

# Surround Supports Family's Involvement in Care

By Rob Heitmeier, Steelcase Health General Manager

We believe change can come from enriching the moments that matter most. Moments in a hospital room are meaningful, personal and pivotal for everyone involved. We know many family members want to support their loved one in every way possible. We know many doctors and nurses value the care, concern and help family members can provide.

But, recent [Steelcase Health](#) observations and insights tell us many hospital environments do not adequately support the needs of family members and are not designed to facilitate family members playing an active role in patient care. Our entire team including researchers and designers set out to solve this problem. Today, we're proud to unveil Surround, a collection of healthcare furnishings designed to support the many roles family members play while caring for the patient.

Very simply, [Surround](#) is designed to make family members feel welcome in the patient room. It includes the flexibility to serve as a sleep surface or sofa, and supports eating, working and socialization. Surround offers family members a place thoughtfully-designed for their needs to support the care of their loved one, relax comfortably and communicate effectively with clinicians.

## NEEDS OF FAMILY MEMBERS

When the wife of one of our Steelcase Health designers, James, had a baby, he experienced what it's like to be a care partner. The environment made it difficult to communicate with doctors and nurses relaying important information. It was hard to host visitors, or eat with his wife. In addition, he worried that his uncomfortable sleeping area kept him tossing and turning at night, and he may disturb his wife in their precious few hours of sleep.

Steelcase Health [previously released](#) observations and insights indicating James' story is not uncommon. Too many family members are made to feel like an afterthought dealing with significant unmet needs in most [patient room design](#) settings. They are faced with challenges related to communication, sleeping, sharing meals, hosting visitors, storage and overcrowding, and maintaining daily routines such as paying bills and working.

## MAKE FAMILIES FEEL WELCOME

Healthcare environments are too often an overlooked tool that can help providers support [family member's involvement](#) in a loved one's care. Not enough hospitals take advantage of the space they have to do this effectively.

Developed with Steelcase Health observations and reviews of industry trend data, peer-reviewed research and case studies in mind, Surround solves many family member concerns including space for;

- frequent, inclusive conversations among family members and their loved ones, and clinicians;

- daily living activities, such as eating, working, sleeping, socializing and hosting;
- flexibility of seating to support a range of body types and postures, including lounging and reclining;
- spatial efficiency and hygiene, reducing clutter in the way of clinicians and easing cleaning for staff;
- clinician requirements, minimizing family members’ risk of impeding patient care;
- family members to place belongings.

Surround is designed to accommodate the critical roles the family plays in the hospital room. It’s modular and integrated design is flexible, and easily reconfigured. It includes; a high-recline arm for relaxed and reclined postures, an integrated sliding table for eating or working, ambient lighting for reading without disturbing the patient, an intuitive fold-down [hospital sleeper sofa](#), power outlets and a USB port in the arms, open storage for personal belongings and complete access to the floor for fast and effective cleaning.

James knows a solution like Surround would have helped his new family have a more comforting experience during their hospital stay. We study the places that support health to deliver insights and solutions to create moments that can lead to change — moments that enhance the wellbeing, empathy and connection of clinicians, patients and families.

For more information and resources on Surround visit [SteelcaseHealth.com/Surround](https://SteelcaseHealth.com/Surround).

Rob Heitmeier is general manager, Steelcase Health, a brand dedicated to developing research-driven, evidence-based solutions for the healthcare industry. Steelcase Health is focused on making healthcare environments more comfortable, more efficient and more conducive to the healing process.

## Steelcase

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