring accessibility and efficiency during procedure. Ergonomic considerations in the design of workstations and equipment contribute to the physical well-being of the surgical team.

While the primary focus in operating theatres is on medical functionality and hygiene, incorporating elements that contribute to the well-being of both patients and healthcare professionals can enhance the overall surgical experience, creating positive environment for patients.



## FLOORS

Homogeneous vinyl / iQ Granit Toro



Toro SC Light Blue  
Ref.: 3093960



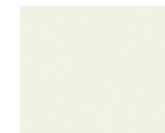
Toro SC Light Grey  
Ref.: 3093960



Toro SC Sand  
Ref.: 3093100

## WALLS

Heterogeneous vinyl // ProtectWALL



CR Uni Super White  
Ref.: 264992061



# INPATIENT CARE



# INPATIENT CARE

A 'caring' patient room involves a thoughtful combination of design elements that prioritise patient comfort, well-being, and a positive healing experience.

The space should be adaptable, with comfortable and personalised furnishings that allow for individual preferences and family needs.

Family accommodation should also be addressed, recognising the supportive role of family members in the healing process.

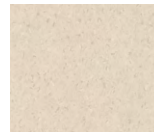
Natural light and views to the outdoors contribute to a healing atmosphere, while therapeutic elements, such as calming colours and artwork, contribute to a soothing environment.

Obviously infection control measures should be integrated (through easily maintainable materials for example) and safety features are paramount, including slip-resistant flooring and emergency response mechanisms.

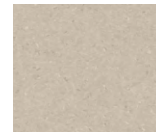


## FLOORS

Homogeneous vinyl / iQ Natural



Warm White  
Ref.: 21103403



Light Warm Beige  
Ref.: 21103481

## WALLS

Heterogeneous vinyl / ProtectWALL



Tweed warm grey  
Ref.: 26499057

## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# BIOPHILIC DESIGN

- A family-oriented space
- Plenty of natural light
- Decorative wall solutions

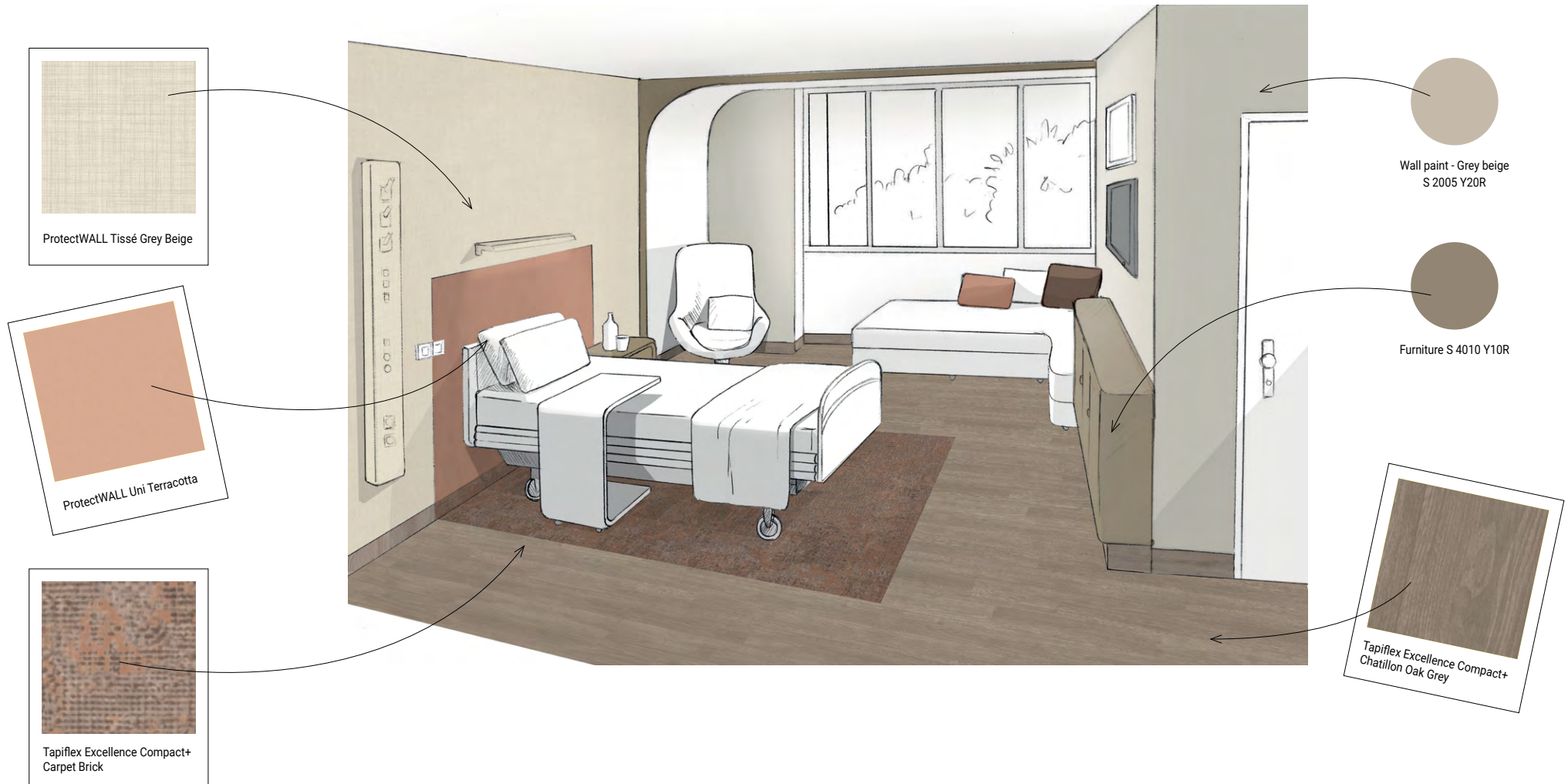




## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# HOMELY DESIGN

- A family-oriented space
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# GRAPHIC Design

- A family-oriented space
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# FOCUS ON PEDIATRICS

**Frédérique F. Thomas created the decor of the outpatient facility at the Necker Children's Hospital in Paris. Below, the interior designer, visual artist and colourist shares her thoughts.**

## **USING COLOUR TO CREATE SUPPORTIVE SPACES FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS**

Studies show that saturated and bright colours appeal to children and adolescents. They also help to reassure relatives accompanying children, creating positive, attractive spaces that relieve some of the anxiety associated with hospitals. The idea behind this design was to make the floor seem like a game that involves surfing from one colour to another. Large diagonal blocks of colour connect children's rooms with corridors and other areas. As the doors are often left open, young patients feel less isolated during treatment and closer to their families and the healthcare team. Colour stimulates our sense, just like music or perfume. I chose three shades: magenta, petrol and saffron yellow (Bright Violet, Intense Petrol and Intense Olive) to create a colourful harmony, generating a genuine yet pleasing contrast. I created three different atmospheres to give children a choice. It is important that they take ownership of their space when they come in for treatment. That is the least we can give them.

**What are your thoughts on how design and colour impact the well-being and healing of patients?**

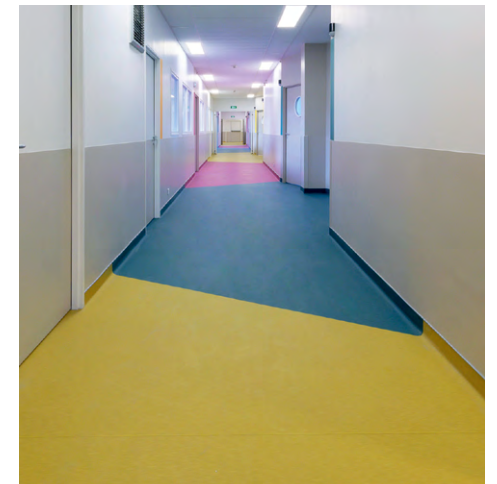
Offering patients a welcoming, reassuring environment where colour and design work in customised harmony seems to me an integral part of a seamless treatment experience. For the Necker Children's Hospital, it was important to bring joy and life to a place where children feel vulnerable, especially when facing difficult outcomes. So I made sure that the bright, contrasting colours really catch the eye. The decor also gives parents confidence, knowing the space was designed specifically for children.

### **What inspires you when designing interiors for healthcare facilities?**

As well as the building's architecture and the technical challenges often encountered, I draw inspiration from the colours, graphics, materials, textures and finishes available. They play such an important role in the design of my projects.

### **How important is it to understand the expectations of the people who use the ward?**

The experience of the healthcare teams is invaluable. You have to listen to the different views and gather as much information as possible. Suggesting design options to them is interesting, especially when the ideas are new to them and shake things up. I have received good feedback— the ward works well and the teams are very happy.



# WETROOMS



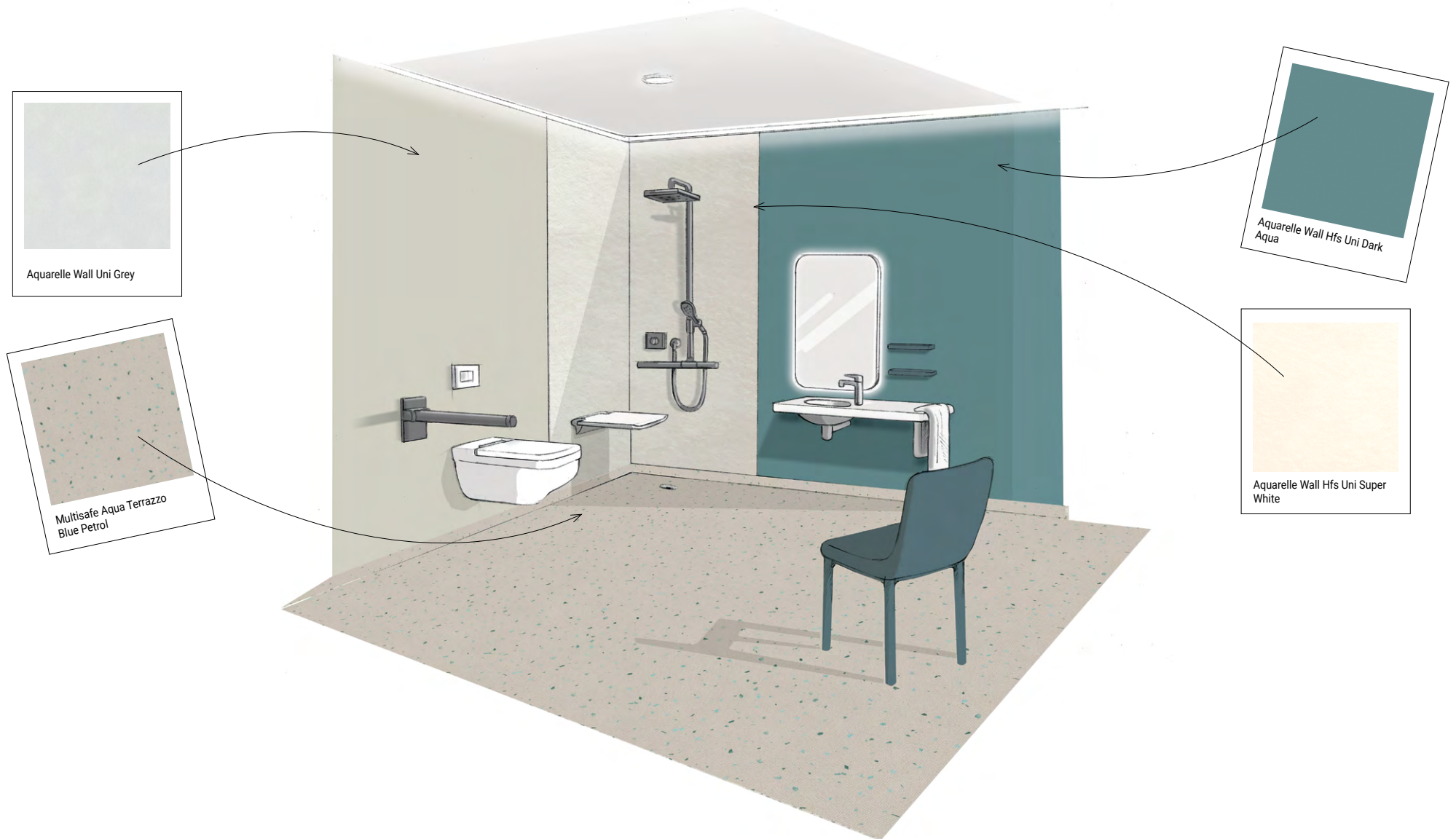
Aqua Multisafe Terrazzo Safe Terracotta - 26544009  
Aquarelle Wall Hfs Uni Terracotta - 3942093  
Aquarelle Wall Hfs Rustic Velvet Nude - 3942087



## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# BIOPHILIC DESIGN

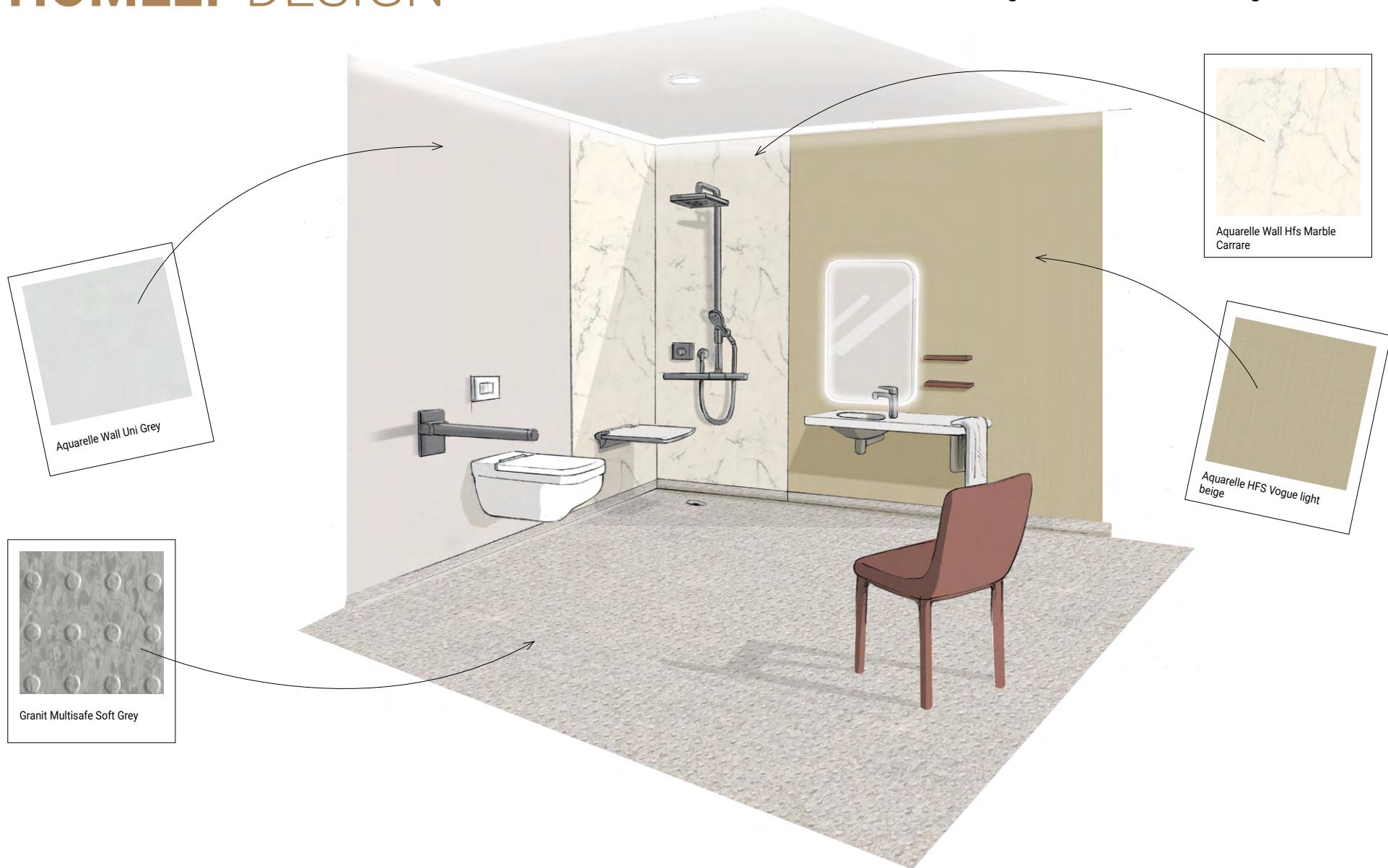
- Promoting patient autonomy
- Inspiring patient safety
- Creating a non-institutional feeling



## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# HOMELY DESIGN

- Promoting patient autonomy
- Inspiring patient safety
- Creating a non-institutional feeling





# STAFF SPACES

Staff also need special attention and dedicated spaces. Break areas should be inviting and comfortable, providing healthcare staff with spaces to relax and recharge.

The design should incorporate elements that support staff wellness, including access to fitness facilities, mental health resources, and stress-reduction programmes.

Natural elements, such as plants and outdoor views, should be integrated to contribute to a positive atmosphere.

Flexibility is a key design principle, allowing staff spaces to adapt to changing staffing levels, job roles, and technological advancements.

Involving healthcare staff in the design process themselves ensures that spaces are tailored to their needs, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement.



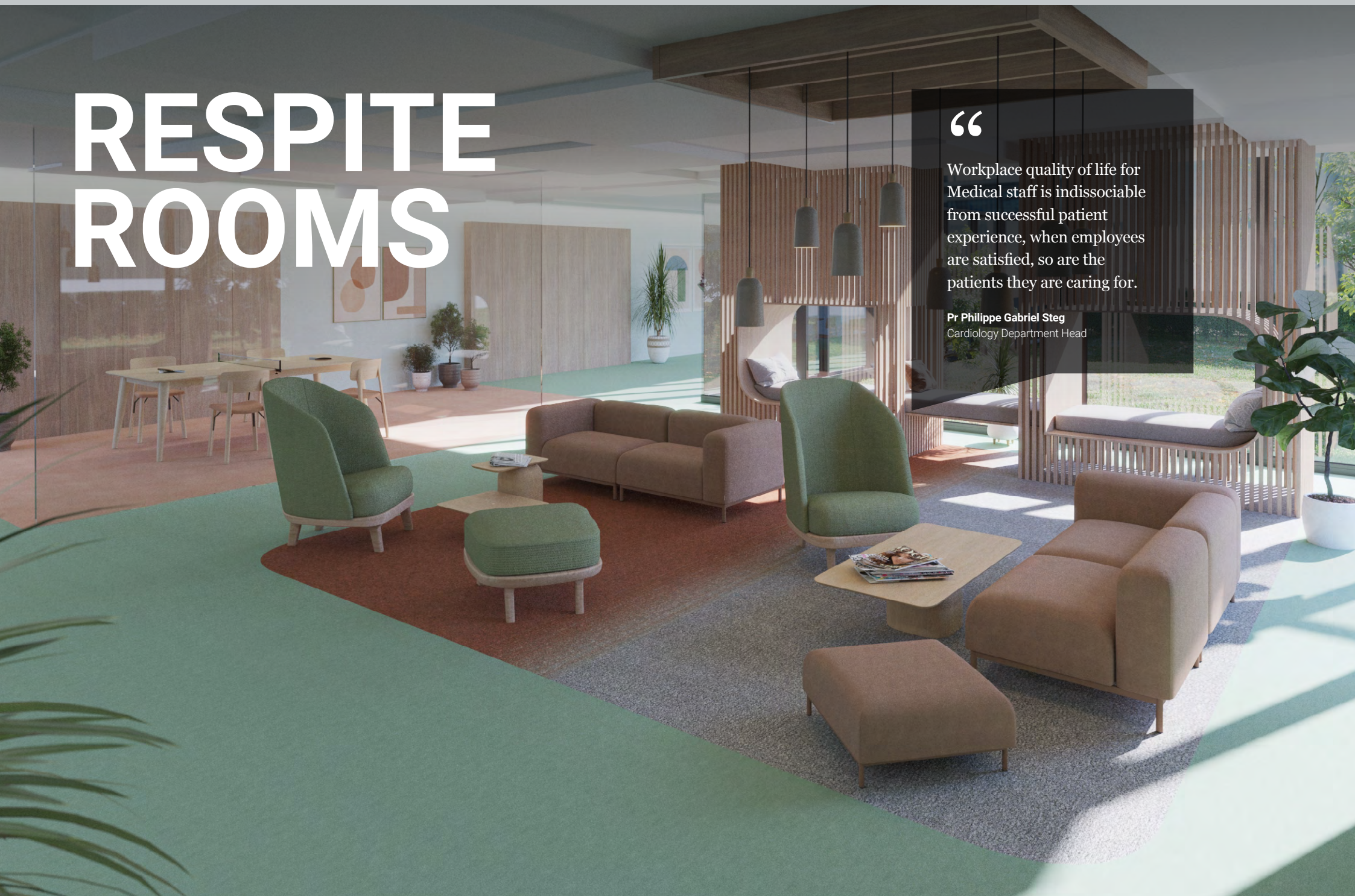


# RESPIRE ROOMS

“

Workplace quality of life for Medical staff is indissociable from successful patient experience, when employees are satisfied, so are the patients they are caring for.

**Pr Philippe Gabriel Steg**  
Cardiology Department Head





# RESPIRE ROOMS

Design dedicated to staff respite areas.

Ensure there is a diverse range of spaces available for friendly interactions as well as for quiet rest.

Favour sound absorbing materials to create islands of calm and personal concentration but also allow group discussions and exchanges.

Here too, natural light, comfortable surroundings, and an engaging, non-institutional feel will help to improve staff well-being.

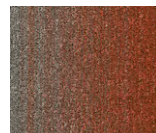


## CARPET FLOORS

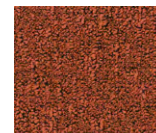
Carpet / Desso fields



B751 9098  
Ref.: 710495055



B751 5012  
Ref.: 710495028



Fuse B755 5102  
Ref.: 710512010

## LVT FLOORS

LVT / iD Inspiration 70



Fibra Green  
Ref.: 24511086



Fibra Terracotta  
Ref.: 24511084

## WALLS

Heterogeneous vinyl  
/ ProtectWALL



Uni White Grey  
Ref.: 264991079

# CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

## HOMELY DESIGN

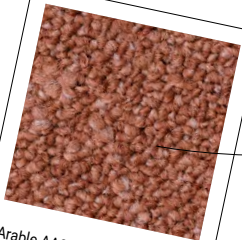
- Multi-use spaces for social interaction and rest
- Sound-absorbent materials
- Non-institutional design



Walls paint - Beige  
S 1005-Y10R



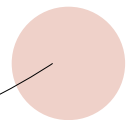
ID Inspiration 70 Brushed  
Elm Beige



Arable AA86 5031



Arable AA86 2915



Furniture S 1010-Y90R



# CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

- Multi-use spaces for social interaction and rest
- Sound-absorbent materials
- Non-institutional design





# NURSING STATIONS





# NURSING STATIONS

Designing for staff efficiency and well-being. Workstations should be crafted with ergonomic considerations, ensuring efficiency and reducing the risk of physical strain.

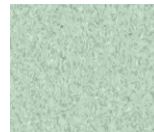
Collaborative spaces, such as meeting rooms and interdisciplinary communication areas, foster teamwork among healthcare professionals.

Adjustable furniture and proper lighting contribute to a comfortable and productive workspace.



## FLOORS

Homogeneous vinyl / iQ Granit



Light green  
Ref.: 21142390



Olive  
Ref.: 21142412

## WALLS

Heterogeneous vinyl / ProtectWALL



Palm Shadow  
Ref.: 264991091

## CREATING A DISTINCTIVE, WELCOMING SPACE

# BIOPHILIC DESIGN

- Centrally-located nursing station
- Open layout
- Enclosed meeting rooms for privacy

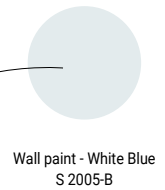
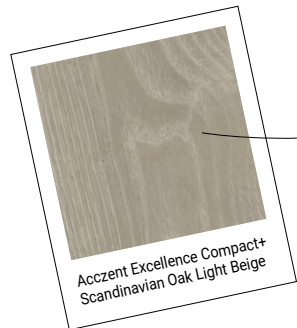
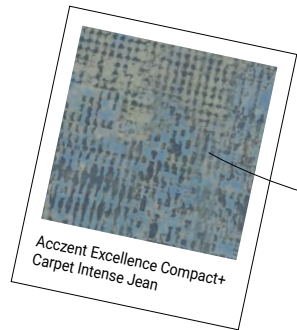
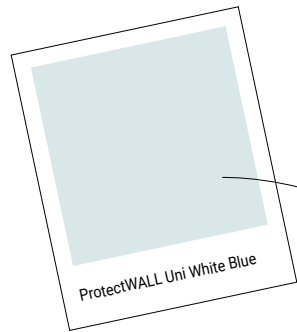




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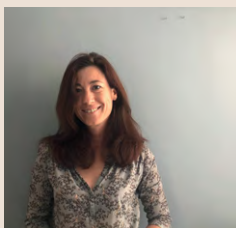


# THE ROLE OF COLOUR IN HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENTS

The coloured appearance of an environment is a stimulus and a message that carries meaning, arouses sensations and provokes emotions. Colour influences our behaviour and our decisions. In the hospital environment, colour enables the recognition of key features, allowing people intuitively to interpret spaces and move between them. And because it shapes what we see, colour is important in signage.

by *Marion Lamarque*

Colour expert  
Founder and President of COLOR THE LIFE.



**Marion Lamarque** is a designer with expertise in 360° colour strategy (identity, trends, design, production, merchandising and communications). She founded COLOR THE LIFE, a network of colour experts that uses the potential of colour in all areas to sustainably develop the human, economic and environmental performance of organisations.

## COLOR THE LIFE

In 2021, COLOR THE LIFE organised a series of webinars on the theme "Colour & Health".

[www.colorthelife.org](http://www.colorthelife.org)



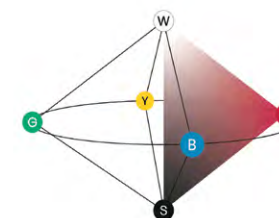
## DEFINING A COLOUR USING THE NATURAL COLOUR SYSTEM ('NCS')

A pragmatic, tridimensional approach

NCS is a universal colour language based on science. It identifies a colour in 2 steps using 6 basic shades that the human eye perceives as pure: white (W), black (S), yellow (Y), red (R), blue (B) and green (G).

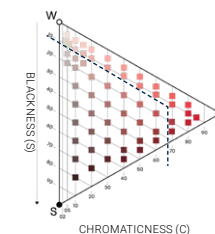
### 1. HUE

The hue is the relationship to 1 or 2 of the 4 chromatic elementary colours in the colour circle.



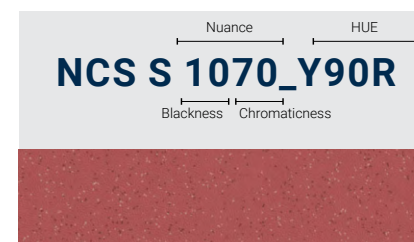
### 2. NUANCE

Nuance is defined by the quantity of black (S), white (W) and chromaticness (C) or purity of hue.



## THE COMPLETE NCS COLOUR NOTATION

Example: Platinum 100 Candy Coral NCS S1070-Y90R



**HUE:** Y90R = mix of 10% yellow, 90% red  
**NUANCE:** S1070 = 10% black  
70% chromaticness





# THE ROLE OF COLOUR IN HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENTS

## HOW TO HARNESS THE EMOTIONAL EFFECT OF COLOUR

The coloured harmony of a space enables patients, staff and visitors to be immersed in an atmosphere conducive to their well-being, whether they seek calm, attention and privacy, or stimulation and conviviality.

The choice and positioning of colours on walls, woodwork, floors, ceilings and furniture can focus the user's gaze on a specific point or conversely open up the space and divert attention.

### PASTEL

Pastel colours enlarge and open up spaces.

### BRIGHT

Vivid colours create a cheerful, uplifting atmosphere.

### INTENSE

Intense colours dramatise the space and promote intimacy.

### DARK

Dark colours highlight architectural elements.

### NATURAL

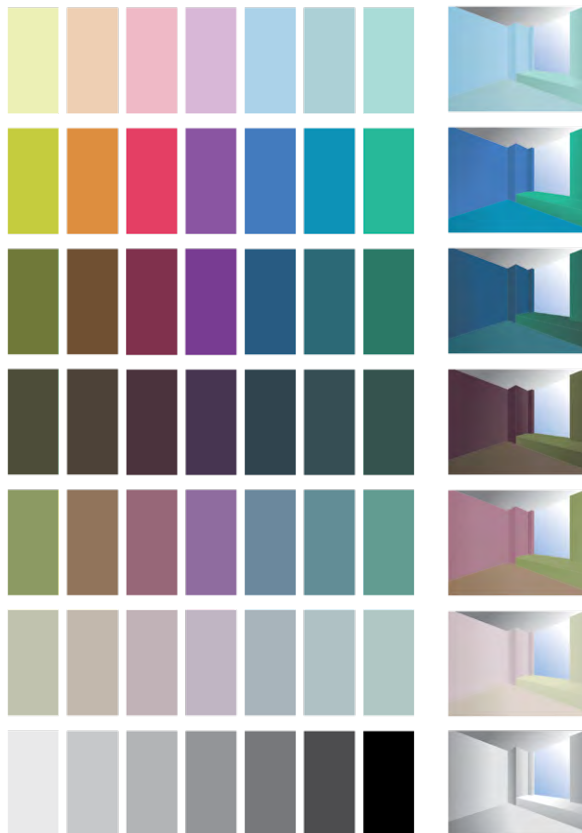
Natural colours create authentic and cosy atmospheres.

### MUTED

Muted colours are discreet and provide reassurance.

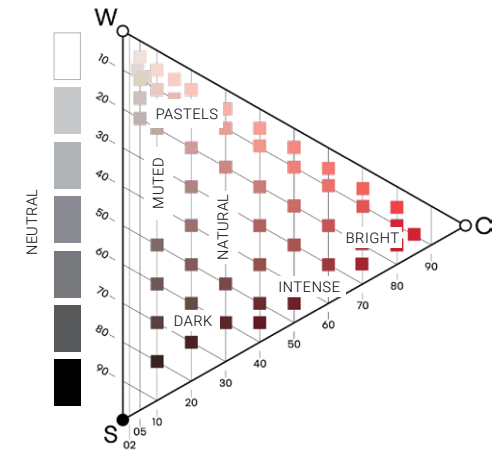
### NEUTRAL

Blacks and whites create striking settings. Greys bring depth and texture.



## DEFINING THE COLOUR FAMILIES

A colour family is a set of colours with the same Nuance (tone).



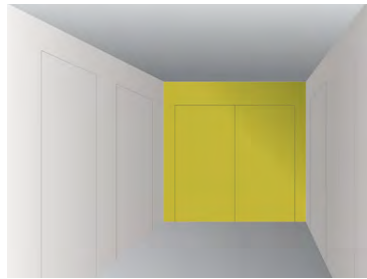
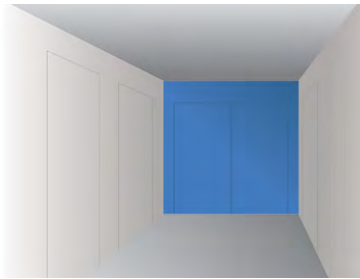
Children's Memorial Health Institute, Warsaw, Poland

# THE ROLE OF COLOUR IN HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENTS

## HOW TO INFLUENCE SPATIAL PERCEPTION

Cold colours

Warm colours

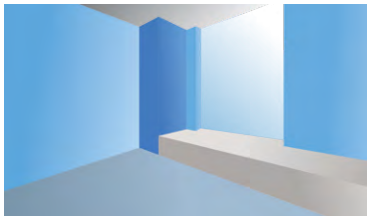


### DISTANCE AND DEPTH PERCEPTION

A warm colour (yellow, orange, red, pink) seems closer than a cold one (purple, blue, turquoise, green). It can be used to make corridors seem shorter or longer, for example.

### SPACE SIZE PERCEPTION

Light, cool colours evoke air and water, two elements that people associate with light and peace. In architecture, they enlarge and open up areas. Dark, warm colours envelop us and reduce the feeling of space, creating a sense of intimacy.



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## HOW TO ENHANCE VISUAL PERCEPTION

It is vital to consider the experience of people with visual impairment when designing a healthcare facility. Colour contrast is central to providing visual clues for doors, handles, handrails and signage, enabling people with diminished sight to better make sense of their surroundings.

### HUE CONTRAST

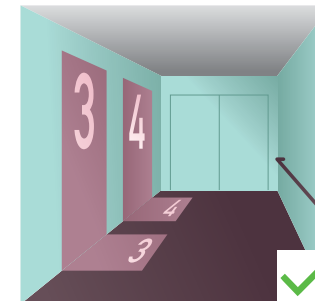


### CHROMATIC CONTRAST



### LIGHT/DARK CONTRAST

LRV difference > 30



As the Light Reflection Value of a colour is linked to its blackness, this measure can help create the right level of contrast. An LRV difference of 30 points is required to generate sufficient contrast.