

# What is a healthcare interior designer?

## CHID Exam Overview

**The Certified Healthcare Interior Designer (CHID) examination** is written based on two main content areas: Planning & Predesign and Design, with questions addressing acute care, ambulatory care, and residential healthcare facilities. A detailed outline of the exam content areas covered in the exam can be found in the [CHID Exam Content Objectives](#). We strongly encourage you to review the [CHID Exam Content Objectives](#) to get a better understanding of what information will be on the examination and to determine if you are ready to take the exam.

Prospective candidates can review the information below to identify whether they are eligible for the examination. This information is not intended to be all-encompassing of healthcare interior designer/architect positions.

If you have questions about your eligibility, please review the certification handbook or contact us at [info@aahid.org](mailto:info@aahid.org) for more information.

## What does a healthcare interior designer/architect do?

A healthcare interior designer/architect is a professional who specializes in creating safe, functional, and aesthetically pleasing environments for healthcare facilities. Their work directly impacts patient care, staff efficiency, and overall healthcare experiences and outcomes.

## Who is eligible to take the Certified Healthcare Interior Design (CHID) Certification Exam?

Candidates for the certification exam should have experience in designing healthcare environments and a thorough understanding of healthcare-specific requirements. Candidates should have familiarity with the entire design process (i.e. programming, planning, schematic design, design development, construction documentation, and construction administration). If you work on projects that enhance patient and staff experiences through thoughtful interior design, you may be eligible to take the exam.

**Below are key aspects of what a healthcare interior designer does:**

- **Understanding Healthcare Needs**

Healthcare interior designers/architects must have a deep understanding of how healthcare environments operate. They consider the needs of patients, medical staff, and visitors to create spaces that promote healing, safety, and efficiency.

- **Space Planning and Design**

Designers/architects understand the importance of maximizing functionality while ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations. They contribute to planning efforts with layouts for patient rooms, waiting areas, nurses' stations, surgical suites, and more, ensuring seamless workflow, accessibility, and required adjacencies.

- **Compliance and Safety Standards**

A critical part of the role is ensuring designs comply with codes and regulations such as the FGI Guidelines, the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), and infection control standards. These regulations help create a safe environment for the public, patients, and healthcare providers.

- **Evidence-Based Design and Research**

Healthcare interior designers/architects use research-driven strategies to improve patient outcomes and staff efficiencies. Evidence-based design incorporates elements like natural light, calming colors, noise reduction, and ergonomic furniture to support patient recovery and staff well-being and retention.

- **Materials and Finishes Selection/Product Knowledge**

They select appropriate materials that meet infection control, durability, and maintenance requirements. They have the ability to make the appropriate selections to support the healthcare environment. They understand the importance of material application while maintaining design aesthetics.

- **Collaboration with Interdisciplinary Teams**

Designers/architects understand the importance of working closely with an interdisciplinary team including, but not limited to, consultants, facility managers, and medical professionals to ensure that their designs support clinical operations and enhance the overall healthcare experience.


- **Sustainability and Wellness**

Sustainable and eco-friendly design choices are becoming increasingly important in healthcare interiors. Designers/architects consider energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and the use of non-toxic materials to create healthier environments.

## **Sample Roles/Positions in Healthcare Interior Design**

Healthcare interior designers may work under various job titles and roles, including, but not limited to:

- **Healthcare Interior Designer**
- **Healthcare Facility Planner**
- **Medical Space Planner**
- **Healthcare Design Consultant**
- **Hospital Interior Design Specialist**
- **Senior Interior Designer (Healthcare Focus)**
- **Healthcare Project Manager**
- **Interior Architect (Healthcare)**
- **Principal**
- **Director**
- **Owner**
- **Facilities Planner**
- **Behavioral Health Consultant**



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