

Healthy healthcare interiors:

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The business case



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### **A healthy building is one that does not harm people or the planet.**

In the U.S., many healthcare organizations are creating healthy buildings because it's the right thing to do to reduce the effects of climate change and improve population health. But it also makes good business sense.

The first reason why a healthy building makes good business sense is that healthcare organizations get money for new projects from investors, often Real Estate Investment Trusts – commonly known as REITs. Today, most REITs like to invest in healthcare organizations that have strong Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) policies.

**“In architecture and design, ESG refers to how businesses use their buildings and spaces to invest in environmental and social initiatives.”**

**- Anthony Brower, Audrey Handelman,  
& Stacey Olsen of Gensler**

They are looking for healthcare organizations that have a history of aligning their operations to support programs that not only benefit the environment, but also their employees, local communities, and shareholders. Ultimately, the purpose of ESG investing is to increase profits by backing well-managed, socially-responsible companies.

### **Designers who have the skills to create healthy building interiors can help their clients meet the ESG goals demanded by their investors.**

This can even give them a competitive edge. While many of the environmental goals are focused on energy and water use, reducing carbon emissions and improving indoor air quality are also priorities.

Social equity might be things like designing spaces that encourage mobility and access and that are appropriate for people of all ages and abilities.

Another reason why healthy buildings make good business sense is that they can save money by helping to attract and retain staff, as well as reduce absenteeism.

**The Covid-19 pandemic has made it clear that it's important to take care of the caregivers, which includes providing them with more supportive workplace environments.**

With annual turnover rates for bedside nurses in the U.S. at 18.7 percent and the average cost of replacing a nurse at \$40,038, even a small reduction in turnover can result in significant savings.

In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic has created new expectations for safety and wellness for office workers. Since there are many administrative staff working in healthcare organizations, healthy building interiors can also help attract, retain, and boost productivity of non-clinical staff.

Finally, healthcare consumers are increasingly aware of the impact of buildings on their health and well-being. So there are marketing advantages to creating a healthy building as well.



**\$40,038**

**Average cost to  
replace a bedside  
nurse in the U.S.**

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