



KAISER'S WINDOW TO HEALTH CARE'S FUTURE

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An ordinary warehouse-style building in a nondescript office park in San Leandro, Calif., is home to some of the most futuristic and cutting-edge medical research in the U.S. It's where the Kaiser Permanente Sidney R. Garfield Health Care Innovation Center is located and testing out new technology, mock hospital environments, and high-tech gadgetry for the health care field.

Walking through mock hospital corridors with eco-friendly floors made from recycled materials are real patients, doctors, and nurses testing out the limits of technology. They're not only examining the impact of the rubber-based floor on their backs, but also other kinds of state-of-the-art gear invented to streamline and systematize the hospital experience.

Photos: Kaiser's high-tech health care



From medicine-delivery robots to electronic medical charts wirelessly connected to all Kaiser's patients' data, it feels a bit like stepping onboard the Starship Enterprise. All gadgets are designed to be easily cleaned and some are gesture-controlled, so they don't even need to be touched. All cameras, both video and still, have extreme zoom for minute documentation. One camera's lens gets so close it can detail a thumbprint.

The Garfield Innovation Center also does work flow simulations where physical spaces and hospital routines are studied and standardized. These simulations are important because they help develop ways to maximize the quality of care for patients and the work-efficiency of health care providers.

All of the technology being developed and tested at the Garfield Innovation Center is in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Danielle Cass, a communications manager for Kaiser Permanente, says, "We are moving a lot of data and we have to make sure it's safe."

About Kaiser Permanente Ventures:

Kaiser Permanente Ventures, the corporate venture capital arm of Kaiser Permanente, makes investments in medical devices, healthcare services and information technology companies. Kaiser Permanente Ventures is dedicated to partnering with entrepreneurial companies to build innovative and enduring businesses that advance the quality and affordability of health care. Since its inception in 1997, Kaiser Permanente Ventures has invested in more than 25 venture-capital backed companies at all stages of development, and contributed organizational expertise, time and resources to the success of these companies. For additional information please visit www.kpventures.com.