

Sensing Spaces

*A strategic approach to optimising
hospital environments*

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Air Arts



The arts programme at University Hospitals of Derby and Burton. The programme aims to distract from illness, improve wellbeing, aid recovery and enhance the hospital experience for 15,000 staff and up to 2 million patients and visitors every year.



Something for Everyone



- Art Exhibitions
- Public Art Commissions
- Environmental Enhancements
- Wellbeing Workshops
- Staff Creative Clinical Training
- Creative Wellbeing Resources
- Performing Arts
- Medical Museum



Hospitals can be overwhelming



Our environments have a huge impact on our sense of wellbeing.

Hospitals can be big, busy, noisy spaces which can overload our senses, creating overwhelm.

Or underwhelming



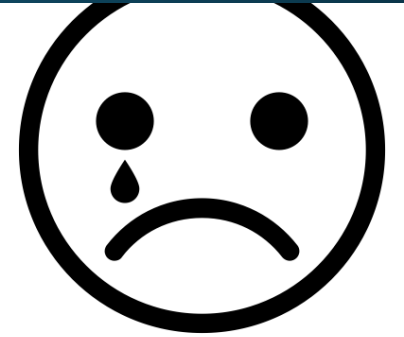
Conversely, bland environments deprive us of our need for sensory stimulation, causing boredom and frustration



How does it make you feel?



In a space where we need to feel calm and reassured, we may experience stress, boredom, confusion, anger and fear

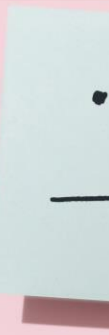
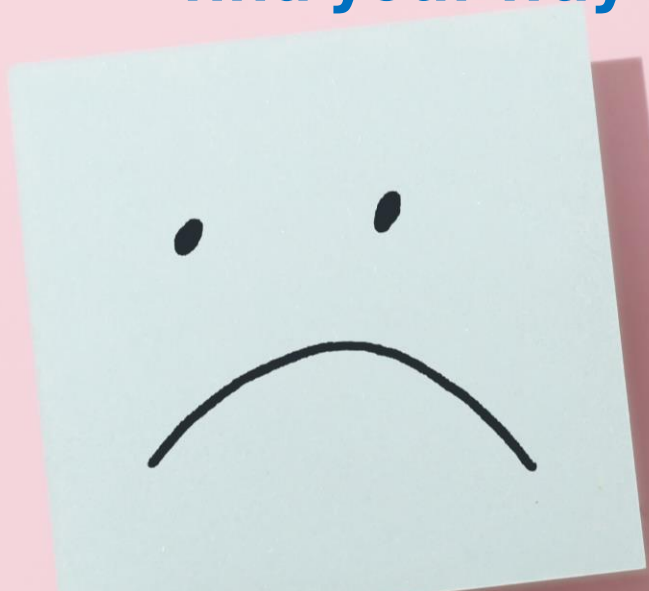


How does it make you feel 2?



Worrying about test results? Worried about a relative?
Neurodivergent? Older? Ill? visually impaired? hard of hearing? Autistic?
Frail? living with dementia? sleep deprived? in chronic pain?

This can dramatically alter your sensory experience creating overwhelm and stress, making it much harder to recover, find your way or understand instruction.



What can we do differently?



Design healthcare spaces with the sensory needs in mind.

Consider all of the senses, not just visual.

Consult users on their experiences.

Co-create solutions with users.

Target where support is needed most.

Wide ranging solutions – something for everyone.

Deliver in partnership with wider wellbeing initiatives.



Sensing spaces Methodology



Developed at the University of Bristol in partnership with the National Arts in Hospitals Network

Toolkits and Resources to support sensory approaches in any healthcare setting

<https://hospitalsenses.co.uk>

A collection of abstract geometric shapes in various shades of green, yellow, and orange, scattered across the right side of the slide. Some are rectangles, some are triangles, and some are curved shapes.

Improving Sensory Environments
**A Practical Guide
to Person-Centred
Healthcare Settings**

A virtuous circle



Less stress leads to a calmer experience.

Increased wellbeing and autonomy leads to shorter stays and faster recovery.

Happier staff means reduced absence and increased retention.

Improved wayfinding and workflow creates efficiencies



Key learning points



- Start with the experience
- Combine experience data with organisational data
- Co-creation is essential
- Small changes can have big impacts
- Invest in partnerships across departments

