

# The Ultimate Layout 4

## The reception and waiting area

### In Brief...

The Ultimate layout is pulling into the reception and waiting area this edition.

Well, we have finally made it to the finish line in our ULTIMATE Layout instalments. From our pit stops at the consultation room, the sterilisation room and then, in last edition, the treatment room, we have now arrived at the face of the practice - the reception and waiting rooms.

Practice facilities can vary greatly depending on the locality and age of the premises just like practice requirements will depend on the size and type of general practice. So don't worry if your practice looks different, remember our Ultimate layout has been suggested as the 'ULTIMATE' and may not suit every situation. Our Ultimate Layout however might give you some handy hints and ideas to think about for your own practice.

Practices, particularly the reception and waiting areas, should be designed to attract patients and to make their visit to the practice as stress free as possible. Listed are some aspects of a practice that should be considered. It is also worth the time to walk around your surgery and to look at it from a patient's point of view.

### Need more information?

For further information regarding the reception and waiting area, please visit QbAY on our new and improved website, [www.qip.com.au](http://www.qip.com.au).



#### EQUIPMENT

Ensure your reception area is big enough to accommodate business equipment such as computers, telephones, fax and photocopier.

#### AUDIBLE PRIVACY

Ensure audible privacy at the reception desk for patients' conversations and for telephone calls.

#### HEALTH INFO AND NOTICE BOARD

Health information such as pamphlets and brochures should be kept well stocked and health notice board information should be changed weekly.

#### MEDICAL RECORDS

It is important that confidentiality, privacy and security of patient medical records is maintained – Criterion 4.2.1. Each patient medical record should be stored securely from unauthorised persons and be retrievable only by authorised staff – Criterion 4.2.2.

#### WAITING ROOM SIZE

It is important that the practice has a patient waiting area sufficient to accommodate the usual number of patients and others who would be waiting at any one time – Criterion 5.1.3.

#### INTERNAL SIGNAGE

Consider the following internal signage:

- no smoking
- directional toilet signs
- interpreter services
- privacy policy
- teaching programs
- fees and charges
- reminders and recalls
- longer appointments
- signs indicating no drugs of addiction or money kept on premises
- security signage.

#### CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

Ensure your kids corner is away from other patients but has an area for parental supervision. Remember to offer washable and noiseless toys.

#### OTHERS

Other issues to think about in the waiting room are the availability of water, tissues, up-to-date magazines and a television or radio that is not too loud.

#### RECEPTION AREA

You should be able to see the waiting room from the reception. Other rooms within the practice should also be easily accessible from the reception – Criterion 5.1.16.

#### PERSONAL INFORMATION

The public should not be able to see anyone else's information via computer screens, accounts or medical records.

#### TOILET FACILITIES

It is important that the practice has toilet and hand washing facilities readily available for use by patients and others. Criterion 5.1.4.

#### EXTERNAL SIGNAGE

The following external signage is required for accreditation: practice name, opening hours, telephone number - either available all hours or after hours contact number for your after hours care provider.

#### SITUATION

The reception area should have ease of access to other rooms and should be able to view the waiting room.

#### RECEPTION DESK

A user friendly reception desk allows patients to write comfortably in a standing position.

#### ACCESS

It is important that the practice provides appropriate physical access to the practice and its facilities including access for people with disabilities – Criterion 5.3.1.