

The Recharge Room: Decompress in a Multisensory, Peaceful Space

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Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the role of biophilic design implementation in the reduction of stress and anxiety for the health care worker, including how to establish similar spaces within any health care system.
- Identify the mechanisms by which stress and anxiety are reduced through exposure to nature.
- Determine ways in which stress and anxiety can be qualitatively or quantitatively measured.

Intervention:

- Multidisciplinary committee formed Summer of 2021
- Repurposed storage space converted to a nature-inspired immersive experience based on biophilic principles
- Funded by the UCHealth Healthcare Worker Emergency Relief Fund as approved by Chief HR Officer
- Recharge Room launched October 22, 2021



*"I really enjoyed my time in the Recharge Room - aptly named, as I certainly felt re-charged, re-energized to take on the rest of the day! I felt able to relax and reconnect with myself, especially with the private room setups. It was helpful to have time set aside to be there, as its otherwise very easy to de-prioritize self-care and focus instead on the seemingly never-ending to-do list. I was impressed/surprised with how spa-like and indulgent the experience felt - it didn't feel like I was in just another room at a clinic or "trying to relax at work."
 -UCHealth Employee*

Stress Continuum



Executive Sponsor:
Cathy Ehrenfeucht, VP of Operations and Capacity

Project Manager:
Kerith Francis

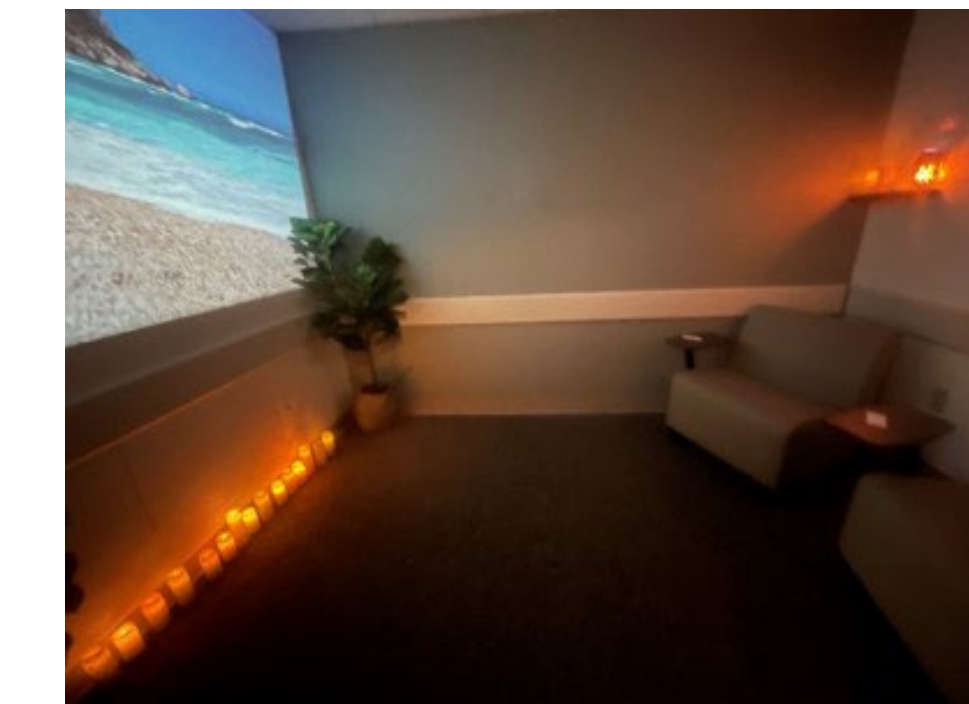
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Sarah Rice

Support:
Christine Walker (Marketing)
Molly Blake (Communications)
Devon Ambler (Human Resources)
Shea Smith (Experience & Innovation)
Julie Swaney (Spiritual Care)
Lauren Hunter (Benefits)
Melissa Strickland (Volunteer Services)

- 2 Projection Rooms
- 4 Massage Chair Cubes
- 2 VR Goggles
- Nature Scenes/Sounds
- Battery Operated Candles
- Tablets with Guided Meditation
- Coffee, Tea, Water, Snacks
- Resource Access
- Pet Therapy/Reiki



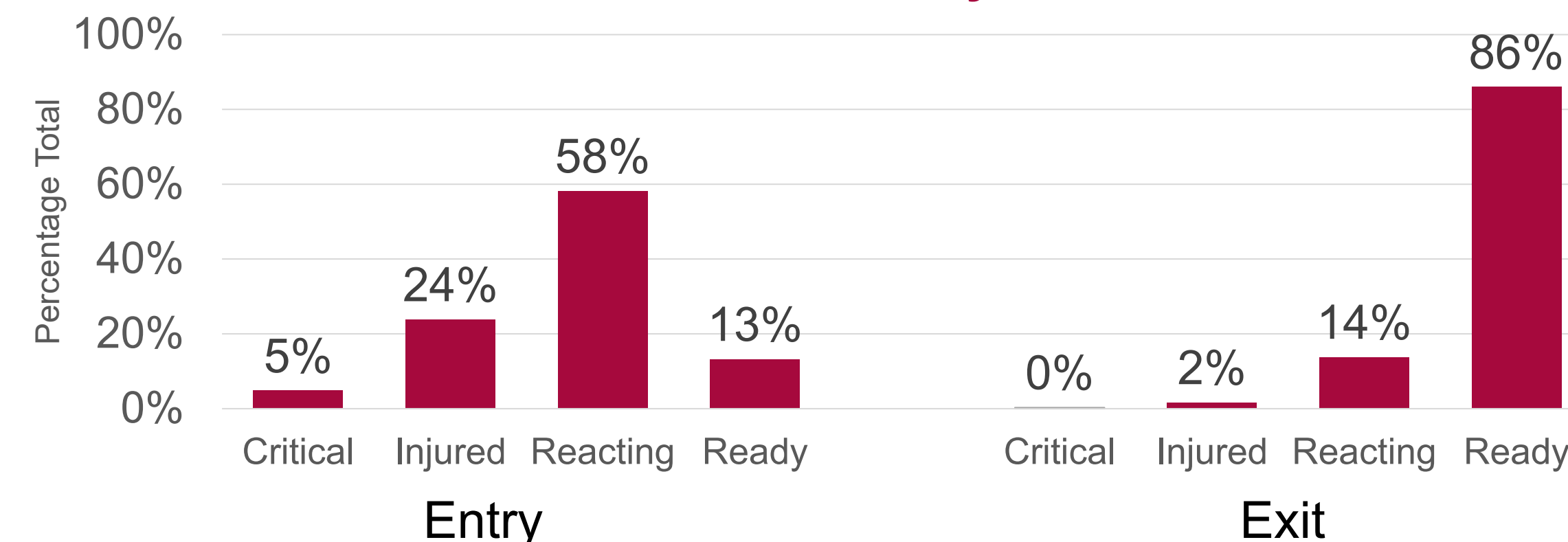
Background:

- Hospitals cared for record numbers of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic¹
- Trauma, exhaustion and burnout resulted in a need for resources and a space within the hospital to allow healthcare workers the ability to safely and confidentially decompress²
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, UCHealth faced a two-fold crises:
 - Caring for the critically ill
 - Sustaining mental health and well-being of our workforce
- Biophilic design research has demonstrated a reduction in acute stress and anxiety when used for healthcare workers³
- A recharge room was conceptualized to provide employees of UCHealth real-time emotional support through integrating immersive, multi-sensory experiences based on biophilic design principles

Results

- 6-month pilot (October '21 – March '22)
- 1889 total visitors
- 84% of users improved their Stress Continuum state

Stress Continuum: Entry vs Exit Scores



Key Takeaways

- The future of health care requires dedicated spaces for employee wellness that provide stress and burnout mitigation
- UCHealth's Recharge Room is uniquely innovative in this approach
- System wide committee has been established to standardize Recharge Room implementations across facilities
- Rooms can be established affordably and in relatively small spaces
- Providing access, communication, permission to use of key importance
- Senior executive support is essential for successful implementation and maintenance of space and resources
- Barriers to access include: proximity to room, scheduling, volunteer staffing

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References:

Li, Y., Scherer, N., Felix, L., & Kuper, H. Prevalence of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder in health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review and meta-analysis. PLOS One. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0246454> (Published March 10, 2021). Accessed (April 1, 2021).¹

Putrino, D., Ripp, J., Herrera, J., Cortes, M., Kellner, C., Rizk, D., & Dams-O'Connor, K. Multisensory, Nature-Inspired Recharge Rooms Yield Short-Term Reductions in Perceived Stress Among Frontline Healthcare Workers. Frontiers in Psychology. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.560833/full> (Published November 19, 2020). Accessed (April 1, 2021).²

Recharge Room Video

