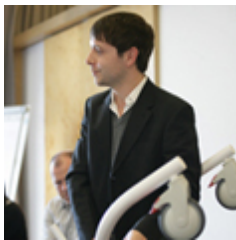




Design Bugs Out: Press Release



Top British designers appointed to 'Design Bugs Out' of NHS hospitals.

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Some of the UK's top designers & manufacturers have been selected to redesign furniture and equipment for NHS hospitals to help in the fight against MRSA and other healthcare associated infections (HCAI's).

The Design Council and the Design Business Association launched a nationwide search in September for teams of designers and manufacturers to redesign furniture and equipment to make them easier to keep clean, and so help reduce patients' exposure to HCAIs.

Thirty-seven designer/manufacturer teams applied, setting out how they would tackle a range of specific design challenges, including redesigning patients' bedside chairs & lockers, commodes and porters chairs.

The five winning design teams include top designers and manufacturers responsible for iconic designs such as Virgin Atlantic's Upper Class airline seats, Herman Miller chairs and Parker Pens.

The submissions were judged by a panel of the UK's most respected experts in the fields of design, healthcare, microbiology, nursing and patient care, including designers Tom Dixon OBE and Richard Seymour (chair of panel), Professor Brian Duerden CBE (Inspector of Microbiology & Infection Control, Department of Health) and Susan Osborne CBE (Chief Nurse, NHS East of England).

The design teams and their challenges are:

Patient bedside furniture – which is easy to clean and maintain, cost effective and sustainable. The winning teams (and their chosen projects) are:

- Patient bedside chair – design consultancy PearsonLloyd (designed Virgin Atlantic's Upper Class seats) with manufacturer Kirton Healthcare
- Patient locker/cabinet – design consultancy Hollington (responsible for design classics including the Parker Pen) with manufacturer Herman Miller
- Patient locker/cabinet – design consultancy Kinneir Dufort with manufacturer Hospital Metalcraft Ltd (Bristol Maid)
- Commode – (portable toilet typically wheeled to a patient's bedside) which is easy-to-clean and easier to use & maintain. The winning team is design consultancy Pearson Lloyd with manufacturer Kirton Healthcare.
- Patient Transport – a porter's chair that is easy to clean and maintain (helping reduce the potential for the spread of HCAs between hospital areas). The winning team is design consultancy Minima with manufacturer Vernacare.

The Design Council was appointed to deliver the project by the NHS Purchasing And Supply Agency (NHS PASA) as part of its HCAI Technology Innovation Programme. This wide ranging programme, funded by the Department of Health, aims to identify and fast-track the implementation of new technologies and design-led innovations to combat healthcare associated infections.

The winning teams have had access to advice by a panel of experts in healthcare, design and patient care. In April 2009, working prototypes will be taken on a national tour of selected hospitals which are taking part in the 'HCAI Technology Innovation Programme'.

Health Minister Ann Keen said: "Patients expect hospitals to be clean, functional and comfortable. Design Bugs Out challenges the UK's design and manufacturing community to come up with new ideas to meet all of these objectives. Furniture and equipment that are easy to clean, will help to reduce healthcare associated infections as well as improving the overall patient experience."

David Kester, Chief Executive of the Design Council said: "This is a terrific illustration of how the power of design is helping to improve public services by finding innovative new ways to tackle challenging issues.

The Design Council is excited to be working with the National Health Service to run this nationally important programme, which I believe will make a great contribution to tackling healthcare associated infections."

Chair of the judges, Richard Seymour – one of the UK's most respected and influential designers, said: "This is the probably the most important thing these designers will do this year – or perhaps in their entire career.

It's a unique opportunity to genuinely affect lives and to leave a lasting legacy, which will continue to help protect people's health for years to come. I am tremendously excited by the calibre of these finalists, and I am looking forward to seeing the product of their creativity and talent. Britain needs more projects like this."

In another strand of the Design Bugs Out project, the Design Council is working with a team of specialists in healthcare-related design from the Royal College of Arts Helen Hamlyn Centre. This part of the project will develop new designs for everyday items used by patients, nurses and housekeeping staff, such as mattresses and blood pressure cuffs. Again, these designs aim to help reduce HCAs by positively influencing behaviour which reduces their transmission or further improving cleaning practices.

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