Perspectives for designing a new healthcare environment; what person-environment factors do future users think are important?

Wellbeing Centre = A centre for wider life-style related issues

This new centre intends to:
- offer psychological support
- support behaviour change
- provide basic health checks
- signpost to other services
- provide individual consultations
- offer computer self assessments

Research Questions
1) What environmental features do end users consider important for a positive experience of a healthcare environment before it is built?
2) How comparable is this to existing experimental research?

Method
53 Royal Free Trust members
3 focus groups, 3 tasks:
1) Multiple choice questions
2) Defining important design features and attributes
3) Designing the layout in 2 dimensional (left) and 3 dimensional moveable models (right)

Results
Six themes emerged from triangulated data (blue boxes). Mixed evidence of identified environmental features as important in people’s experiences of healthcare (green boxes). End users considered service more important.

Atmosphere
+ Homely/Modern atmosphere
+ Informal and comfortable
+ Natural elements present
+ Maximise natural lighting

Homely Modern
+ More relaxed, less stressed
+ Calm and content
+ Shorter hospital stay
+ Less pain killers

Nature
+ Less stressed
+ Perceived less draining
+ Less pain medications
+ Shorter stays

Natural Light
+ More important than environment

Spatial layout, size, structure
+ Depends on clear service process

Service

Health assessment areas
+ Provide places with varied privacy levels
+ Consider auditory and visual privacy e.g. position of computers, sound proofing
+ Use self-assessment areas to “help get people in”, as long as privacy still offered
+ Non confrontational seating

Waiting experience
+ Comfortable and relaxing
+ Provide choice (furniture, waiting areas)
+ Display waiting times
+ Display appropriate health information in uncluttered way
- Avoid unrelated distractions

Initial points of contact
+ Visible reception, close to entrance
+ Visible, clear queuing system
+ Easy access for all
- Avoid “intimidating” desks

Reception
+ Immediately recognisable
+ Clear view of entrance
+ Waiting times communicated perhaps electronically

Access
+ Wide doors and pathways
+ Open long desk with lowered sections

User drawing

User 3D model

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