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## VISUAL ART IN HOSPITALS

The fact that the arts and sciences are viewed as two distinct disciplines, and indeed are designated as such, poses immediate problems to a consideration of art in medicine, among the most important divisions of science. Nonetheless, there has always been an awareness of the "art of medicine," as well as an understanding that wellness is impacted by a wide range of circumstances, many of which lie outside the normal confines of medical research.



According to a 2006 report by the Department of Health Working Group on Arts and Health, the arts "have a definite contribution to make and provide huge opportunities in the delivery of greater health, prosperity, and enhanced experience for patients, care recipients, and staff alike."

Art in hospitals is typically regarded favorably by patients and staff alike, although the level of evidence is not universally excellent. Psychological effects to color hue, brightness, and saturation may mediate the effects. Colors that elicit high degrees of pleasure with low levels of arousal are more likely to promote calm, whereas colors that elicit dissatisfaction with high levels of excitement may cause worry. This result, as well as evolutionary psychological theories that predict favorable emotional responses to flourishing natural surroundings, is compatible with the fact that patients typically report a liking for landscape and nature scenes. Contrary to popular belief among some modern artists, patients who are unwell or worried about their health may not necessarily be calmed by abstract art, preferring instead the pleasant diversion and feeling of calm provided by landscape and nature scenes.



Florence Nightingale recognized the use of art in medicine in 1859 and raised themes that are still very important today. 'The effect of beautiful objects, of a diversity of objects, and particularly brilliance of color is seldom at all acknowledged,' she wrote in Notes on Nursing. We don't know much about how form, color, and light affect us, but we do know that they have a real physiological effect. 'The diversity of design and brilliance of color in the things offered to patients are effective ways of rehabilitation.'

Politicians and civil workers are beginning to understand the potential benefits of visual art to patients. Alan Milburn, then Minister of Health, suggested in 2001 that there should be a "early recognition of the value of the healthcare setting to recovery and rehabilitation."

Perhaps the most well-known scientific study of the visual environment and health outcomes is a retrospective study in which 23 patients rehabbing from cholecystectomies in accommodations with windows on to naturalistic environments rather than brick walls had shorter post - operative hospital stays, received fewer adverse evaluative comments from nurses, required fewer moderate and powerful analgesic doses, and had significantly reduced scores for minor postsurgical complications.



Patients and staff alike are generally supportive about art in hospitals. A qualitative review of the Exeter Healthcare Arts Project discovered that the presentation of visual arts in that hospital was seen as having a good influence on morale by patients, staff, and visitors. Frontline clinical professionals believed that the arts had a favorable effect on healing, and 24% said that the arts improved clinical outcomes.

It has been argued that the health benefits of visual art are due to good distraction. The concept that environmental elements can inspire happy sentiments, hold attention and interest, and so lessen stressful thinking is referred to as positive distraction.

There is a substantial body of knowledge on the impact of colors on mood, and it is probable that the colors employed in visual arts are part of the benefit mechanism. Color stimuli can be classified according to their hue (wavelength), brightness (illumination), and saturation (vividness), as well as our emotional responses to them as pleasurable/unpleasurable and arousing/not arousing. Colors that elicit high levels of pleasure while eliciting low levels of arousal are more likely to generate a sense of calm, whereas colors that elicit dislike while eliciting high levels of excitement may cause worry. In the comprehensive investigation by Valdez and Mehrabian, short wavelength blues and greens elicited more pleasure than longer wavelength reds and yellows, whereas no consistent relationships between hue and arousal were detected. Colors that were brighter and more saturated were more pleasurable, with brightness adding more to enjoyment than saturation. In contrast, saturation increased arousal more than brightness.

Reference link : <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2996524/>