

Architectural Design Practice and Projects

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Srazali Aripin



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DAYLIGHT IN HOSPITAL DESIGNS

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ABSTRACT

Daylight is part of a healthy environment. In the context of hospital designs, much literature on the healing environment has reached a consensus that the physical aspects of the built environment could indirectly contribute to the health outcomes of patients and staff (doctors and nurses). Among the physical aspects, daylighting is considered one of the most influential factors to achieve visual comfort contributing to a healing environment that is physically and psychologically appropriate. This chapter highlights the role and importance of physical aspects (i.e. daylight) in hospital design.

Keywords: Daylight, Hospital Design, Healing Environment, Lighting

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between natural environment and health is clearly explained in the Hippocratic treatise (i.e. *Airs, Times, Waters and Places*, one of the early classics of medical geography). The treatise basically emphasizes that climatic and geographical factors have strong influence on human health. It outlines what are the common diseases that occur in particular locations, seasons, winds and airs (Deuraseh, 2003). Most physicians accept that illness emerges due to the action of the three factors: disposition (e.g. genetic), stress (e.g. exhaustion) and agent (e.g. pathogen). Whether or not we trace the causes of the illness materially, psychologically or spiritually, environment has a significant role in all parts of the process (Day, 2002).

It is well understood that most patients in hospital wards get little attention from a doctor in a day. Some may get slightly longer daily personal care from nurses and therapists. In most cases, depending on their illness type, patients often remain in the bed with either little to do or just sit (Lawson, 2002). Thus, it is reasonable to accept that the design of the environment experienced by patients may be an indirect factor to their sense of well-being and health recovery. Healthcare designers should embrace the notion of creating a supportive environment in hospital design (i.e. healing environment) that is physically healthy and psychologically appropriate. Inevitably, designing healthcare facilities is a very complex task: both functional and psychological. Healthcare designers are generally expected to conform to various requirements provided by the Ministry of Health (MoH), which has to be in line with