

ABSTRACT

PAPER TITLE: TOWARDS ENSURING THERAPEUTIC EFFECTIVENESS OF THE 'BRICKS AND MORTAR' OF MENTAL HEALTH UNITS

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Background

We now have information that was not previously available to guide the design and construction of mental health units; studies that examine the impact of the 'bricks and mortar' on mental health outcomes and quality of life of patients, careers, staff and visitors.

During the last eight years PPS has reviewed extensive evidence based design (EBD) literature (n-234) for NSW Health, Queensland Health and ACT Health for inpatient mental health units serving needs of acute care, medium-secure care, children and youths, older persons and community care. The requirements of child and youth day programs were also reviewed.

A substantial funding increase for Queensland Health will provide opportunities for 35 new, redeveloped or refurbished mental health facilities; this new approach to design and construction will ensure the best outcomes for these projects.

Methods

The PPS User-Designer Evidence Based Collaborative Design process has created particular design considerations that will inform the planning and development of new and refurbished units now under construction in Queensland.

Findings

This process has enabled consumers, clinicians and architects:

- to develop expertise in mental health design
- to support collaboration and peer review
- to interpret service models in unit design
- to discover EBD which can inform design
- to work within the jurisdictional review of Australasian Health Facility Guidelines (AHFG)

Conclusions

The resulting design considerations are extremely robust as they contain the latest literature-based evidence and strong anecdotal evidence from the experiences of expert clinicians and facility-users in Queensland.