

# Keilhauer to Launch Healthcare Seating Company

Sittris seating products address infection control, cleanliness and comfort with proven market expertise

**Addressing the growing demand for healthcare environments that balance the healing process for patients with the comfort and support requirements of staff and visitors, Toronto-based Keilhauer has invested the last four years in search of innovative remedies for a host of issues inhibiting effective healthcare seating solutions. The prescription: Sittris, a new company dedicated to healthcare seating, will be launched at Healthcare Design.06 held in Chicago, November 4-7.**

With the launch of Sittris, Keilhauer will be extending its 25 years of seating expertise into the healthcare market, creating a new direction while protecting the clarity and focus of the Keilhauer promise: "high quality seating on time for office environments."

As a separate entity, Sittris will be solely dedicated to providing the unique solutions warranted by healthcare's distinct needs, and enable Keilhauer to remain committed to the needs of the ever-changing workplace.

"The formation of a healthcare-specific company is a perfect next step for Keilhauer," said Mike Keilhauer, president of Keilhauer. "Our position as an innovation leader in contract seating, as evidenced by our success developing cutting edge products exclusively for the seating segment of the industry, gives us the ability to apply our proven creative and technological capabilities in a marketplace yearning for advanced design solutions."

Leading the launch of Sittris, the company's Sophia Series of healthcare seating brings a completely new set of options to the market. Its core design element is a unique back/seat shell that meets the diverse needs of both patients and caregivers. A component seating system designed for Sittris by Helen Kerr of Toronto-based Kerr & Company, the Sophia Series can be specified with a variety of leg and arm options, depending on the intended use – for patient rooms, nursing stations, public seating areas and specialty purposes, such as bariatrics. Sittris also offers coordinating beam seating ideal for waiting rooms and lobbies.

Offering maximum cleanability and infection control through innovative upholstery solutions and fabric treatments, Sittris products are rooted in a results-driven promise: clean seating that stays clean. While direct access to proven Keilhauer seating design expertise affords Sittris with the know-how to create highly durable products offering the most comfortable user experience imaginable, the combination of cleanliness, comfort and durability makes Sittris products the highest quality healthcare seating available today.

"Sittris provides not only comfort and aesthetics in its product designs but also speaks to important healthcare requirements such as infection control, skin health and bariatrics, an underserved market in its own right," said Glenn Barras, president of Sittris. "Every product we bring to market will specifically address the myriad needs intrinsic to healthcare environments. Ease of product cleanability and a commitment to improved functionality for specific seating applications will be two of our overriding design objectives."

With one in ten hospitalized patients (approximately four million) acquiring an infection after admission to a hospital in North America (1), improved furnishings that can be kept germ-free and sterile are becoming a necessity. To address this problem, Sittris offers products available

in three choices of infection-fighting fabric: Siliform™ (Sittris' patented process for applying silicone to a chair), Microcare® (upholstery) and Sustain™ (non-PVC synthetic leather) are antimicrobial, impermeable to fluids, stain-, soil-, and liquid-repellent, and cleanable with just soap and water. Additionally, Microcare features germ-killing Nano-Silver technology, a triple antibacterial mechanism integrated into the fabric rather than a topically applied treatment.

The Sittris seating line includes products designed specifically for ease of patient comfort and movement. For instance, post-operative patients often need to move about the facility with IV poles, oxygen tanks and catheter bags. With most seating options, patients typically have no choice but to leave this equipment in front of them, which can have a negative affect on patient dignity, and cause awkward and potentially hazardous positioning of equipment. By addressing the placement of medical equipment, Sittris healthcare seating allows providers to manage treatment needs in a discreet and dignified way.

Bariatric patients also have specific seating needs. Obesity is a serious, chronic disease affecting more than 25 percent of American adults underscores the growing need for services, care and products developed specifically for this patient population.

"The majority of healthcare seating available today is simply a larger or stronger version of an existing product, which does not adequately address the needs of bariatric patients," said Barras. "The Sittris solution for the bariatric patient features a specially developed chair to address each critical need of the bariatric patient: skin care, infection control, breathing ability, and dignity."

Featuring a sculpted lumbar area, Sittris seating – which accommodates excess skin – allows full access to the patient's back and torso. This helps prevent patient and caregiver injuries during lifting or seated care, and enables access for patient treatment. The lumbar area and fabric options promote airflow around the patient to address common bariatric skin problems caused by sweating. For larger patients who have difficulty bringing their arms to their side, Sittris seating provides comfort, as well as easier ingress and egress via flatter seat pan. A slightly sloping chair back relieves pressure on the patient's diaphragm to promote oxygen intake.

In addition to patients, hospital staff have their own special needs in seating design. Nurses, for example, have physically demanding jobs and suffer from the highest incidence of back injuries of any profession. This is primarily due to the frequency of moving and lifting patients. Designed to allow nurses easy access to patients, Sittris seating enables treatments to be performed on seated patients. Sittris products – whether intended for the patient or the caregiver – essentially serve as a workstation for today's healthcare provider.