

In his article, 'View Through a Window May Influence Recovery from Surgery', along with his ten year clinical study of patients recovering from gall bladder surgery, Robert Ulrich posits that scenes of nature not only improved a patient's postoperative recovery, but also provided benefits for visitors and staff.

So... gaze on images of colourful gardens, blue skies, majestic mountain vistas or sweeping, sandy beaches. TESS USA Inc (Therapeutic Environmental Solutions), uses soothing Views to Nature to enhance patients wellbeing in all divisions of healthcare facilities.

Ernesto Machado, president and founder of TESS says, 'Within the US, using views to nature to assist in the healing model has become an important addendum in this new era of patient care. In Europe, nature therapy has been a part of their healthcare fabric for centuries... Now, as Europe moves to revitalise its healthcare industry the TESS backlit Views to Nature become an effective and cost-efficient way for the evolving healthcare market to provide more patient-friendly environments.'

For the last ten years, TESS has offered a line of custom-made backlit Virtual Windows, Skylight Ceiling Systems, and non-backlit enhanced Wall Murals directed at reducing patient stress while uplifting patient and staff alike in clinical settings.

On a global scale, with hospital budgets tight and patient medical care the main focus, design solutions addressing the patient's emotional and spiritual comfort often receive less priority. Documentation shows that the effect of nature views on recovering patients results in reduced depression, improved pain control, and shorter hospital stays. This provides increased patient/family satisfaction and assists administrators in delivering a higher multi-faceted level of patient care.

In its third generation of products, TESS has also been addressing the growing imaging centre movement with its revolutionary patented MRI Art and Light Panel System for wall and/or ceiling application. Unique to the healthcare industry, the system is backlit, does not breach the shield and is certified for all magnet frequencies.

Often an unrecognised benefit of these programmes is the positive effect on the dedicated medical staff. Connie Felton, manager of the Centre for Advanced Imaging at West Virginia University Medical Centre in the US, says her facility has received overwhelming response to their multiple installations of backlit nature scenes. 'We have hospital employees stop and ask if they can have a peak at our sunshine and lovely views. It has definitely brought happiness to patients and employees alike.'

TESS was recently represented at the unveiling of a state-of-the-art nuclear medicine department at G Brotzu Hospital in Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy. This high-specialisation medical facility installed a 1.22m by 1.83m TESS Virtual Skylight above its PET machine and backlit Virtual Window nature views in front of each reclining chair where patients sit to receive treatment.

The insight and initiative of Gianluca Borelli, chief engineer and head of facility operations at G Brotzu, went a long way in bringing the TESS programmes into the hospital. Borelli says, 'Everyone has been amazed at the transformation these nature views provide to the environment. Now all the divisions want them.' Dr Livia Ruffini, director of nuclear medicine at G Brotzu, says, 'The TESS panels were used to create a warm and welcoming environment for patients and family members. Everyone feels less stressful, and the environment is more efficient for wellness.'

Machado believes what began as a passionate vision ten years ago – bringing nature as a healing paradigm into high-stress hospital environments – has been embraced and is flourishing through TESS.

Sandra Corcoran, MEd Integrated Arts, facilitates workshops on alternative healing paradigms nationally and internationally. +

Further information

View all the TESS products on its website, recently launched through *Hospital Management International* at: www.hospitalmanagement.net (Products & Services, Facilities & Furnishings, TESS).



Uplifting images for staff and patients reduce stress in clinical settings



A spa-like environment created by TESS MRI system at Morton Plant Hospital's Imaging Centre in Florida. Design by The Ritchie Organization (TRO)

A CHANGE OF VIEW

There is increasing evidence that the patient's surroundings can have an immediate effect on state of mind, and this in turn can affect wellbeing and recovery. That is why hospitals are starting to use calming views of nature as a healing paradigm.