Pediatric Hospital Environments: Do They Make a Difference?

Rhyan Elliott  
*Pittsburg State University*

Barbara McClaskey  
*Pittsburg State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/posters_2019](https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/posters_2019)

Part of the *Pediatric Nursing Commons*

---

**Recommended Citation**

Elliott, Rhyan and McClaskey, Barbara, "Pediatric Hospital Environments: Do They Make a Difference?" (2019). Posters. 15.  
[https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/posters_2019/15](https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/posters_2019/15)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Research Colloquium 2019 at Pittsburg State University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Posters by an authorized administrator of Pittsburg State University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact lfthompson@pittstate.edu.
Pediatric Hospital Environments: Do they make a difference?

Rhy an Elliott, Senior BSN Student
Barbara McClaskey, Faculty
Pittsburg State University

Abstract
The environment can have an extreme impact on a child’s well-being, growth, and health. This should be taken into consideration especially for those children that are surrounded by a hospital environment. The healthcare system can come across as extremely intimidating and frightening to young patients. The purpose of this research study is to change this mind-set by creating a more welcoming atmosphere through child-friendly interventions such as, magic, colorful art, and nature. The research has shown that it is important to take children’s perspectives into consideration and to implement them into the design of pediatric hospitals.

Materials/Methods
Music: Due to the stimulating environment of hospitals full of noise, lights, and distractions, music has become a calming measure for children and even their families.

Equipment Creativity: Large and small equipment alike can be very intimidating to an adult patient, but especially to the small children encountered in a pediatric hospital. By making items from MRI machines to devices that simply secure the placement of NG or IV tubes more child-friendly, favorable to a child’s eye, they can become overall less daunting.

Examples:
- The pediatric patient’s were found to be concerned about where their parents would sleep.
- They were also concerned about sibling visits when staying in the patient room.
- The children found that they preferred private rooms over shared, because it allowed freedom to make some small decisions for themselves and to have family closer.

The doctor said only little kids are allowed to sleep on the big bed but my daddy and mommy have to sleep on the floor on a mattress instead ... and there’s a little boy sleeping in his bed and his daddy was sleeping on a mattress like my mommy and daddy ... I won’t stay on my own … just stay with my mommy and daddy, not on my own (boy 5 years)

A picture [on wall] of my family … maybe I should draw it … maybe I’ll just make a picture of me and my sister (girl 5 years)

‘Maybe there should be boy and girl room [bathroom] … think we have to put need put girl one here and a boy one here and girl one here ... ’ (girl 5 years)

If you put it [box for paints/crayons] up there [top shelf] then how can you reach it?’ (girl 5 years)

‘And outside there was an alarm in the dark like … someone set off an alarm out there … yeah I couldn’t sleep my ears were so stiff, I couldn’t even get awake with it’ (boy 5 years)

‘Maybe like a little map ... so you can look up, that’s my playroom that’s my room’ (girl 5 years)

Ways to make these colorful interventions cost effective for the hospitals, patients, and their families.

Gaps in the Literature
There are some small steps that can be taken in order to develop this topic further, such as:
- Most of the studies were being developed in countries overseas like, Ireland and Australia, but there is not as much being done in the United States.
- Informing the architects/builders of the ideas and innovations at the blueprint stage of the design of the hospital. This needs to be done in order to make the children’s dreams a reality.
- Ways to make these colorful interventions cost effective for the hospitals, patients, and their families.

Illustrating the Research

Proposed Plan for Change
The interventions taken to create a favorable environment to healing in pediatric hospitals have taken leaps and bounds from what they were in the past. I agree with all of them and have a few tips to keep the progress going.

Bring home to the patients - Home is where patients are often the most comfortable, by bringing aspects such as video games, stuffed animals, artwork, etc. into the hospital environment, we as nurses can help them have peace of mind in a stressful situation.

Allowing them to be kids - As nurses, we need to look past the patient’s illness and realize they are still just like every other kid, only with a few minor limitations. Kids in the hospital still want to interact with the outside world and do the “normal” activities their peers are doing, such as: going to prom, playing on the playground, or maybe just doing homework like everyone else.

References
doi:10.1177/1743907307085517

Contact
relliott@gus.pittstate.edu