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NOISE FREE HOSPITALS A THING OF TOMORROW

Noise pollution in hospitals is considered an under-the-radar threat to patient safety, but experts are working to design the hospital of the future--a silent one.

A growing movement brings together experts both within and outside of healthcare, from hospital leaders to acousticians and even musicians, according to *Quartz*. The team works to reduce noise levels wherever possible, thinking outside the box in many cases. For example, wearables, which are poised to inundate healthcare in the coming years, could replace noisy monitors to silently alert nurses when a patient's condition changes. Their vision would also incorporate private waiting rooms for surgical patients and ambient music in place of televisions, not unlike efforts to reduce anxiety levels for autistic patients.

Considerable previous work has gone into reducing noise pollution from alarms, but that only partially addresses the problem, according to the article; research from Johns Hopkins University indicates patients are far more disturbed by the sound of other patients who are in pain.

The movement is part of a larger shift in how hospitals think about design, according to Nick Dawson, executive director of the Johns Hopkins Sibley Innovation Hub. The shift doesn't come down to one particular factor, Dawson told *Quartz*.

"Some organizations are motivated by revenue streams from intellectual property," he said, while "some are looking at it as a way to mitigate HCAHPS [Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems]. And some are looking at it and saying, 'There's this untapped voice of the patient out there and we need to re-tailor our business toward them.'"

Evidence indicates that, as healthcare becomes increasingly outcomes-focused, facility design can affect patient outcomes as well.

Source: *FierceHealthcare*

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YOUR CAR AS YOUR OFFICE

Self-driving cars are about to make your vehicle your office within five years or less, the CEO of **General Motors** said in an interview this week, as the company began testing autonomous cars in San Francisco.



"Whether it's a second office or entertainment, I think there is a lot of new opportunities when you have that person in the vehicle," **CEO Mary Barra** told *Business Insider* this week.

GM is currently testing 40 of its self-driving cars (dubbed Bolts) in San Francisco and Scottsdale, Ariz. The automaker acquired S.F.'s autonomous car startup **Cruise Automation** for a reported \$1 billion earlier this year and has quickly gotten to work putting its technology to use. "We are testing and we are moving very quickly," Barra said in the interview. "We are very much committed to autonomous and doing it safely and we are aggressively developing the technology, but we will put it out for the consumer when it meets all of our requirements."

Barra said autonomous vehicles will always fill a specific niche need in the market, but added the GM is looking at ways to make self-driving cars compatible with other transportation products — all while staying competitive in an increasingly competitive market.

"When we step back and look at this broadly, we see it all fits together: electric, autonomous, and sharing. People still need to get from point A to point B, and we believe autonomous will be a big part of it," Barra said. "We will start from a shared perspective and expand from there. But I think we are a ways from walking into a dealership and walking out with an autonomous car."

Source: *Dallas Business Journal*

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