



ORIGINAL REPORT

Decorative elements in the medical imaging area improve patients' perception of pleasantness[☆]

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Received 11 April 2012; accepted 23 July 2012

Available online 2 May 2014

KEYWORDS

Hospital design;
Facility design
and construction;
Psychological stress;
Patient satisfaction;
Environment

Abstract

Objectives: To evaluate the sensation of pleasantness perceived by patients attended in the radiology department in response to decorative elements hung on the walls in the waiting rooms and in the hallways of the imaging area.

Material and methods: The material resources comprised works of art in the form of “magic windows” representing scenes from nature installed on the ceilings and walls of the waiting area and hallways of the imaging area. Patients were given a brief questionnaire with general data and questions (sadness–cheerfulness, coldness–warmth, darkness–light, and pessimism–optimism) about their perception of the decorative elements.

Results: Of the 150 questionnaires collected, 142 were filled out correctly. The overall health of these patients was good in 84 (56%), not bad in 58 (39%), and poor in 8 (5%). The idea seemed very good to 70 patients (47%), good to 58 (39%), not bad to 8 (5%), indifferent to 11 (7%), bad to 1 (1%), and very bad to 2 (1%). As for a patients' mobility, 119 patients (79%) walked into the department, 18 (12%) were wheeled in on beds, and 13 (9%) needed wheelchairs.

Conclusions: We found a high level of satisfaction with the decorative elements.

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[☆] Please cite this article as: García Marcos R, Martí-Bonmatí L, Martínez JJ, Vilar J, Katic N, Lemercier P, et al. Los elementos decorativos ambientales en el Área de Imagen Médica mejoran la percepción de agradabilidad del paciente. Radiología. 2014;56:129–135.

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PALABRAS CLAVE

Diseño hospitalario;
Diseño y construcción
de servicios;
Estrés psicológico;
Satisfacción
del paciente;
Entorno ambiental

Los elementos decorativos ambientales en el Área de Imagen Médica mejoran la percepción de agradabilidad del paciente

Resumen

Objetivos: Valorar la sensación de agradabilidad percibida por los pacientes que acuden al servicio de radiología asociada a la instalación de elementos decorativos ambientales.

Material y métodos: Los recursos materiales consistieron en la implantación de obras de arte en los techos en forma de «ventanas mágicas» y paneles en las paredes de las salas de espera y pasillos del Área de Imagen, respectivamente, que representan elementos ambientales de la naturaleza. Posteriormente, a los pacientes se les dio un breve cuestionario con datos generales y preguntas (tristeza-alegría, frialdad-calidez, oscuridad-luminosidad y pesimismo-optimismo) sobre la percepción que le transmiten los elementos decorativos instalados.

Resultados: De 150 cuestionarios recogidos, 142 pacientes rellenaron completa y adecuadamente el cuestionario. El estado de salud general de estos pacientes era bueno en 84 (56%), regular en 58 (39%) y malo en 8 (5%). La idea les pareció muy buena a 70 pacientes (47%), buena a 58 (39%), regular a 8 (5%), indiferente a 11 (7%), mala a 1 (1%) y muy mala a 2 pacientes (1%). La movilidad del paciente al realizar la consulta se distribuyó entre aquellos que venían andando (119 pacientes, 79%), estaban encamados (18 pacientes, 12%) y necesitaban silla de ruedas (13 pacientes, 9%).

Conclusiones: Se ha constatado un alto nivel de satisfacción por parte de los pacientes cuando se valora la sensación percibida asociada a la instalación de elementos decorativos ambientales en las paredes y techos de las salas de espera y pasillos del Área de Imagen.

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Introduction

The artistic intervention in the hospital setting with decorative elements is an option to improve the patient's perception of the hospital that can have a positive effect in his mood and state of mind during his stay in the service of radiology.¹ Today's hospitals are buildings designed as state-of-the-art functional machines and complex spaces designed to speed up the process of exploring patients in a similar way to a production line. On the one hand this enhanced efficiency has helped shorten response times and has saved more lives but on the other these structures are less concerned on the specific situation and personal experience lived by patients who are more and more overwhelmed and disoriented by this alien depersonalized setting.² This project is born from the conviction that the surroundings play a significant role in the attitude and life experience of people. It seems reasonable to think that better surroundings can contribute to the psychological state and attitude of patients who will be willing to undergo more tests than the ones they undergo as part of their clinical process.³ This is why on top of a huge system of hospital infrastructure aimed at optimizing the processes of disease diagnosis and management another type of facility is needed, one capable of communicating with the patient while conveying feelings of calm, peacefulness, optimism, and compassion. These elements can also strengthen the patient's curiosity through an element of surprise capable of producing an ultimate sensation of pleasantness. The overall focus of the artistic project developed is inspiring the curiosity and surprise through an unexpected experience in a standard hospital setting.⁴ Compared to the routine practice of hanging TV screens at the waiting room for leisure extraordinary experiences can benefit the patient in a much deeper way. In

our development we have taken the following issues into consideration:

The extraordinary distracts us from negative thinking. We are used to paying attention to unexpected or incomprehensible events and curiosity—understood as an active process of interpretation can give meaning to new experiences which in turn are a powerful way through which the mind channels troublesome thoughts into something inspiring and optimistic.⁵

The extraordinary leaves an everlasting impression. Our selective memory stores outstanding events and experiences of our daily lives only. Does anyone remember what we were waiting at the dentist's waiting room a couple of years ago?

The extraordinary promotes conversations. In the hospital setting the possibility of using a certain surrounding capable of strengthening socialization and promoting a starting point for a cheerful conversation is another way to fight the loneliness, concerns, and uncertainty typical of visiting someone in a hospital.

The main goal of this study is to improve the sensation of pleasantness perceived by the patients who go to the service of radiology by designing and building environmental decorative elements later assessed in surveys.

Materials and methods**Actions**

The actions implemented focused on access pass ways to the patient—waiting rooms and connection aisles that in their

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