

Designing New Hospitals

Who Cares About the Patients?

The design of hospital environments and processes impacts patients' experiences and feelings. Hospitals are places for the sick, infirm and mentally sensitive, and must serve all ages, genders and various cultures. Hospital design includes not just the physical architecture and interior design of the wards, but also the intangible patient care processes.

How were co-design methods, including patients, applied in the design of 2 new hospitals?
Did they result in better patient experiences?

- Semi-structured interviews with 3 experts in 2 hospitals
- Observations from a co-design workshop between hospital staff and hospital architects.

- Both hospitals utilized a customer jury in their design processes.
- Differing views on the value of patient involvement in the design process.
- Too many different opinions don't lead the process forward.
- Concretising the environment, e.g. using virtual reality, is a way to involve patients in the space redesign.
- Concretization increases discussion between stakeholders, but when things become more concrete, it's easier to request more changes.
- The need for service design was pointed out - it can help with efficient processes, test new services through simulation, and encourage bolder ideas.

Hospital 1

Planning

Benchmarking

Physical replica of the planned treatment room was constructed for hospital staff.

Hospital 2

Every Monday, technical experts discussed building related issues.

Every Tuesday, hospital staff from a specific ward was invited to discuss the requirements with an architect.

VR simulation workshop with hospital staff

VR simulation workshop with customer jury

Limited Timescales and Resources

Utilizing co-design methods, needs more resources and time especially in the planning phase. Benchmarking is the fastest and most cost effective approaches.

Impact of Co-design Methods

The co-design workshop facilitator must find the balance between encouraging open creativity and being realistic on the scope of participants' influence.

Physical Environment vs. Patient Experience

Virtual Reality (VR) simulation and physical mock-ups of a treatment rooms concretize the spaces and add realism to co-design sessions. However, such solutions can result in focus on the physical layout and overlook the intangible patient care process.

