New Children's Hospital Youth Panel

Onto Toronto Pronto!

AUGUST 2009
The group at Niagra Falls
The New Children’s Hospital Youth Panel is a group of 12 young people who are all past or current patients of the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Yorkhill. The Youth Panel provides a way for young people to influence the planning and design of the New Children’s Hospital in Glasgow. The members of the Youth Panel are using their experience to empower other young patients to play a positive role in improving the health service and making it more supportive of young people.

The Youth Panel allows young patients to influence a hospital development of local, national and international significance. The involvement of young people, particularly those who live with chronic or debilitating medical conditions, brings experience and fresh ideas to the design of the new hospital thus ensuring that the design leads to an inclusive, supportive, healing environment for young people. The Youth Panel brings these young people - who are often overlooked because of the extent of their illness or medical condition - together and gives them a voice.

In August 2009 the Youth Panel visited two internationally renowned health care facilities in Toronto, Canada. These were the Hospital for Sick Children and Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation. They went to get fresh, ambitious ideas for the New Children’s Hospital, to meet the Youth Councils at the Sick Kids and Bloorview and to learn more about how young people are involved in helping to plan and run their hospitals.

The Youth Panel went to Toronto following an invitation from Professor Pat McKeever. Professor McKeever is the Senior Scientist, Bloorview Research Institute and Adjunct Scientist, Research Institute, Hospital for Sick Children. During a visit to Glasgow to discuss her research with children and young people on their perceptions of hospital design Pat met with the Youth Panel and was very impressed with their work. She invited them to Toronto to visit the Hospital for Sick Children and Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation as she felt this would assist them to develop their ideas for their new hospital. The Panel then researched these 2 facilities, established contact with their Youth Councils and met regularly to plan the trip.
The aims of the trip were:

- to examine the design of adolescent services at two leading health care facilities
- to assist young people to articulate their needs and aspirations in relation to the design of adolescent facilities for the New Children’s Hospital
- to explore the engagement processes that were influential in the development of the new Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation in Toronto
- to develop supportive working relationships with the Youth Councils of the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto and Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation

This report describes the key design, building and service features that the Youth Panel would like to bring back to Glasgow and to their new hospital.

These are:

- **Designing for Children and Young People**
- **An Age Appropriate Health Service**
- **Access for All**
- **Art & Design for All Ages**
- **Bringing the Outside In**
From the first moment they entered the Sick Kids and Bloorview Kids Rehab the Youth Panel were impressed with the facilities. The buildings had a character and presence. They were finished to a high standard, communicating and reinforcing value and respect for patients, carers and families.

They portrayed a positive image and contributed positively to their local communities. Both hospitals made a bold statement with their main entrance and both were welcoming, easy to use and comforting.

At both hospitals the main entrance was easy to locate and logically positioned. The entrances were obvious with good external signage and wayfinding. The main entrance doors were fully automated with ready access to seating and waiting facilities. Wheelchairs and mobility aids were available at the main entrance.

When you first entered the buildings there were immediately visible and obvious reception desks providing assistance and reassurance to patients and families. The entrances provided a good balance between a calming, reassuring atmosphere and stimulation and distraction. Both used light to create an environment that was calming and reassuring and Bloorview had minimised the noise levels in public areas enhancing the feeling of calm.

They had good amenities for patients and carers including comfortable waiting facilities, shopping and support facilities. From the main entrance there were logical, easy to follow layouts with accessible signage and wayfinding.

"I think that the sick kids is different in the sense that it has an unmistakable sense of "normality."

"Unlike many hospitals, it has a light and airy atmosphere when you walk in the door - the sound of water, bright colours, and lots of natural light!"

"Bloorview is a fantastic facility, it looks cool, and the hospital is so neutral, calm-full and soft on the eyes throughout!"
"It's a very relaxing and calm environment and it is made up of very neutral colours, with the odd bright colour to tell you which floor you are on."

Cleanliness and maintenance seemed to have been key considerations of the design approach for both hospitals. They looked well maintained, clean and hygienic.

"Clean lines make the hospital look sleek and stylish while being practical for cleaning."

"The hospital throughout provides easy access to hand sanitation facilities which will reduce the spread of infection. The hand sanitizers are also located at easy levels so that people wheelchairs can access them easily."

"It is clean and hygienic!!"

Both hospitals had impressive ward, single room and clinical accommodation but also a good range of family and patient support facilities. The Youth Panel were particularly impressed by the adolescent facilities, which are discussed later in this report, the support facilities in the main atrium and the provision of quiet, reflective space.

"I loved the fact that the entrance to the hospital could almost be mistaken as the entrance to a shopping mall. As you walk through the ground floor the Starbucks, Roots, Subway and toyshop provide convenience and normality to patients and parents!!"

"The reflection room at Bloorview is a comforting place to go for parents or patients. It is used by anyone, no matter what their religious beliefs are. The walls are sound proof which helps keep the privacy to a high standard."

A particular feature of Bloorview that impressed the Youth Panel was its close integration with its local community. The local public school is sited in the hospital building and its gymnasium and swimming pool are shared with the local community. Bloorview is a long-stay hospital and so is different from the New Children’s Hospital but nevertheless, the Youth Panel were keen on the close relationship that had developed between the hospital and the surrounding community and the onward benefits this had for patients.
“The fact that the community were allowed to use the swimming pool and the school being so close by would reduce the stigma almost of being in hospital and allow the surrounding community to be almost more open minded towards people with disabilities!!”

“The school and swimming pool is very good because it is for the community and the hospital and that means you don’t have that dreadful changeover when you go in or come out of hospital.”
The key issue that is repeatedly identified by young patients is their desire for increased independence and treatment that recognises ‘young adult’ status. The Canadian hospitals had a number of features that the Youth Panel would want to see replicated in Glasgow. These were elements of the buildings, facilities and services that each helped to make the hospitals feel welcoming and respectful of teenagers as well as younger children.

"The building reflects that it has been inspired by children/young people. Each area has its own unique elements for all ages, not just toddlers and small children."

There was separation from younger children and a clear recognition that teenagers had different needs, interests and priorities. Age-appropriate activities were provided in all clinical, treatment, accommodation and support areas. Of particular interest to the Youth Panel was the internet access that allowed young patients to stay connected to their family, school, friends and the outside world. Teenagers also had their own facilities – in the Sick Kids this was called Marnie’s Lounge – which they could use to meet with and spend time with other young patients. However, even though there were separate facilities for teenagers there was also age-appropriate provision in all the play, support, education and public facilities throughout the hospitals.

Marnie’s lounge was a great place for young people to hang out in. It is used by both out-patients and in-patients. It was very spacious and had loads of activities to choose from, such as:

- Pool table/Television
- Music/Video games
- Crafts/Internet access.

It also had a small kitchen in it for making snacks.

“This teen room has a kitchen installed at the back for YOUNG PEOPLE. They have chefs come in to cook and give lessons. This means that young people can learn independence and learn HOW to cook or even practice while they are away from home. It’s important that you don’t lose a sense of the fact that you are still capable when you are ill which ultimately is part of growing up. It’s keeping a simple normality in your life while you are in hospital."
"Marnie's Lounge had everything that a teenager would want especially a full size pool table."

Internet access was a big thing in the hospital as it let the young people stay in contact with their friends and family.

The Library was one of the most used places in the hospital, even when patients couldn’t get out of the wards. The librarian uses internal CCTV to broadcast a live story time to all the beds in the hospital.

"The Library is very spacious and comfy. It has wide selection of books for young people to borrow or lounge around on the sofa and read peacefully."

Young patients had a degree of control over their environment and care. They had the opportunity to personalise their room through a notice board for posters, cards, pictures etc and were able to choose the art used to decorate their room.

Each room had a patient/family/staff communication board to help them keep in touch. The Youth Panel felt that this would be very good for young patients as they could add in their own comments, read the messages and play a more active part in managing their own care.

"They have canvases and pictures that you can remove from the walls and replace with different ones."

Both hospitals had flexible catering systems that allowed young people to have a degree of control over what and when they ate. This flexibility had proved to be very popular with patients.

"The Youth Advisory Group has been very proactive in making it possible for the young people in the hospital to have choice when it comes to certain things. They came up with an inspirational idea of making a meal train to allow the in-patients to eat when they were hungry and not at certain times."

"The meal train meant that young people had freedom of choice and were not limited in what they could eat."
Privacy was an important consideration in the facilities – allowing teenagers to feel more at ease. The rooms were made up like four bed bays, although they had a little twist to them.

"If you didn't like your neighbour, you could just pull the wall shut, unlike the current curtains that Yorkhill has. This is a good idea as it does give you that privacy and gives you choice in regards to being in a single room or bed bay."

In the new A&E department the single rooms have been transformed and provide easy access with large doors that swing on hinges. The lights in the single rooms can be dimmed and are soft on the eyes when needed and there is a balance between privacy and being connected to the nursing staff.

Even busy clinical areas like A&E had been designed to promote age-appropriate care.

There was also a Pager system which, instead of calling out peoples names, beeped you when it was your turn, and also let you wander off to the shop or phones. This increased confidentiality.

Squares and rectangles are placed strategically to provide areas which are more private and other areas are more open for children to play.
Access for All

The design of the buildings encouraged independent movement for all users, particularly those with mobility, sensory, orientation impairments and with literacy or learning difficulties. All users could move straightforwardly and purposefully around the hospital sites.

"From entering Bloorview, everything is accessible for everyone. The reception desk is at a height for wheelchair users."

This was particularly true of Bloorview which was a new build. The design of their buildings provided clear, understandable layouts with circulation routes that explained themselves to users without over-reliance on sign posting. Routes around the buildings were short, uncluttered and direct with practical aids such as seating and handrails built in.

"The access throughout Bloorview is a triumph in that people in wheelchairs are catered for throughout the building."

"Low level reception desks, hand sanitizers, bins and door touch pads are incorporated into the building throughout and do not stick out like a sore thumb! These have been incorporated stylishly and discreetly!"

Colour, texture, art, flooring etc had been used to enhance wayfinding and to indicate the move from public to private areas.

There was access to appropriate toilets, hand washing, and showering facilities throughout the hospitals and these had been designed to allow for independent use – even where children and teenagers had greatly reduced dexterity and mobility.

One particular feature that stood out was the space that was provided throughout the buildings and facilities. Space planning had addressed the needs of disabled people and the range of increasingly large equipment and kit they may need.

"Our logo is based on the infinity symbol - signifying the promise of every child and the possibilities made real through our groundbreaking standards for accessibility and paediatric rehabilitation."   Bloorview Kids Rehab
One of the key ways in which the hospitals had addressed age-appropriateness was through the art and design in their facilities. Both hospitals had very different looks but they both had managed to feel equally welcoming to very young children and to teenagers.

One of the ways they had achieved this was through the use of art installations that were attractive to all ages. These were sufficiently neutral to appeal to all ages but were still colourful, tactile and attractive. A wide range of ages and abilities of children using the hospitals had been considered with disabled patients – those with mobility, sensory or learning difficulties – having equal access.

"I really liked the clever use of fish tanks, toy etc that were built into walls etc. which reduced clutter and were softer on the eyes."

The art included sculptures that were tactile and interactive; feature installations such as aquariums and games consoles; contoured pieces that were attractive to look at and to touch making them accessible to all abilities and the imaginative use of gardens, greenery and outdoor views to bring light, colour and a sense of well being into the hospitals. A particular feature of the art installations was their local character and reflection on the history and nature of the hospitals.

"The installed aquarium reflects light in the space, creates something to do, as well as been a nice feature of the hospital building!"

"Games consoles are built into the walls to save space and reduce the risk of infection spread. Dried flowers were also built into the wall panels to try and bring a little of the outside back indoors due to a lack of windows."

"There is a lot of wood and it is good that you can interact with all the wooden features and art in the hospital."

The Youth Panel were impressed with the care and attention that had gone into designing some of the more mundane features of the facilities - even the bins! The clean, sleek lines of the hospitals were helped by stylish accessories that blended into the design approach and palette.
"The good thing about the bins was that, besides recycling, they were stylish and blended in with the surroundings and didn't look out of place. They were very impressive."

The Youth Panel quickly noted the way lighting had been used and noise minimised to create an environment that was calming and reassuring. Lighting was used differentially in clinical, treatment, public and support areas to both assist in marking the change from public to private areas and to help create a healing, supportive ambience.

"The new A&E department mixes clean lines with soft lighting which are soft on the eye and do not overwhelm."

"It has a light and airy atmosphere when you walk in the door, the sound of water, bright colours, and lots of natural light!"

"There are no jarring colours or lights as you enter the hospital - it almost reminds me of an exceptionally large boutique like apartment with clean lines soft lights and functional yet stylish soft furnishings."

All facilities were finished to a high standard, communicating and reinforcing value and respect for patients, carers and families. The imaginative use of design features such as wooden floors, wooden kickboards, neutral colour schemes and a small number of high quality art pieces all contributed to an attractive, healing environment that would be easily maintained and sustainable.
Both hospitals had gardens and external areas that offered additional facilities to the hospital buildings and made significant contributions to the patient experience. These were both attractive and functional.

While the Sick Kids has a city-centre site, Bloorview is located in a suburban area and so had more access to garden space. However, although Sick Kids was significantly more constrained by its location both had designed external areas that reflected and were appropriate to the local area and community. External areas had made creative use of the available land and brought light, views and connectivity with the outside world into the hospitals.

In Bloorview in particular, co-location with treatment areas and wards offered therapeutic space for patients and families to sit, meet and wait and additional play and relaxation areas for patients and siblings.

"It had a great feeling of combining the outdoors with the indoors."

"I liked the outdoor gardens as they were very accessible to all."

![Atrium](image1.png)

![Patio Area](image2.png)

![Sick Kids View](image3.png)

![Garden Area](image4.png)
Our trip in pictures
If I could have just one thing...

"The A&E at Sick Kids"
Lizzie

"The Decor in Bloorview"
Bea

"The Reflection room at Bloorview"
Andy

"Marnie's Lounge"
Lisa

"Internal CCTV like at Sick Kids"
Jaccckie

"Gardens outside like Bloorview"
Alison

"The space/peace and feeling of tranquillity"
Tari

"But I wouldn't copy anything to be honest. I would like something more original. Maybe like the Atrium but not the same."
Joeh
This trip gave the New Children’s Hospital Youth Panel the opportunity to view, discuss and learn from the experience of two world renowned health care facilities in Toronto, Canada.

The generosity of their wonderful Canadian hosts meant that the Youth Panel came away from Toronto full of new ideas, aspirations and ambitions for the care and treatment of teenagers and young people in Glasgow.

This will benefit our New Children’s Hospital as it will make an invaluable contribution to the ability of young people to influence a development of local, national and international significance. The involvement of young people brings experience and fresh ideas to the design of the new hospital thus ensuring that the design leads to an inclusive, supportive, healing environment that meets their needs, interests and aspirations.

The study trip to Toronto has enhanced the opportunity for young people to share their ideas, experiences and hopes for the new hospital and will assist them in making a positive and influential contribution to the services they use.
Who was on our trip?

**Glaswegian Visitors**

New Children’s Hospital Youth Panel

Alison Cloudsley, Elizabeth Imrie, Lisa Kerr, Jacckie Logan, Joeh McSherry, Afribeanne Robertson, Nefertari Robertson, Andrew Williams

Staff

Sarah Brady; Health Improvement Senior, Child & Youth Health; West Glasgow Community Health and Care Partnership.

Daniel Connelly; Community Engagement Manager, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Kate Munro; Community Engagement Manager, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Wendy Taylor; Haematology/Oncology Research Sister. Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Yorkhill

**Canadian Hosts**

Professor Pat McKeever; Senior Scientist, Bloorview Research Institute and Adjunct Scientist, Research Institute, Hospital for Sick Children

The Sick Kids Children’s Council - especially Alex, Kaitlyn, Rebecca and Ryan

Amanda English; Child Life Specialist, The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto

The Bloorview Youth Advisory Council - especially Dan, Crystal, Gabby, Selina, Kaley, Dolly and Ashley

Kim Jones-Galley; Life Skills Facilitator, Professional Practice Leader, Bloorview Kids Rehab, Toronto
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