

Design Brief: Sensing Spaces of Healthcare

Creative Storage Solution: Supporting a Sense of Order and Control during Childbirth

The Design Brief:

Sensing Spaces of Healthcare

The 'Sensing Spaces of Healthcare' project rethinks NHS hospitals through its focus on sensory experiences. Using approaches ranging from historical archival research to creative research methods, the project seeks to identify and address sensory challenges and opportunities within specific hospital environments. Sensory experiences can be difficult to articulate and explore, and this project harnesses the opportunities that creative approaches afford in exploring sensory encounters with hospital spaces.

Sensing Spaces of Healthcare is a UKRI funded research project led by Victoria Bates www.hospitalsenses.co.uk. As part of this project we have carried out research at Southmead Hospital in collaboration with Fresh Arts, North Bristol NHS Trust.

Fresh Arts

Fresh Arts is the arts programme managed by North Bristol NHS Trust which provides hospital and community healthcare to the residents of Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. Fresh Arts exists to improve the quality of life and enhance the wellbeing of patients, visitors and staff.

The Research

As part of the Sensing Spaces of Healthcare project, we have carried out research on site about sensory experiences of maternity spaces, and run a workshop with Maternity Voices Partnership to develop this design brief.

During the research and workshops, people who have experienced being on a maternity ward told us that the ward is like a 'whirlwind' - it's busy, noisy and stuff is everywhere. Before their admission, they are informed by midwives on what to pack and bring and it is quite an extensive list for service users, patients, partners and babies! As a result, people end up with lots of things to help them navigate their time on the ward including clothing, home comforts (i.e. pillows, flame-free candles) and toiletries. Some of the items they bring suggest that people are not only looking for a calming, clutter-free space but also a space that makes them feel more at home.

We heard from participants that they believed they did not have enough space to store the many items they were asked to bring to the ward. This contributed to stress and confusion. They believed their "stuff being everywhere" also imposes a danger to staff as they might fall over it or it might be in the way in an emergency.

"Having things all over the place makes everything feel chaotic and is dangerous for staff in emergencies. Partners and visitors have stuff too." - Southmead workshop participant.

Why this is needed / the user needs:

What we heard in research

As a person on the maternity ward, I would like somewhere to put and order my stuff so that I can relax and know where my things are and to make the environment feel calm and more like home.

The design brief:

Overview:

We are looking for individuals or teams to help work with us to prototype a storage solution that people bring into the hospital with them to help people better manage their things and provide comfort.

The intervention should enable people to store their belongings in a way that makes it easy for them to access and find. This will help bring a sense of control and make the space feel calmer. This can help people to feel more at home by providing them with the security of their things and the ability to use them when needed.

Aims:

- The intervention should support people in maternity wards to organise their things and know where they are so as to reduce clutter on the wards.
- The intervention should help people feel more at home by providing them control of their things and their ability to use them when needed.
- The intervention should support staff in administering care by reducing clutter and hazards in the ward.

Prototype

The designer / design team must create an initial prototype of the storage solution, so that it can be tested with people in the hospital. You will be expected to work closely with Fresh Arts and the Sensing Spaces of Healthcare team on this.

Location

There are significant limitations to space on maternity wards. Often people are moved between wards and beds. In some instances, people have a drawer or a bedside table/chair to put their things on, but most of the time, things sit in assorted bags under the hospital bed making it difficult to locate items and organise things. The prototype therefore should not be a large piece of furniture. It could: be brought into the hospital as a storage solution; provide something that people could receive in advance, or upon admission, to help them organise things they bring from home; and be moveable to enable items to be transferred when people are moved within the hospital. Designers will need to work flexibly and may need to adapt elements of their initial design to respond to the space that is available within the hospital.

- people feel calmer and at home (which they might want to choose themselves).
- Although the examples above are cloth, there may be other ways that you could work creatively with materials to create something portable and appropriate for the constraints of hospital spaces e.g. something more sturdy that flattens and folds out, or which is modular.
 - If something *was* developed that was fabric in nature, a prototype might be developed that volunteers could also sew. Southmead has volunteer knitters and bespoke patterns: this could reduce costs in the long term and make it more affordable / accessible

Relevant desk research

- Desk research suggested that existing storage within hospitals is often prioritised for records and items needed by medical staff. There is very little research or available solutions for patients', service users' and visitors' storage on the ward. Maternity wards do already tend to have storage but it is not moveable and users have little control over it.
- People are told what to bring into the hospital with them and the list is extensive and also not consistent across hospitals. See examples: --
 - o <https://www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/your-care/your-visit/what-should-i-bring-to-hospital#:~:text=Toiletries%20and%20nightclothes,slippers%20in%20a%20small%20bag.>
 - o What you should and shouldn't bring with you - Advice from North Bristol - <https://www.nbt.nhs.uk/patients-carers/coming-hospital/what-bring>
 - o NHS advice on what to pack in your labour bag - <https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/labour-and-birth/preparing-for-the-birth/pack-your-bag-for-labour/>

Considerations:

- Any design needs to consider how infection control, fire safety and other such concerns will be managed.
- Space is at a premium in hospitals.
- It is common for items to be lost on the ward. The intervention will need to enable items to be kept safe.
- The intervention will need to encourage people to bring less stuff, but the right stuff, to the hospital to minimise clutter.
- The intervention will need to be affordable, accessible, and scalable.
- The materials used should consider their impact on the environment and encourage reuse.
- All artists working on site will need a DBS

Project Management

The schedule (timelines and deadlines):

- **DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: Thursday 29th June**
- We will make decisions on applications in July 2023
- Final prototype ideas will need to be signed off in late July, with prototypes available for testing in August-September, and delivery of the final product in October.

The contract

- The appointed artist/design team will be issued a contract with the University of Bristol.
- Please note that the University of Bristol will keep Intellectual Property of prototypes. This will enable us to maximise societal benefit, as we intend to put design details in the public domain to improve affordability and accessibility. On this basis, we will also ask you to deliver a design portfolio with the final prototype, which outlines how others can reproduce this design in their own hospitals (and/or budget versions thereof). Please only apply for this design competition if you are happy with these terms.

Working with the SSOH team:

- This project is being managed by the Sensing Spaces of Healthcare team, with input from Fresh Arts where appropriate.
- The Sensing Spaces of Healthcare team will work with you along a structured timeline, to be provided in July, which will involve a number of check-in points (such as sign-off, prototyping)
- We have NHS ethics approval to work with service users / patients directly to receive feedback on prototypes, and we will need to lead this process. We can take prototypes on site and gather feedback for you from service users / patients at specified points in the process.
- We will support you to liaise with our project partners.

Budget:

£10,000 inc VAT. This is inclusive of all research and material and fabrication costs associated with both the prototype and the final storage solution(s). Depending on the nature and cost of this design, we may request the delivery of a 'batch' for testing, rather than a single object; this will be decided with the team at contract stage. You will be paid £3000 at the start of the contract, £3000 at an agreed mid-point (official sign off of your idea, likely at the end of July) and then £4000 on delivery (October).

How to put a proposal forward:

Please email victoria.bates@bristol.ac.uk with a proposal for how you might approach this piece of work, the team involved and any relevant experience you have in this space. This does not need to be long or particularly detailed at this stage – two A4 pages maximum, including any images. We will ask for a more detailed design for sign-off in July if your proposal is selected.