



KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

To collect the perceptions of clinicians and design professionals concerning aspects of interprofessional engagement and communication and design process success strategies during healthcare design and construction projects.

Identification of Tools and Techniques to Enhance Interdisciplinary Collaboration During Design and Construction Projects

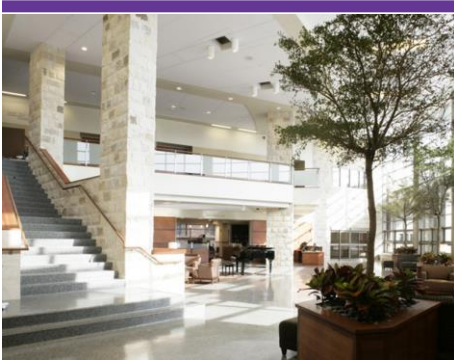
Keys, Y., Silverman, S.R., Evans, J. 2016 | *Health Environments Research & Design Journal*, Volume 10, Issue 5, Pages 28-38

Key Concepts/Context

The design and construction of healthcare environments requires a collaboration of professionals from a variety of backgrounds to produce the best possible results. However, it is not uncommon when these collaborations generate frustrations and miscommunications among the different professionals involved. Nonetheless, the authors suggest that strategies involving interprofessional collaborations could be improved so that frustrations and delays are mitigated while optimal results are still achieved.

Methods

This study gathered qualitative data through an online survey distributed to construction managers, architects, healthcare professionals, and interior designers who were involved in recent new construction or renovation projects in a healthcare context. A total of 144 responses were collected and analyzed. Themes were extrapolated from open-ended answers given by participants, and information concerning clinician involvement in design projects was gathered from nurses, interior designers, architects, and construction managers.



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Findings

Elements of successful interprofessional collaboration were found within three themes that were extrapolated from open-ended survey answers: communication strategies, organizational dynamics, and clinician input. Clinician input was valued by 98% of participants involved, with several architects noting clinicians should have been involved earlier in the process and that they hoped to spend more time consulting clinicians in general. Healthcare administrators voiced frustration when decisions were not communicated clearly or when decisions made at the corporate level were not open for debate. Overall, results showed that teamwork could be jeopardized when a project's organization culture does not foster clinician participation or when there is frequent turnover within the design team.

Limitations

The authors noted several limitations within this study. The number of responses analyzed (144) is a relatively small sample size. While a wide range of perspectives from participants within the healthcare design process was included, the authors note that there is an innumerable number of people who contribute to these projects, most of whom were not included in this study. There was also uneven representation for perspectives in different fields, with architects being the most represented specialty.

Design Implications

This study encourages designers to optimize meeting strategies by ensuring clear communication and understanding between all professional backgrounds during design meetings. Mock-up designs also were found to be highly effective tools during the design process. By involving clinicians early in the process and maintaining a clear communication channels, designers and project managers can help ensure that the optimal result is achieved.

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