The Design and Experience of Play Spaces in Pediatric Healthcare Environments

Sophie Weaver1, Julia Hess1, Amanda Mac1, Meaghan Walker1, Tim Ross1,2
1Bloorview Research Institute, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital; 2Department of Geography and Planning, University of Toronto

Methods
• Used a scoping review5 methodology
• Searched six databases using terms related to ‘play space’, ‘pediatric’, and ‘healthcare’

Results
1. Pediatric play space designs should be accessible, inclusive, and encourage interaction with others and the environment
2. Ample seating, quality pathways, good lighting, and biophilic components are important design features of pediatric play spaces
3. Little research (1/15 articles) has considered the design and experience of playgrounds in health care settings
4. Little research (3/15) on play spaces in health care settings has emerged from the Global South

Next Steps
Further research is needed to understand (1) how children and their families experience pediatric play spaces and, in particular, playgrounds, (2) how practitioners are using them, and (3) what best practices are for designing pediatric play spaces.

Relevance to Holland Bloorview
This research may help Holland Bloorview to optimize current and future play spaces. In turn, it may help to enhance the quality of care delivered to children and families. This work also aligns with HB’s efforts to (1) Lead and Model Social Change, and (2) to Discover for Action.

Acknowledgements
Thank you to the Ward family for supporting this research. Thank you also to Iveta Lewis for supporting the design of this review’s search strategy.

References

There are numerous design elements that need to be considered when designing play spaces in pediatric health care settings

Background
• Play spaces in pediatric hospitals enhance quality of care for children and their families by providing opportunities for fun, socialization, and reducing anxiety and distress1,2
• Engaging in play can mitigate a child’s negative feelings during hospitalization and may aid recovery3
• The design of play spaces should take into account how they are experienced and how they can be used to enhance care4

Objective
To reveal what the literature says about designing play spaces in pediatric healthcare environments to enhance quality of care

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