

WELLNESS ARCHITECTURE

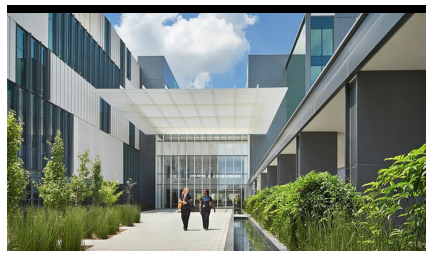
By Jessica Smith

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As health and wellness becomes entrenched as a mainstream mindset, it is spreading into new areas – moving beyond gyms and expanding across communities and real estate.



Liuzhou Forest City by Stefano Boeri
Architetti, Italy



Sloan Kettering Regional Ambulatory
Cancer Center, New York



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‘We’re at the beginning of a new movement in home and community design that tackles our uniquely modern problems: sedentary lives, unhealthy diets, stress, social isolation, pollution and nature deprivation,’ says Katherine Johnston, senior research fellow at the Global Wellness Institute.

- : Each year about 1.3m potential US buyers express an interest in wellness communities, according to the Global Wellness Institute**
- : According to the Global Wellness Summit, the wellness lifestyle real estate and communities market is worth £88bn (\$119bn, €100bn) and growing at 9% a year, and is expected to reach £114bn (\$153bn, €129bn) by 2020**
- : Consumers are increasingly demanding that the architecture of a broad range of public spaces, from hotels to hospitals and airports, includes wellness as a key design parameter**

Lab Notes

1. From Work Zones to Well Hotels, businesses across disparate sectors are starting to understand how wellness placemaking can affect consumer wellbeing.
2. But as Alfredo Carvajal, president of Delos International and Signature Programs, explains, brands need to think beyond materials. 'You need to do something with movement, something with community, comfort levels, nutrition, light and sound.'
3. While architects have long acknowledged the mood-enhancing properties of good design, scientists are starting to back up these claims with hard data, paving the way for a new generation of neuro-architects.
3. There is a growing understanding that implementing biophilic design can actively aid patient recovery, offering myriad opportunities for healthcare providers.
5. Hospitality brands are also using similar tactics to enhance their offer for health-conscious consumers, while airports are redesigning terminals to mitigate the health impacts of air travel.



Sweat!, UK



Wellness and fitness studio, Gatwick airport

New territories

Traditionally, health and wellness has been restricted to venues such as gyms, leisure centres and hotels. Now, as the industry becomes more pervasive, it is spreading to other areas. According to the Global Wellness Institute, hotels, gyms and wellness retreats need to be leaders in the wellness architecture revolution. It predicts that in the future our buildings will be designed to make us healthier and happier right from the blueprint stage.

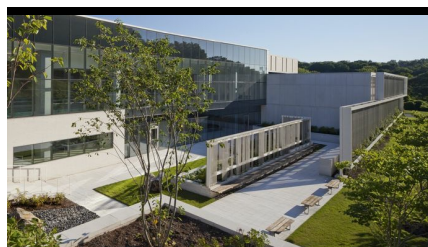
In a bid to increase footfall, retailers and department stores that aren't typically rooted in this sector are increasingly jumping onto the wellness bandwagon by redesigning their offerings. Amid increasing competition from online shopping, declining foot traffic and rising vacancies, mall owners are attempting to draw customers in by including gyms.

British department store group Debenhams, for instance, is opening a selection of in-store gyms, operated by affordable gym operator Sweat!, as part of its strategy to make its stores a destination for social shopping. 'We believe that by teaming up with Sweat! we will optimise the space that is available in some of our stores while offering an attractive and credible leisure experience to customers,' explained Sergio Bucher, CEO of Debenhams.

Airports, not usually associated with the sector, are also starting to integrate a wellness offer. This concept was new in 2015, when **Gatwick Airport** and San Francisco International Airport offered yoga classes to passengers to prepare the body physically and mentally for in-flight conditions. Now the trend is expanding to have an impact on the refurbishment of major airports. Heathrow airport recently announced an exclusive partnership with FlyFit to open the world's first in-airport wellness and fitness studio, and **Baltimore-Washington International Airport** has opened a new workout space that combines high-end travel with fitness on the go.



The Algae Dome by IKEA lab Space10,
Copenhagen



Sloan Kettering Regional Ambulatory
Cancer Center, New York



The Algae Dome by IKEA lab Space10,
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Biophilic design

Architecture is beginning to move away from its preoccupation with surface aesthetics to focus on creating buildings that have a positive impact on human health. 'Let's grow buildings where we can graft tree cells on to frameworks and the contractors can become arborists, but before we get to this point let's continue to use philosophies such as biomimicry and biophilia,' wellness architect Veronica Schreibeis Smith said during her talk at the Global Wellness Summit.

Emerging strategies ranging from the inclusion of more plant life in offices to the creation of entire homes built around the inhabitants' personal wellbeing show that this mindset is increasingly being introduced. The **Global Wellness Institute** believes there will soon be living buildings with energy-producing algae embedded in their walls, as well as **Cradle to Cradle**-certified buildings made of materials such as clay and wood. One powerful case study of this kind of architecture – Algae Dome – was presented by research lab **Space10**. A four-metre-high wooden structure wrapped in 320 metres of coiled transparent plastic tubing flowing with green microalgae, the dome demonstrates how buildings could help feed urban populations sustainably in the future.

These design tactics are particularly suited to the healthcare market, where architects are incorporating more green space to help speed patient recovery. Studies have shown that contact with nature has **positive effects on health** and wellbeing, and that nature is a key component in the optimal environment for healing. In New York, the Sloan Kettering Regional Ambulatory Cancer Center created a garden room lobby and built special zones to aid patients' health, and Kaiser's Radiation Oncology Center in Anaheim included a zen garden to help make patients feel more at ease as they undergo physically gruelling cancer treatment.



UC Health at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio



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Neuro-architecture

In the past few years a lot of research has been done into the relationship between spatial design and its effect on the human brain. Now scientifically led research is taking this one step further. Rather than just simply adding greenery to optimise a visitor's wellbeing, architects are considering how neuroscience can play a pivotal role in shaping human behaviour through various neuro-architectural principles. 'Our studies of light, colour and intensity showed that heart rate variability, a sensitive indicator of mental engagement and health risk, changed with only 15 minutes of different electrical light conditions in a controlled space,' Eve Edelstein, research director of the Perkins+Will Human Experience Lab, told Frame magazine.

UC Health at the University of Cincinnati, a neurological and psychiatric care centre in Ohio, is an example of Perkins+Will's most recent work. Due to open in 2019, the institute will cater for the needs of different patients suffering from neurological disorders, including Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, migraines and traumatic brain injury. The team worked with a committee of doctors, patients and families to address every step in the patient's journey, as well as using neurological research to show that specific design elements, such as lighting, acoustics, colour schemes and building orientation, can help improve the lives of patients with cognitive dysfunction and other brain conditions.