

Project 4

NHS Estates Research Projects

Studies undertaken for NHS Estates

Two recently completed studies have addressed issues which affect the design of all health buildings.

The study, **'Differentiating between Public & Private Spaces in Hospitals'** (2002), was designed to inform the relationship between the physical characteristics of hospitals with patients' experiences of moving within them &, in particular, to examine this in the differentiation between public and private space.

The geometric configuration of a hospital determines the relationship of the main entrance to departments, the ratio of horizontal to vertical circulation, the distances of frequent journey routes and the opportunities for visual wayfinding references. Six purpose built hospitals, each being an example of different but fairly standard hospital building configurations, were selected as case studies. Patients and visitors in the hospitals were interviewed to ascertain their experience of journeys within them.

'Reduction of Hospital Acquired Infections by Design'

(2003) addressed the seriousness of hospital acquired infections (HAIs). The objective of this study was to answer the question, 'How can design help to reduce HAIs?'. It investigated what guidance is available to infection control practitioners and building designers, whether additional guidance is needed, and, if so, in what form. The study found a lack of relevant evidence based research, a considerable body of relevant knowledge which is not generally available, and a lack of clarity and consistency in the new ways in which fundamental decisions relating to infection control issues are made. It proposed the need for feedback from the field, and for improved guidance.

