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Flexible and future-proof hospital design: Planning for uncertainty

Bakul Chandra, Founding Partner and Mentor at Renascent Consultants, emphasises that while scalability enables hospitals to expand as needed, versatility ensures that their spaces remain dynamic and resource-efficient

The healthcare sector has faced immeasurable challenges and undergone several changes in the last few years. Designing hospitals that are flexible and future-proof is most crucial in today's rapidly changing healthcare landscape. This may involve moving away from traditional building design ideas and embracing adaptable design frameworks that can cater to evolving needs.

These include design optimisation and utilising smart cutting-edge technologies that can enhance patient care, streamline operations, and support future upgrades.

Scalability and versatility in design

A scalable hospital design enables healthcare providers to respond to changing demands, expand services, and incorporate new technologies while minimising disruptions to patient care. Hospitals must be equipped to grow and adapt as circumstances demand. Spatial design needs to offer a forward-thinking solution, enabling facilities to expand or contract with minimal disruption. Spaces designed

with modularity in mind allow for seamless transitions.

While scalability ensures hospitals can expand as needed, versatility ensures that the spaces within remain dynamic and resource-efficient.

In contemporary hospital design, every square metre must serve a purpose, or ideally, multiple purposes. Flexible layouts with open plans and movable partitions empower hospitals to reconfigure spaces based on immediate needs. For instance, diagnostic areas can transform



in times of high activity, the hospital remains intuitive and efficient to navigate.

Sustainability as a foundation for resilience

Future-proof hospital design must be rooted in sustainability. By integrating energy-efficient systems, renewable energy sources, and eco-conscious materials, architects can reduce a hospital's environmental footprint while improving its resilience to external disruptions.

Natural ventilation, daylight-

hance operational efficiency but also provide a buffer against climate-related challenges. Sustainability is not just about environmental responsibility; it's a practical strategy for ensuring long-term cost-effectiveness and reliability.

The role of architects in healthcare design extends beyond creating functional spaces; it is about crafting environments that inspire confidence and resilience. Scalable, versatile, and sustainable design principles form the backbone of future-ready hospitals, enabling them to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of healthcare. While collaboration among architects, healthcare providers, and policymakers is crucial to realise these visions, it is the thoughtful integration of simple design strategies that could transform the hospitals of tomorrow.

"Cultural nuances are whispers, but functionality is the roar for a developing nation. We must craft typologies that address the healthcare needs of the masses first and foremost. A healthy populace is, after all, the foundation of a thriving society"

Incorporating healing spaces, such as green courtyards or terraces, further enhances the versatility of hospital design. These areas provide moments of respite for patients and staff, promoting recovery and reducing stress

into outpatient clinics or even temporary isolation units, maximising the use of available resources.

Incorporating healing spaces, such as green courtyards or terraces, further en-

hances the versatility of hospital design. These areas provide moments of respite for patients and staff, promoting recovery and reducing stress. Thoughtful spatial planning also improves wayfinding, ensuring that even

ing, and the use of durable, low-impact materials like recycled steel or low-carbon concrete contribute to healthier and more sustainable environments. Green roofs and rainwater harvesting systems not only en-

When it comes to nourishing this sector, experts prescribe a regular diet of Express Healthcare. The magazine has been the source of a healthy dose of expert information, incisive category analysis and remedies for industry ailments since 20 years, thereby earning the trust of industry professionals. It's no wonder then that the finest in the field trust the foremost in the field.

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