

ABSTRACT

THESIS: The Impact of Private Spaces on Mental Health of Veterinarians

STUDENT: Erica Zhang

DEGREE: Master of Science

COLLEGE: R. Wayne Estopinal College of Architecture and Planning

DATE: July 2021

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Research has increasingly indicated that the veterinary medicine profession is inundated with mental health issues, especially with the recent climb of veterinarian suicides. Sources of stress have been investigated in terms of the job and daily demands that vets face, but little is known about the environmental impact that clinic interiors may contribute. In order to gain a better understanding of this environment and mental health relationship, this thesis aims to research the impact of private spaces on stress levels of vets in the clinic setting. Results have pointed towards a potential correlation between the presence of private areas and increase mental health levels, though further investigation is needed. No correlation was found between the presence or absence of private areas and overall job satisfaction, though specific elements like noise level and personal working space were correlated to the inclusion of private areas. Results also revealed that the clinic interiors that do not have access to private areas do contribute to increased stress levels experienced by the vets, though this does not appear to impact the stress experienced as a whole. Findings from this study could help when considering future veterinary clinic design and encourage interiors that promote healthier, happier staff members.

Keywords: veterinarian, mental health, built environment, coping, stress, private spaces, veterinary clinic