

Concurrent Session K
Wednesday 2 September
1.00pm – 1.50pm



Session 3
Designing Facilities to Enhance the Student Clinical Placement Experience
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Dr Benjamin Cleveland is a Research Fellow in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne. He manages the research program for the Learning Environments Applied Research Network, which has included research into medical learning environments over recent years.

Tara Veldman is a Director at Billard Leece Partnership, who were engaged to design the new Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne. In addition to practicing architecture in Australia, Tara has worked in the Netherlands and Middle East and has a passion for socially-based design in healthcare.

New approaches to the clinical education and training of health professionals is driving the need to update the design of learning spaces in hospitals and other healthcare facilities. Wider recognition of the benefits of blending formal and informal, and physical and digital learning opportunities is challenging architects to design a wider variety of learning spaces and integrate them into new and refurbished healthcare facilities in support of the student learning experience.

Using the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), Melbourne, as a case study, this paper discusses the influence of new generation learning spaces on students' learning and their overall higher education experience in clinical settings. The Health Education and Learning Precinct (HELP) at the RCH incorporates the seven different types of new learning spaces that the Scottish Funding Council (2006) identified on contemporary higher education campuses: group teaching/learning spaces; simulated environments; immersive environments; peer-to-peer and social learning environments; clusters; individual learning spaces; and external spaces. Briefed in collaboration with the University of Melbourne's Department of Paediatrics, this variety of learning spaces was integrated into the RCH to provide students and teachers with a better overall environmental experience as well as opportunities to develop new approaches to learning and teaching (Bines & Jamieson, 2013).

This paper explores the process through which these learning spaces were developed and designed and describes the types of spaces that are now available to students and health professional educators at the RCH. The paper also explores the subsequent transfer of the guiding principles and design concepts that were developed at the RCH into other teaching hospitals and healthcare facilities in Australia.

Taking a wider view, the paper also discusses the intersections between contemporary learning spaces, curricula and pedagogy in the health professions and highlights the need for change management strategies that aid the alignment of the vision, design and use of new learning spaces.

The influence of education spaces on the pedagogical activities and educational experiences of students and teachers in the health professions has historically not been well addressed in the literature (Nordquist, Kitto, & Reeves, 2013). Indeed, space as a mechanism for enhancing the

student experience and fostering the development of the knowledge, skills, and values required of health professionals may have been largely overlooked. The paper concludes that further research and evaluation (both academic- and industry-based) is required into the influence of space on students' learning and their overall educational experience. Such research is needed to enhance our understandings of the effectiveness of different types of learning spaces in supporting learners, learning, teachers and teaching in healthcare settings.