

# Improving Patient Experiences in Victorian Emergency Departments



Promoting a positive patient experience for older people in the ED

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# Context

- Victorian Auditor-General's report *Managing emergency demand in public hospitals* (2004)
- Audit of 25 Victorian Emergency Department waiting rooms (2004)
- Government investment into improving patient experiences over four years (2005)

# Key Priorities

Audit of Victorian ED waiting rooms

Consumer research

Improving Patient Experience Program

## Physical amenity upgrade

- Internal environment
- Facilities
- Special needs

## Communications enhancement

- Consumer information materials
- Signage Improvements
- Workshops for frontline staff

## Policy development

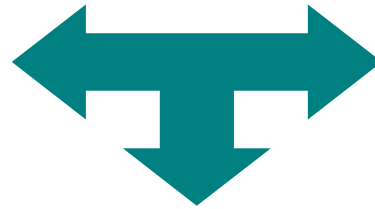
- Volunteers
- Waiting room management

# Improving the older person experience

Emergency Access Reference Committee

ED-Audit Sub-Committee

Aged Care Sub-Committee



Improving the experiences of older people

**ED environmental audit**

**Older person consumer  
research**

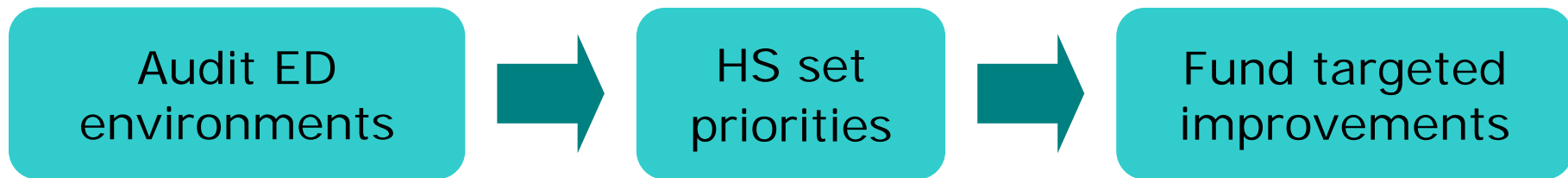
# Improving the experience of older people

## Project components:

### 1. Research

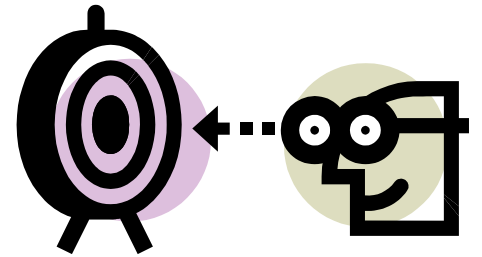


### 2. Create 'older friendly' ED environments



# Create 'older friendly' ED environments

The aims of the audit were to:



- build local and system capacity
- link EDs into broader activities
- ED environment meets the special needs of older people

# The Tool

*Improving the environment for older people in Health Services: An audit tool*

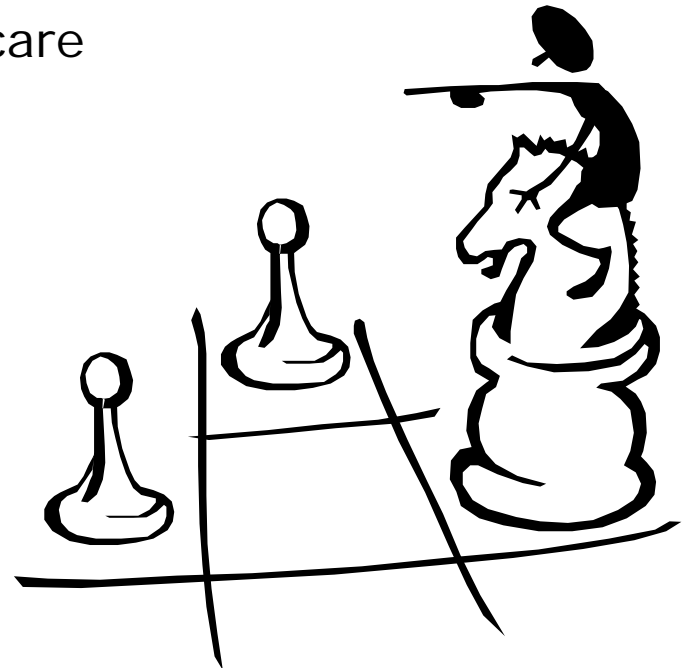
Available at:

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/older/audittool.pdf>



# Strategy

- Link with program areas in DHS
- Invitation to health services
  - Use *Improving the environment for older people in Health services: An audit tool* (2006) in ED
  - Link with COAG LSOP and Improving care
  - Identify priorities and submit tool
- Fund improvements
  - Physical amenities
  - Signage
  - Furniture and equipment
- Evaluate system-wide findings



# Findings

Overall improvements since the previous audit of ED waiting rooms in 2005

- comfort and privacy in ED waiting rooms
- lighting
- access to food, drink, public toilets and telephone
- flooring
- wayfinding and signage
- access to quality information materials

# ED Environment

External areas, entrances and hallways:

- uses line markings on the floors within the ED
- hand rails

Call Bells:

- work
- flexibly positioned
- easily accessible



## IDEA

Purchase next generation hand-held nurse call devices

## IDEA

Improve access to triage desk for patients in wheelchair by adjusting the height of the triage desk



Night time:

- night toileting
- noise levels

# ED Environment

## Flooring:

- floor strips
- replace carpet
- constant colour
- resurfacing works

## Equipment/ furniture:

- trolleys
- doors
- hoists
- phones
- portable step
- commodes

## Orientation:

- window to outside
- clocks

## Environment Adaptation:

- policies and consistent practice

### IDEAS

Increasing the volume of the taxi phone

Mobile Cisco telephones which are adjustable for the hearing impaired and can be used for interpreter/ family consultation at patient bedside



# ED Environment

## Bathrooms/ toilets:

- bathroom fittings
- bathroom aids
- renovation

## Patient cubicle:

- bedding
- trolleys
- tables

## Visual perception and lighting:

- handrails in a contrasting colour to walls

### IDEA

sensor lights in toilets



# ED Environment

## Signage:

- adequate wayfinding
- eye level and on the floor
- Use of colour
- familiar icons or symbols
- text is easy to read

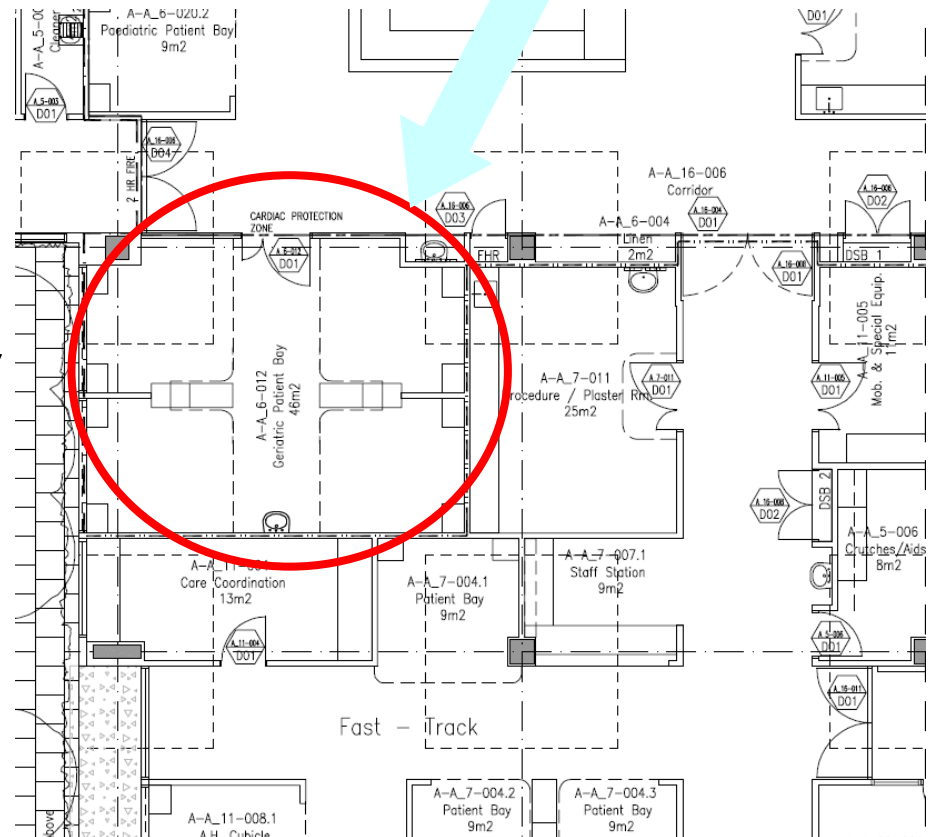
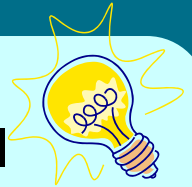


# Challenges for EDs

- Appropriate level of stimulation:
  - noise is minimised
  - under-stimulation is avoided
- Mood enhancement/comfort:
  - natural views
  - windows

## IDEA

Dandenong Hospital redevelopment 2009  
New geriatric bay designed for older people



# Summary

- Primary outcomes
  - Improved physical environment in ED
  - EDs were linked into broader health service and system wide activities
  - Improved physical, social and environmental features in the ED and waiting room
- Secondary outcomes
  - System wide understanding
  - inform ongoing policy initiatives

