

Passing the torch to the next generation

volunteers and vice versa," explains Rigo.

The connection between these generations prepares students for their role and helps integrate them into the hospital community. "Our seasoned volunteers feel very strongly about their positions here at the hospital and take pride in what they do," says Keith Simmons, the hospital's summer student volunteer coordinator this past summer. "Students see how much they put into the hospital and mirror that."

Alex Prosser, an experienced volunteer in the hospital's emergency department, has trained more than a dozen student volunteers through the summer program and says his experience as a father and grandfather has helped him relate to the hospital's younger volunteers. "It's great to watch them and see how well they're progressing," Prosser says. "It makes me happy to see them broadening their life experiences."

Rigo explains that many students are drawn to the hospital because of their interest in health care, while others develop this interest after they have had the opportunity to learn and volunteer in the health-care environment. "We strive to make sure students have a positive volunteer experience, and

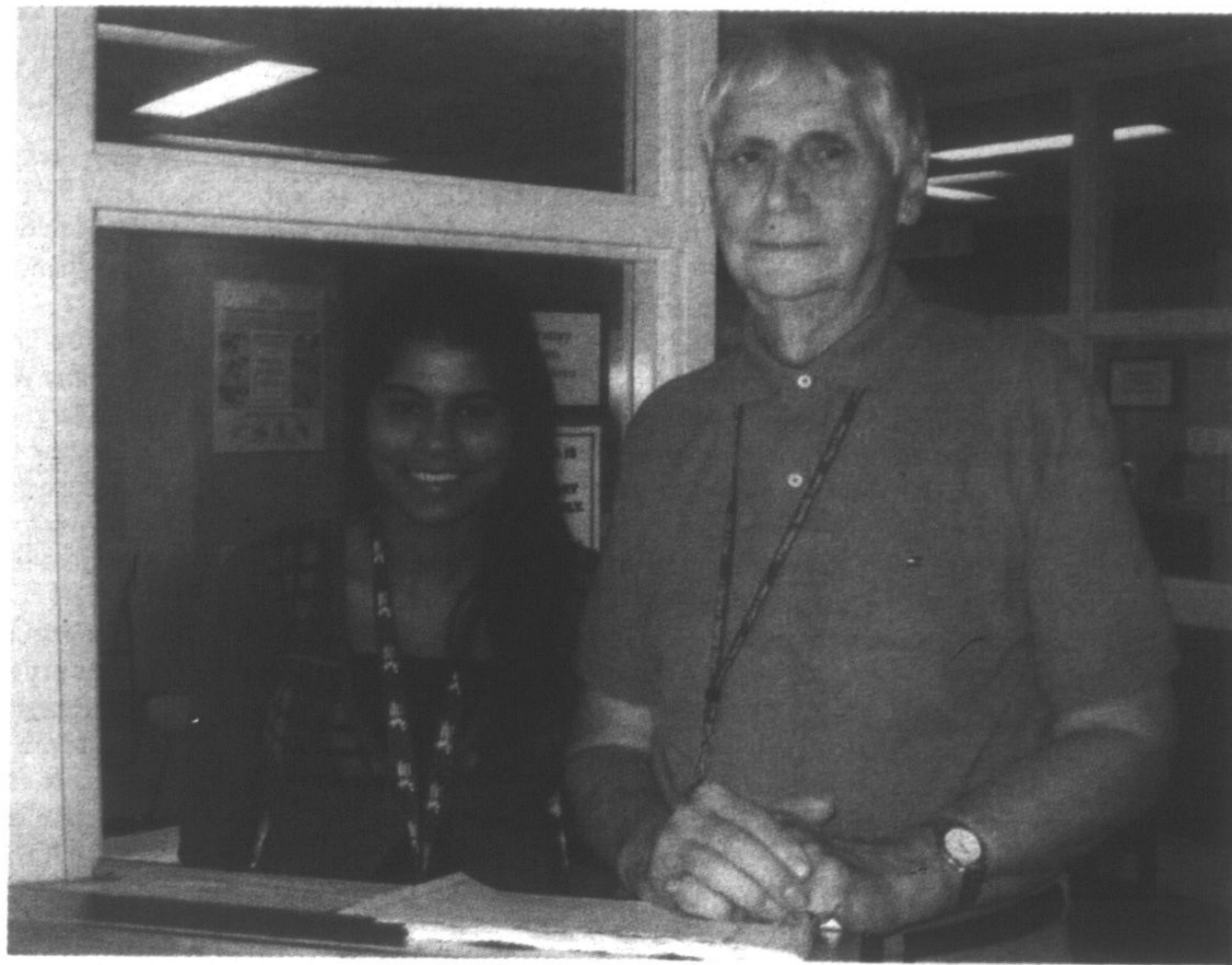
many of our student volunteers end up coming back and joining the hospital as physicians, nurses and professionals," Rigo says.

Vinny Kaur, a volunteer patient assistant in the emergency department this past summer is attending the University of Toronto this year and says, "I want to work in the medical field later in my life and I thought this would be a good experience."

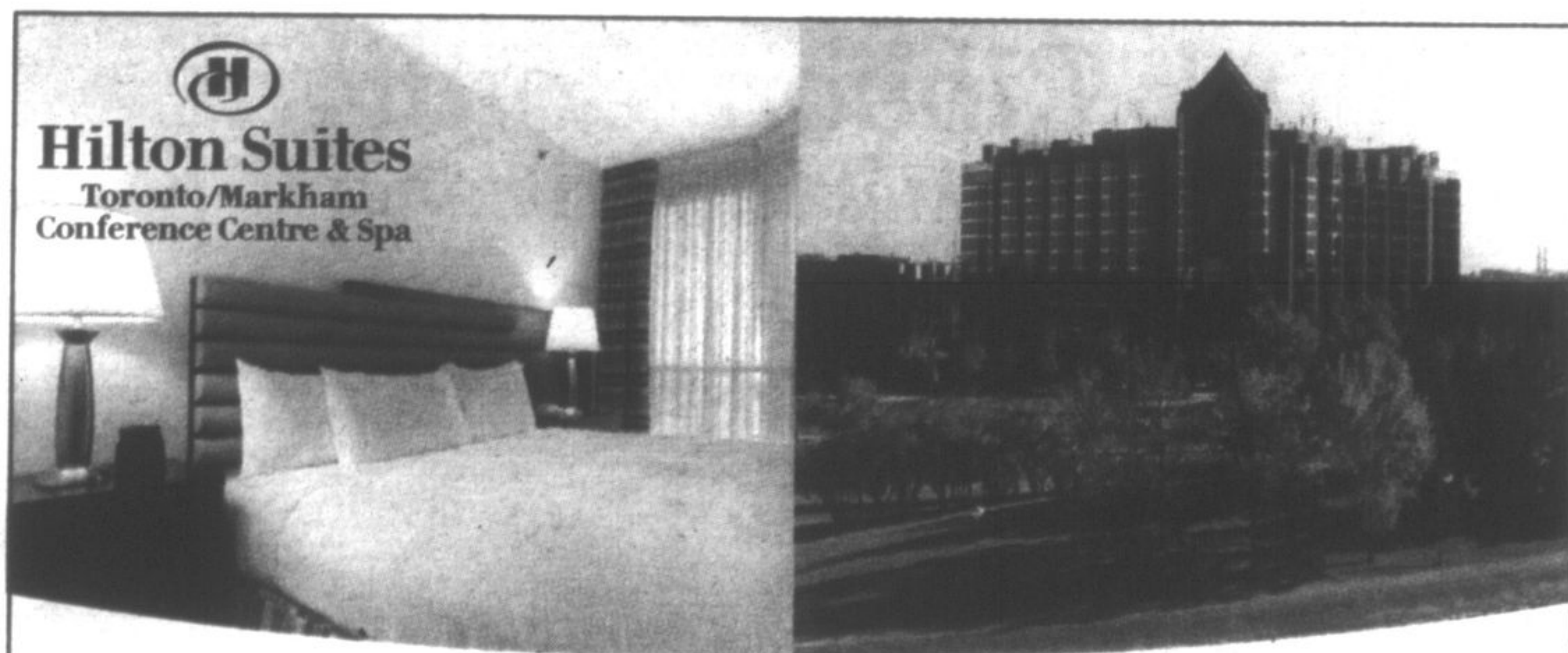
As a volunteer, Kaur witnessed the challenges of working in the emergency department up close, assisting nurses with everything from making beds and running errands to interacting with patients.

"I like helping people and I am appreciated here," she said. "This is a whole new experience that I'm going to take with me."

With 300 summer student volunteers joining the hospital each year, the tradition of giving to the community continues thanks to the ongoing commitment of Markham Stouffville Hospital's seasoned volunteers and the relationships formed across generations. As Rigo explains, "It is this exchange of knowledge that helps our volunteers from all generations learn, grow and be the best they can be."



Vinny Kaur, a past Markham Stouffville Hospital summer student volunteer, and Alex Prosser prepare to greet and direct patients in the hospital's emergency department.



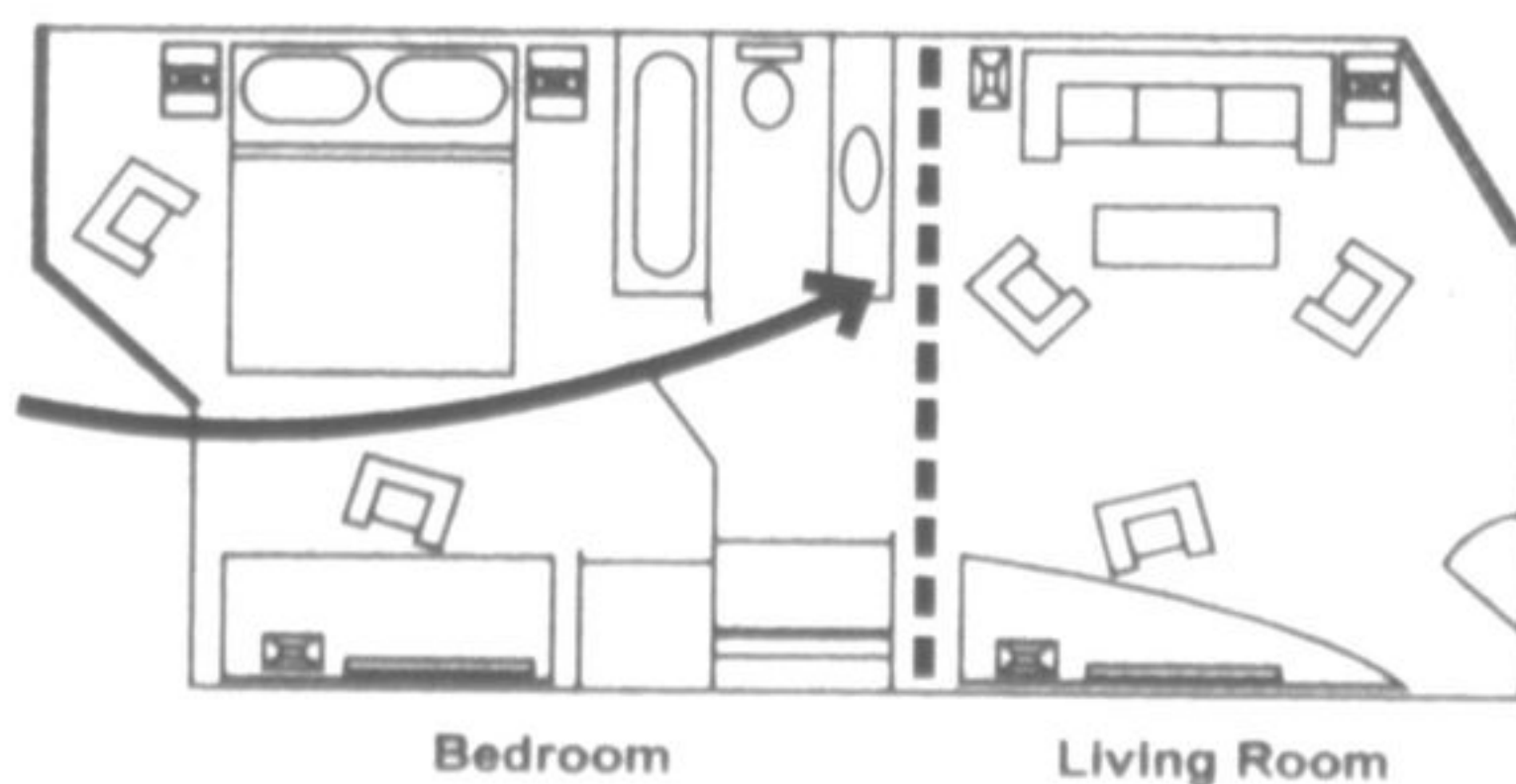
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