Developing the Design Audit Tool

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Design – A problem?
• Issues design needs to address:
  – High levels of stress
  – Impaired learning
  – Impaired reasoning
  – Impaired memory, especially recent memory
  – Increasing dependence on the senses (yet often impaired visual perception)
Only 3 types of incoming sensory data:

- Chemical
  - smell
  - taste
- Electromagnetic
  - light
  - electric and magnetic fields
- Movement
  - touch
  - sound
  - kinaesthesia
Key Assumptions

The environment

- Supports the positive engagement of the person with dementia
- Is age and culturally appropriate
- Is sensitive to a range of ethnic groups
- Is, where possible, individualised to the person

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Key Assumptions

• The environment:
  • Encourages independence of movement and autonomy
  • Balances technical aspects and the ‘cared for’ experience
  • Facilitates staff
  • Minimises the need for transfer
  • Compliance – DDA, building regulations, & care standards

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• The contents of the design for people with dementia audit tool:

  • Section A: Interior environment
  • Section B: Exterior environment
  • Section C: General principles
  • Section D: Additional notes
  • Section E: Scoring sheet and report
• Audit Scope

  – Care homes
  – Dwelling houses
  – Healthcare ward environment
  – Design drawings

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Process

• Literature Search
• Expert Group
• Pilot
• International Collaboration
• Review & Finalise
• Launch June 2008
• Design criteria categories:

  – Essential
    • Based on research and expert opinion
  – Recommended
    • Based on current literature and informed international best practice
Essential Features (24)

– Bad example

– Good example
• Hall/Entrance/Wayfinding

  – There is good access for those with physical or mobility problems including wheelchair users
• Hall/Entrance/Wayfinding

- There is use of particularly clear signage mounted at an appropriate height to help with wayfinding for everybody
• Hall/Entrance/Wayfinding

  – There is use of strong colour and tone contrasts between sign and background
• Lounge/Day Room

– The carpet/floor covering is blended into the overall colour scheme yet contrasts with walls and furniture. Strong or large patterns have been avoided
• Lounge/Day Room

– Toilet facilities are near at hand and are visible from seated position or are otherwise well sign-posted
• Dining Room

– The dining room is small and domestic in scale as appropriate to cultural requirements
– There is good control over distracting background noise
• Meaningful occupation and activities
  – There is space for residents to participate in activities such as art and craft work and hobbies
  – There is easy access to safe outside space with facilities for residents to engage in light gardening or exploring, where desired
• Bedrooms
  – If an individual room, the entrance is personalised and identifiable to the occupant and/or their family
• Bedrooms

– If there is no en-suite, toilet facilities are close nearby and have clear signage and visibility
– If there is an en-suite toilet/shower, the WC can be viewed directly from the bed-head position and vice versa
• Toilet area

  – In shared areas (lounges and dining rooms) access to toilets must be conspicuous from as many viewpoints as possible
• Toilet area
  – The colour and tone of the toilet pan and seat are in contrast to the floor
• Bathrooms
  – Mirrors are well placed and are designed to be removable or easily covered
  – The main room light fitting is not sited directly over the bath
• Exteriors

  - There is a safe, enclosed and secure outdoor environment with inconspicuous boundaries
• Exteriors

– Exit gates and manhole covers are blended into pallet of materials with latches, bolts and handles concealed where necessary
• General principles

  – There are consistent floor covering colours and textures to minimise confusion
• After the essential features
  – Recommended (100+)

As research advances and as feedback can be measured, quantified and evaluated it is expected that more of the recommended features will move into the essential category.
• Examples

– There is play equipment to improve quality of visiting time.

– There are facilities for visiting services such as hairdressers and aroma-therapists.
A Care Home Experience

- 71% fewer falls in corridors
- 3% of residents with recorded weight loss compared to 13% before
- 2 residents need help at mealtimes compared to 7 before
- 60% reduction in reported physical aggression
- Medication for aggression & agitation reduced from 20 times to once a week
- More quality time with residents
• What does it all mean?
  – Example of simple change of signage in a care home

Before the change two older ladies always needed help to find the toilets. After the new graphic signs had been fitted they could find the toilets without any assistance
Designing for the future

• We may need to solve problems not by removing the cause but by designing the way forward even if the cause remains in place.

  – Edward de Bono
• If you do not design the future someone or something else will design it for you.
  » Edward de Bono
That bear again……..