

NURSES INVOLVEMENT IMPROVES BUILDING PROJECTS

What the design process looks like

Facility design begins with thinking and imagining and ends with an actual structure. The design process for most projects is comprised of seven basic steps.

Step One: Pre-Design

Stage one incorporates your experience and know-how into the design. The design team needs to understand what your work entails including work process, patient flow, medication distribution, and supply details such as linen and equipment storage. This sharing of information and knowledge forms the basis for critical decisions that will be made farther along in the process.

Understanding how ideas are transformed into glass, floors, ceilings, and walls will boost your confidence and make you an effective member of the design team.

Step Two: Schematic Design

The work you have done in pre-design is used to develop detailed plans for construction of the facility. This step sets the direction for detailed plans, so understanding work flow and process patterns is essential here. Once this phase is complete, the plan is “set” before moving on to the next phase.

Step Three: Design Development

All the final project details—from light fixtures to paint colors—are finalized in step three. The design is frozen at the end of this step, which means that your ability to influence any aspect of the design is limited. Once the project has reached this stage, any changes will be extremely costly, because a change in one area will inevitably lead to changes in others.

Step Four: Construction Documents

Step four involves finalizing the detailed drawings and documents that will be used by the engineers and construction contractors.

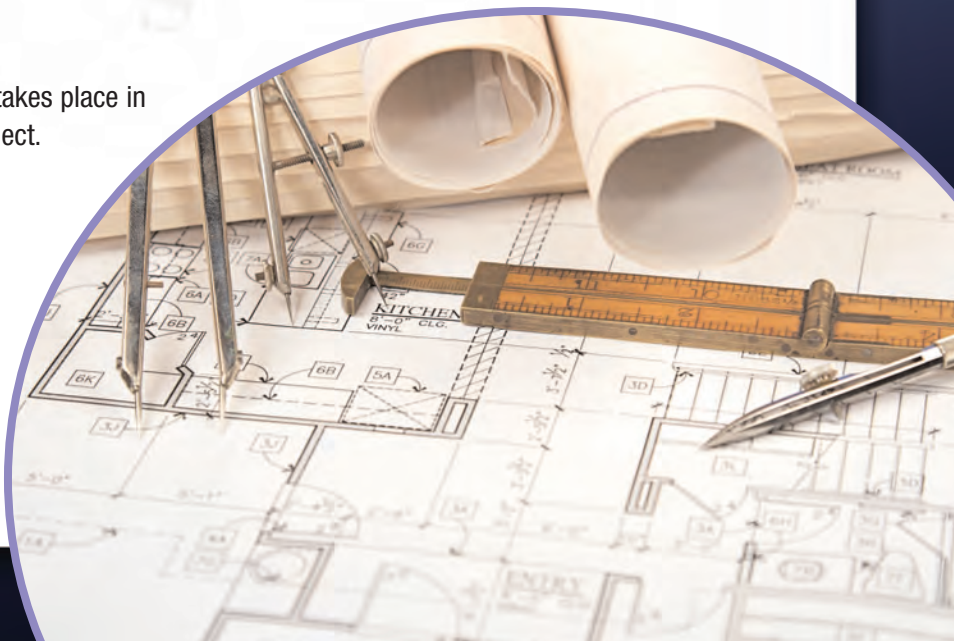
Step Five: Construction Administration

The actual work of building or renovating takes place in step five which results in a completed project.

Step Six: Occupancy

Step six involves moving into the newly constructed space. Your understanding of work flow is essential to making a smooth transition with as little disruption as possible in this stage. The information

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you provide will help to make sure that everything ends up where it should be. Planning the move is something that will begin very early in the design process and continue as the design takes shape.

Step Seven: Post-Occupancy Evaluation

An evaluation of the environment is made after it has been “lived in” for three to six months. At this stage, the environment is modified and changed as necessary. Having designed adaptable and flexible environments will inherently be helpful when changes and modifications are made in post-occupancy.

Adapted from Cardon, K., (2009). Better care by design: Nurse involvement improves building projects. *NURSES FIRST* 2 (6).

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