



Architecture for Health

Palliative Care Centre Design for Medical Staff

Taylor, Luke ; Proto, Francesco
 lsft@btinternet.com ; fproto@brookes.ac.uk
 School of Architecture, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, OX3 0BP

Introduction

Working in palliative care is regarded as one of the toughest roles within healthcare. Current literature surrounding architecture and health has focused on patient wellbeing while neglecting medical staff.

This study looks at the impact of palliative care centre design on medical staff and seeks to understand if the design of palliative care centres could improve the wellbeing of medical staff. Potentially mitigating some of the psychological stress inherent in the workplace, increasing staff retention as these effects are usually the cause of early departure.

Due to the gap in the existing literature, this study is an important step in providing a deeper understanding of burnout, compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma. If such issues were further understood, architecture could be used to support the workforce within palliative care improving resilience and retention with the use of good design.

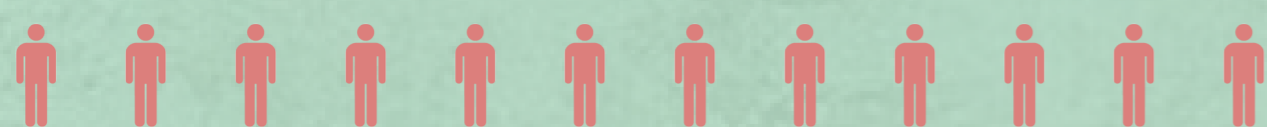
Results

Results of this study show all participants believe that design could mitigate the psychological stress of the job, making tasks easier and improving high-quality patient care. Due to the limited scope of the study, the questionnaire sample size is relatively small; however, it highlighted the potential need for further research.

12 participants were interviewed. Ranging from 3 months experience to 30 years, with a combined total of 116 years in palliative care.

All 12 participants:

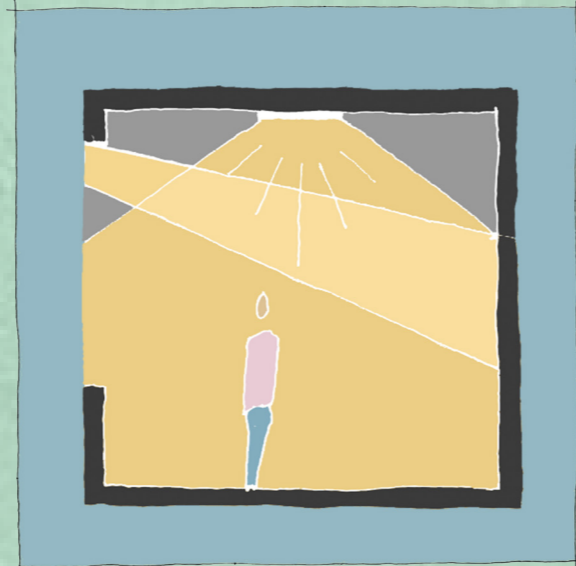
- Were satisfied with their job.
- Felt that the environment impacted their mood.
- Take breaks at work.
- Felt design could mitigate some of the psychological stress of palliative care.
- Provided views on design aspects of the centres which helped construct the design manifesto for a palliative care centre.



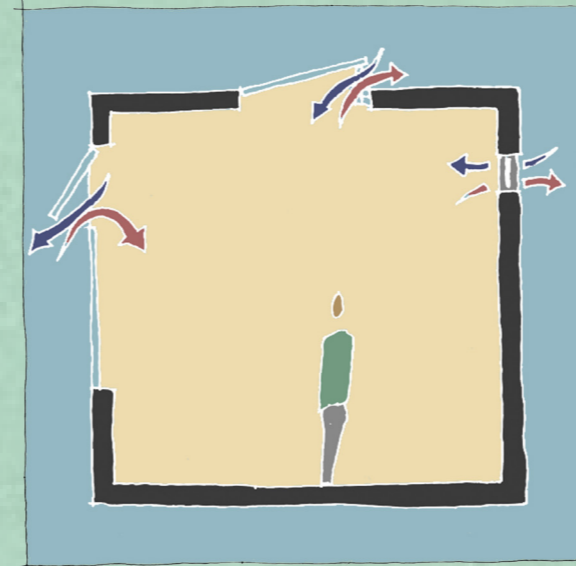
Cited Literature

Channon, B. (2018). *Happy By Design*. 1st ed. London: RIBA.
 Jencks, C. and Heathcote, E. (2010). *The architecture of hope*. 1st ed. London: Frances Lincoln.
 Lloyd-Williams, M. (2008). *Psychosocial issues in palliative care*. 2nd ed.
 Cold, B. (2001). *Aesthetics, well-being and health*. London: Ashgate.

Design Manifesto



Natural Light



Good Ventilation



Dedicated Family Space



Dedicated Staff Space



Cafe / Social Area



Retreat Space



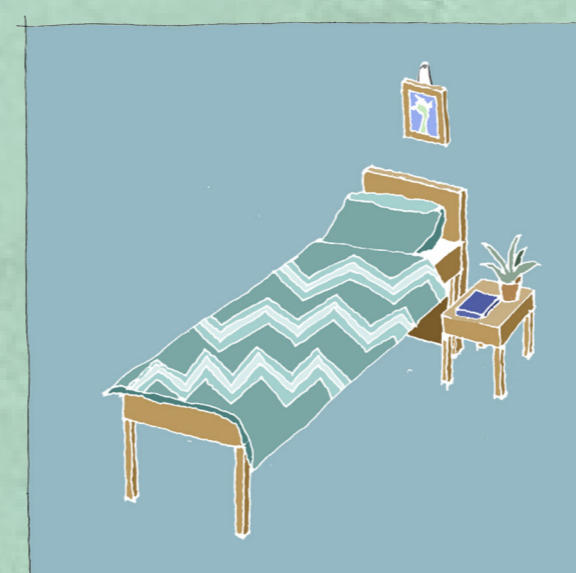
Views of Nature



Unrestricted Design



Colour - Yellow has been found to increase serotonin in the brain



Homely Atmosphere - No clinical bedsheets

Methodology

This research rests on a multidisciplinary approach:

A structuralist approach will investigate the binary opposition between staff and patient wellbeing.

A post-structuralist outlook will invert the viewpoints and shift the focus from patient to staff wellbeing.

A semi-structured questionnaire attained staff design ideas to act as a potential blueprint for the design of future centres.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has shown that palliative care centre design does impact medical staff and as a result, has an impact on the ability to provide good quality care. The study has presented that design could be a way of mitigating some of the psychological stress palliative care medical staff experience in the workplace. It can be said that if the design of these centres were more staff-centric, the staff would find their jobs more comfortable and more enjoyable resulting in a happier and therefore more productive workforce that could deliver improved patient care.

A design manifesto has been drawn up with the factors that affect staff wellbeing, further research may add to this. It is clear from the research previously carried out and within this study that we have a responsibility to look at the impact of design on the wellbeing of staff, and this has not explicitly been considered in a palliative care before.

Following this research, the design manifesto could be tested on a new palliative care centre and gain the input from medical staff on the design. The building of the centre would then provide real data on the impact on the staff and hopefully provide a blueprint for palliative care centres moving forward.

Interviews



This wordcloud has been created with all the interview responses from the medical staff.

