

Results of the researchers on the social space in hospitals, obtained in the Rehabilitation Children Hospital in Radziszów in Poland.

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Hospitals cease to be treated like a “healing machine” by patients and the medical staff. Treatment facilities should be balanced between strict medicine treatment and the healing space, which has a positive influence on the patient’s mind and body. Attention focusing so far on the medical diagnosis needs to be expanded to encompass sociological, psychological, aesthetical factors. These aspects have not been studied, so it is necessary to initiate new research, draw new conclusions and implement them into the design process.

The paper presents the research results on the social space in hospitals, obtained in the rehabilitation hospital for children in Radziszów, Poland. The social space in the present research was defined as a readily available place for patients, their parents or guardians and staff in the time when no treatment procedures are taking place.

The hospital under study carries a comprehensive rehabilitation for children and teenagers suffering from orthopedic, neurological rheumatic disorders and osteoporosis. The specificity of the treatment influences the obtained information.

Third year students from the Faculty of Architecture at the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice took part in the project. The main aim of the research was to obtain information about spatial preferences and demonstrate the shortcomings of the social space facilities. The data obtained can be useful in showing new directions in designing social space at health care facilities. The following research methods have been used:

- workshop with children 1 – 12 years;
- workshop with teenagers under 18 years;
- interviews with patients ‘parents and teachers;
- surveys with doctors, nurses and medical staff.

During research interviews several research tools appropriate for each target group have been used:

- art classes;
- drawing classes;
- projects;
- surveys;
- interviews;
- notes;
- photographic analysis etc.

The study showed children’s likes, needs and dreams. The awareness of these can help to cure patients faster than without it.

The study indicated that there is no leisure rooms for fun, science or recreation. The author also indicates free spaces and room possible to be arranged or rearranged for these purposes.

The undertaken analysis has shown that social spaces are required. Studies showed how the variety of social spaces could satisfy users’ needs and indicated the time when the patients could use it.

The results have been summarized, interpreted and translated to the “architectural language”, which makes the presented project a source of valuable information helpful in the designing process.