

EMPOWERING PATIENTS WITH CLEVER DESIGN

EVERY DETAIL COUNTS,
DOWN TO THE FURNITURE.

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT THE EQUIPMENT in a medical facility is meant to help patients, but have you ever stopped to think about the furniture? For specialty infusion chair maker **Champion Manufacturing Inc.**, creating chairs that empower patients and facilitate healing is not just a priority—it's who they are.

Champion's commitment to helping patients succeed in treatment is what has made the company an industry leader for nearly 30 years. "A patient's state of emotion plays a large part in the treatment process," says **Lauri Waidner**, marketing manager for Champion. "If patients have a comfortable and empowering place to receive treatment while they recline, rest, heal, and recover, then we've done our job."

For patients going through life-changing treatments—infusions take anywhere from one to eight hours each time—their world is only as large as their fingertips can reach. It's this truth that motivates Champion to do one thing and do it right. "We want to see a chemo patient ring the bell for their last treatment and move forward with their life," Waidner says. "We

want to see a patient who is dialyzing get that kidney transplant and move forward. It is all about the patient succeeding. It's why we wake up every morning and choose to build medical recliners that can make a difference when it matters most."

But how do they do it? Champion takes a dual approach. The company works with patients and caregivers alike to provide seating options that help the caregiver provide the best treatment possible while also helping to alleviate any stress and anxiety for the patient.

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Champion's chairs help to give patients back that feeling of being in control. Patients can adjust recliners with the push of a button, turn on massage or heat functions, and access entertainment with little movement. "It's the little things that help them make decisions for themselves while in treatment," Waidner says.

At **Smilow Cancer Hospital** in Connecticut, where you'll find approximately 80 of Champion's **Ascent**

II Power chairs, patients say the mechanical-powered recliners are essential to their healing, says **Tracy Carafeno**, director of patient services. "They can change the position for comfort by themselves where before they had to have staff assistance to recline."

That bit of independence is crucial to the emotional well-being of patients, says **Carolyn Truini**, operations coordinator for Smilow. "The chairs have improved patient experience and staff safety."

Champion Manufacturing does its research, and it shows. That includes spending a lot of time in medical facilities, observing and surveying staff and patients. "If there is something more we can do, we try to engineer it into the product so they won't have to worry about it again," Waidner says. Champion was among the first in the industry—after learning of a need from a customer—to add swing-away arms to ensure chairs fit through small doorways in an emergency, for example.

The chairs are also engineered to have an open design—so any fluid spills (bodily or otherwise) go away from the patient and onto the floor. This assists



St. Louis Children's
Specialty Care
Center, designed
by Cannon Design.



ASCENT AT A GLANCE

**Manual and
powered
recline styles**

**Recline with the
push of a button**

**Wide arms that
also swing away**

**Removable seat
for easy cleanup**

**Twin-wheel
casters for ease
of movement**

**Retractable
foot tray**

**Heat, massage,
and other custom
capabilities**

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the provider in detecting potential problems while improving cleanup and infection control. All of Champion's seat cushions are removable, further helping with cleanup. "Safety is not negotiable. These chairs can't just look pretty," Waidner says. "Aesthetics aren't the only concern. It has to function first and foremost to meet the needs of clinical staff and patients."

The chairs' central caster lock system enables nurses to quickly lock or release breaks, and a wall-hugger mechanism increases effective floor space in facilities. The chairs also include table options so patients can have a variety of entertainment within reach. And design teams can choose from various seat back options depending on the project.

VALUE ACROSS THE BOARD

"Caregivers demand recliners that have true clinical functionality," Waidner says. "Patients seek the recliners that will provide them with the most comfort and empowerment options during treatment." The happier and more comfortable patients are, the better the survey scores of a facility, too.

As a medical device manufacturer, Champion designs and manufactures under a quality management system using standards and specifications in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (Title 21) and ISO 13485:2016 Medical Device Standard. "We're taking the extra steps to ensure our products are made for the demands of the health care environment and the safety re-

quirements they have,” Waidner says.

Champion products were designed with a long life in mind. They are built with a steel frame and modular design, allowing for durability and easy repair and parts replacement when needed. “If there’s a tear in the vinyl, you only need to replace that part, not the entire chair,” Waidner says. Champion has determined the useful life of its chairs to be eight years. At the end of life, the chairs are 98% recyclable by weight.

EDUCATING THE INDUSTRY

But Champion’s work doesn’t stop with the development of a great product. The company is also passionate about educating the industry on designing health care spaces that are both func-

tional and patient-centric. “Champion truly understands the clinical needs of the most demanding medical applications,” Waidner says. “Providing a product that serves the medical industry is a serious task requiring testing, thoughtful design, and months—if not years—of evaluation.”

The company recently became an AIA educational program provider and plans to become an education provider for the Interior Design Education Council. “We want to help people see there are holes in the system where they may have previously used a product that is not built for health care,” Waidner says. “It’s about having open communication with the people who have the important task of specifying products for the health care environment.” **gb&d**



OPPOSITE: This treatment area at DaVita Dialysis Clinic in Tennessee, designed by Acquilano Leslie Inc., includes Champion’s classic chairs.

BELOW: The UMASS Marlborough Hospital Cancer Center, designed by S/L/A/M Collaborative.

