

## Are You Putting Your Customers on Display?



There are three things that some store designers forget to do: leave room for shopping baskets; leave room for two people to pass in an aisle without invading one's personal space; and leave room for a proper and comfortable waiting area.

Way back, it was common practice to keep the waiting area uninviting and uncomfortable. The flawed theory was, "Why let them sit down? We need them to walk the store and shop!" (This theory is still being applied by those who oppose drive-up windows.) Move into this retail century and you quickly discover that you cannot trick someone into shopping; this is especially true if the person is not feeling 100 percent. **One of the advantages that community pharmacies enjoy is that they are known to be welcoming and excel at making a customer feel comfortable.** Take it to the next step and offer your patients a comfortable and peaceful place to wait for their medication needs to be filled.

Here are a few tips to improve your waiting area:

- ✓ Your waiting area must be **positioned so that customers can see at least one member of your pharmacy personnel**. Not being able to see anyone will make the customer wonder if they have been forgotten ("*out of sight, out of mind*").
- ✓ **Offer at least one chair with arms** and one without. Padded seats are appreciated.
- ✓ **Avoid benches**, including church pews. No one wants to share a seat with someone who doesn't feel well.
- ✓ **Be willing to give up some prime wall space** to create a waiting area away from your aisle traffic.
- ✓ **Offer clean and new-looking chairs**, located in a clutter-free environment.

-- Gabe Trahan, NCPA Senior Director of Store Operations and Marketing