



INSIDE THE FUTURE OF SKILLED NURSING DESIGN

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Key Takeaways

A booming senior population, rising construction costs and evolving technology — these are among the biggest factors shaping the future of skilled nursing facility (SNF) design.

But rather than being reactive, some providers and architects have found that good design can improve business outcomes and address the challenges of occupancy and turnover.

In long- and short-term care, these experts are using design in a few key ways to tackle pain points and build SNFs for the next generation:

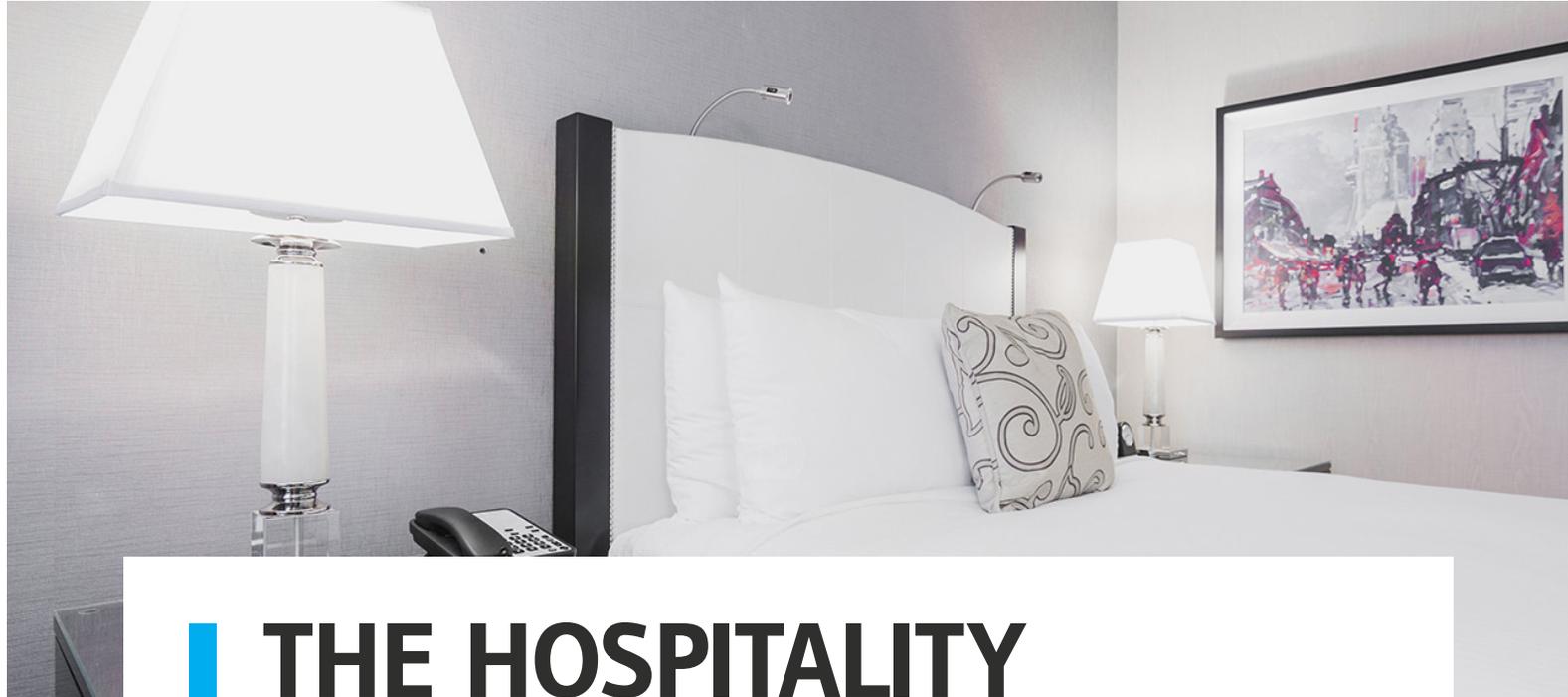
- Use hospitality industry principles to help satisfy a discerning clientele
- Serve an increasingly frail senior population by limiting their travel through use of both centralized and mobile amenities
- Reduce resident and staff isolation with more communal work and dining spaces
- Build a physical infrastructure that allows for ubiquitous Wi-Fi as technology evolves

Whether a provider wants care philosophy, technology or geographic environment to dictate design choices, the decision ultimately comes down to budget. And with construction costs increasing, labor availability decreasing, and demands for privacy on the rise, designers and architects are embracing a mix of “small house” models, multi-service facilities, and resident-driven design.

The most successful providers are the ones who can align their visions to their budgets; who build for the coming technological wave without knowing what technology is coming; who find strong partners in architecture, interior design, health care and neighborhoods; and who tailor construction to the end user — not only the resident, but the staff and neighbors too.

“Organizations that aren’t adapting or changing,” says Josh Bagley of the Virginia-based senior-living provider Goodwin House Incorporated, “aren’t going to be around in five to 10 years.”





THE HOSPITALITY ETHIC

This report explores the future of SNF design within the context of several major categories, including resident rooms, the dining experience, common areas and health care offerings. All of these areas and more are influenced by the overarching trends outlined above.

But perhaps the biggest philosophical factor in the future of SNF design is one that has always been at play: the need for providers to create the best possible user experience for all involved, including residents, staff, family and neighbors. The single biggest design principle driving that experience?

Hospitality.

“We are seeing a lot of the health care properties look a lot more like the hospitality world,” says Zeke Turner, founder and CEO of the Indiana-based senior housing developer Mainstreet. “When you enter them, if you didn’t know you were there for a medical use, you would probably think you were walking into a hotel.”

This hospitality ethic touches on all areas of SNF design, pushing providers to deliver private residential rooms, top-rate dining experiences and beautiful common areas.

“Consumers need more from the experience of their health care, in particular as it relates to their environment,” Turner says. “And right now, the environment across all of health care leaves a lot to be desired.”

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