



IHEEM Annual Conference
The Quality Patient Environment – Maintaining the Momentum
Healthcare Estates
27-28 October 2009
Harrogate International Centre

Operations Based Design Promotes a Holistic Response to the Quality Patient Environment

Many of the recent healthcare design projects in the United States are incorporating elements from recent studies based on Evidence Based Design (EBD) which comprises a slice of the Healing Design Circle. The other and possibly more fundamental piece of the Healing Design Circle is Operations Based Design (OBD) which is fast becoming recognised as the basic design core of a healthier environment. In summary, the Healing Design Circle includes operations, technology and the environment. The focus on operations based design within the Health Design Circle is applicable to all healthcare design work being done in the U.K. This presentation will demonstrate how planners and designers in the U.K. can take a more evidence based in depth look at operations prior to design, thus elevating their design solutions to support a quality patient environment.

The majority of healthcare design in the United States is based on supporting efficient, effective operations and the highest quality of clinical care. By identifying new, improved operational workflow and appropriate technology applications during the planning process, the final facility design can maximise patient safety, reduce infection control, elevate privacy and deliver patient, family and staff security. Well defined workflow patterns lead to reduced throughput and length of stay times, which in turn leads to greater patient and staff satisfaction. In the end, clinical care is sound and patient outcomes are elevated.

Included within the OBD process is the need to identify key ergonomic factors to apply to the successful design. Before you address the fact that the cumulative weight lifted by a nurse in a typical 8-hour shift is equivalent to 3,600 pounds - with patient handling equipment/devices, patient care ergonomic assessment protocols, no lift policies, and patient lift teams – planners and designer must understand the impact of analysing, evaluating and re-designing the work systems will have on the future healthcare environment. Successful design understands how beautiful aesthetic design is compatible with the needs, abilities and limitations of hospital staff and patients.

This presentation will display the tools and techniques used to identify streamlined workflow patterns that lead to exception healthcare facility design. Tools such as workflow mapping, computer simulation and “dashboard” technology, will be demonstrated as to how they elevated final design solutions to support sound clinical care. Case studies will be used that show how process improvement work and efficient workforce planning have led to the highest quality in the physical environment.

Presentation attendees will be armed with the knowledge of how operations based design is the key to maintaining and accelerating the momentum towards the UK's Quality Patient Environment.