

Review of Victorian public hospital outpatient departments

Physical amenities, communication and information



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Presentation Overview

Review of the physical amenities, communication practices and information materials in Victorian public hospital outpatient departments

- Project rationale
- Objectives
- Method
- Findings
- Next steps

Review of Victorian public hospital outpatient departments
Physical amenities, information materials and communication practices

Introduction
The Victorian Government is committed to providing high-quality, patient-centred care. This review was conducted to assess the physical amenities, information materials and communication practices in Victorian public hospital outpatient departments. The findings will inform the development of a new standard of care for Victorian public hospitals.

Objectives
The aim of this review was to:
• Identify the current state of physical amenities, information materials and communication practices in Victorian public hospital outpatient departments.
• Compare the current state of physical amenities, information materials and communication practices in Victorian public hospital outpatient departments to international best practice.
• Identify the key areas for improvement in Victorian public hospital outpatient departments.

Method
The research methodology included:
• A literature review to identify international best practice.
• A survey of 23 Victorian public hospital outpatient departments.
• Focus group discussions with staff and patients in Victorian public hospital outpatient departments.
• A review of the Victorian Standard of Care for Outpatient Services.
• A review of the Victorian Standard of Care for Information Materials and Communication Practices.

Findings
The review identified several key findings:
• Physical amenities: Victorian public hospital outpatient departments generally score lower than international best practice in terms of physical amenities, such as waiting areas, seating, and lighting.
• Information materials: Victorian public hospital outpatient departments generally score lower than international best practice in terms of information materials, such as brochures, leaflets, and websites.
• Communication practices: Victorian public hospital outpatient departments generally score lower than international best practice in terms of communication practices, such as staff communication and patient engagement.

Recommendations
The review identified several key recommendations:
• Improve physical amenities: Victorian public hospital outpatient departments should improve physical amenities, such as waiting areas, seating, and lighting.
• Improve information materials: Victorian public hospital outpatient departments should improve information materials, such as brochures, leaflets, and websites.
• Improve communication practices: Victorian public hospital outpatient departments should improve communication practices, such as staff communication and patient engagement.

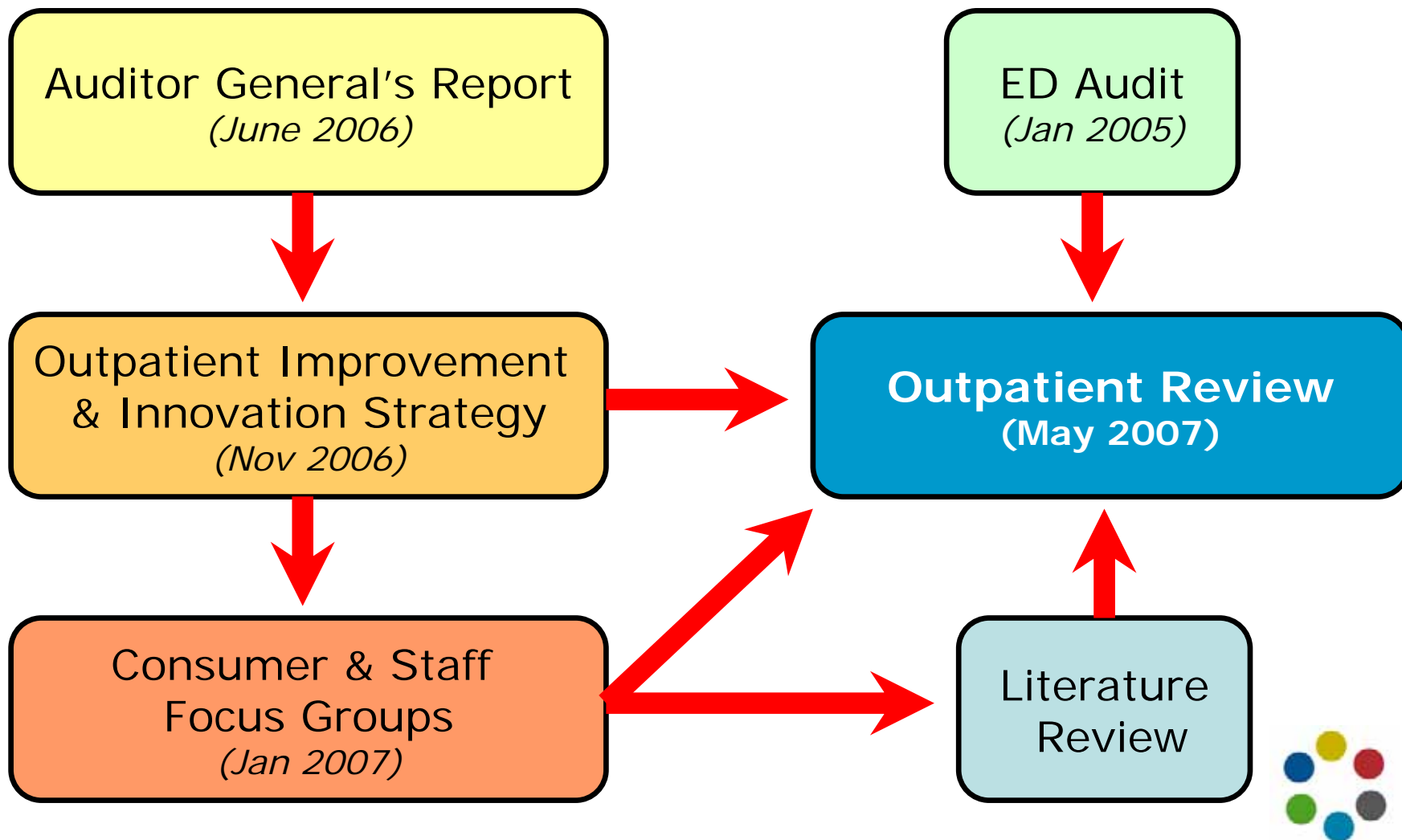
Conclusion
The review identified several key findings and recommendations. The Victorian Government is committed to providing high-quality, patient-centred care. This review was conducted to assess the physical amenities, information materials and communication practices in Victorian public hospital outpatient departments. The findings will inform the development of a new standard of care for Victorian public hospitals.

Examples of good practice from the review

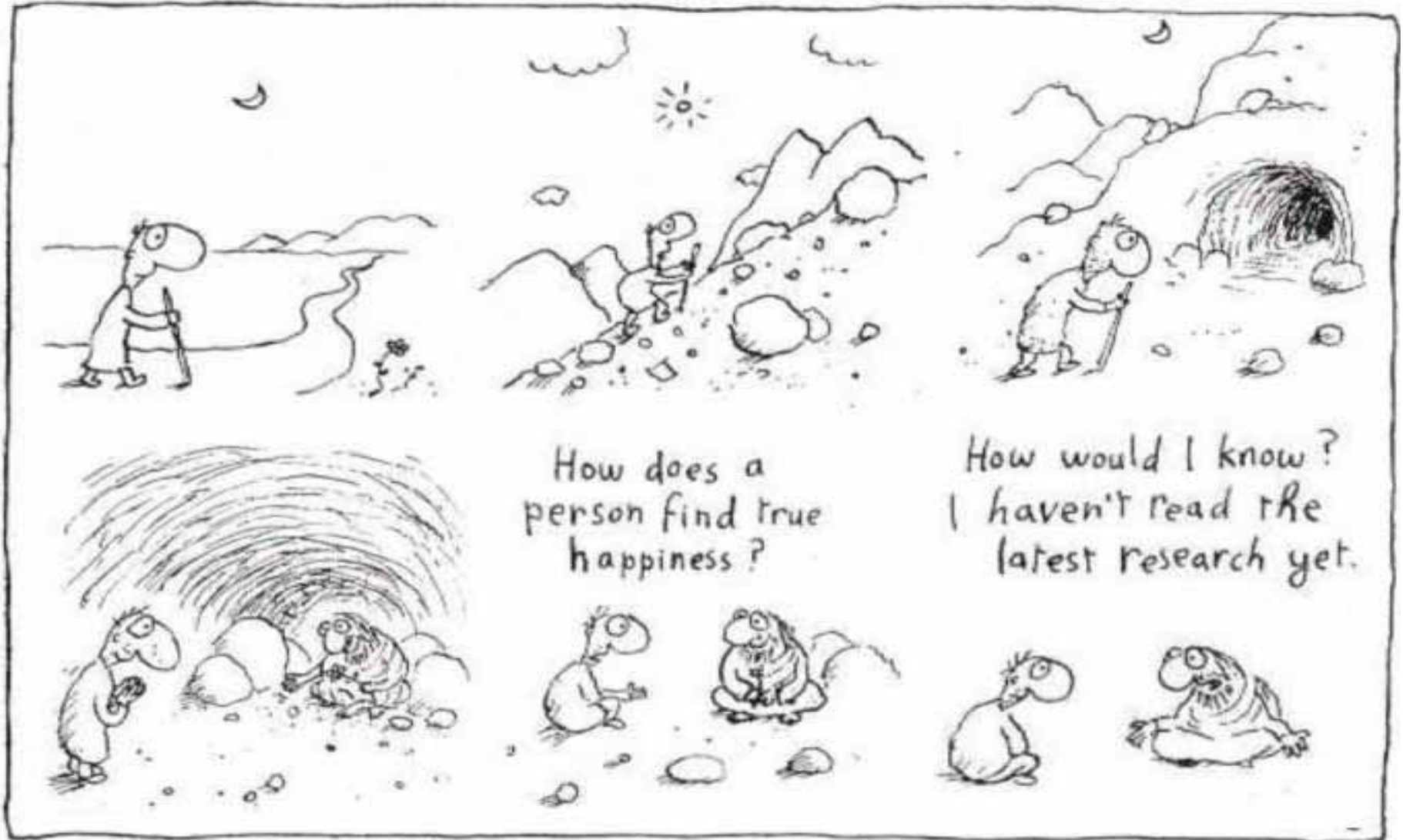
Department of Human Services
A Victorian Government initiative



Project Rationale



How to improve the outpatient experience?



Literature Review

Different aspects of physical amenities, communication practices and information materials in health care facilities linked to:

- Clinical outcomes
- Perceptions of quality of care
- Satisfaction
- Safety
- Stress



Key Objectives

1. To evaluate the current state of physical amenities, information materials and communication practices in outpatient departments at Victorian public hospitals.
2. To identify examples of good practice and design.
3. To identify areas that may benefit from improvements.



Method

- Development of an Outpatient Review Tool
- Contractor trained
- Conduct tours of outpatient areas and complete tool
 - 23 metropolitan hospitals and 5 major regional hospitals
- Data collated, analysed and findings evaluated
- Recommendations and feedback given



Review Findings



Way finding and Signage - External

- Poor placement
- Lacked logical flow
- Insufficient number
- Unclear content
- 82% had multiple outpatient locations
- Inconsistent names
- Easy to follow at 36%



Way finding and Signage - Good Practice



Seating

- 71% indicated there were times when there were not enough seats to meet demand
- Most provided seats with padding 82%, arm rests 89% and durable materials 96%
- Able to monitor seating from reception area at 64%
- Seating could be moved into small flexible groupings at 89%



Seating

- Adequate spacing between seating for mobility devices at 29% of outpatient areas
- Variable seating available for
 - Disabled patients (60%)
 - Bariatric patients (36%)



General amenities and physical environment

- Good access to general amenities
 - Public phones (93%) and Taxi phones (86%)
 - Drinking fountains (82%) and vending machines (57%)
 - Toilets (100%) and disabled toilet facilities (96%)
- Most had climate control (89%) and natural lighting (68%)
- Half had visible clocks
- Usually well maintained 86%



Children and Families

- Play items for children 75%
 - Infection control issues associated with play items
- Baby changing facilities present in 75%
- Facilities for nursing mothers present in 25%

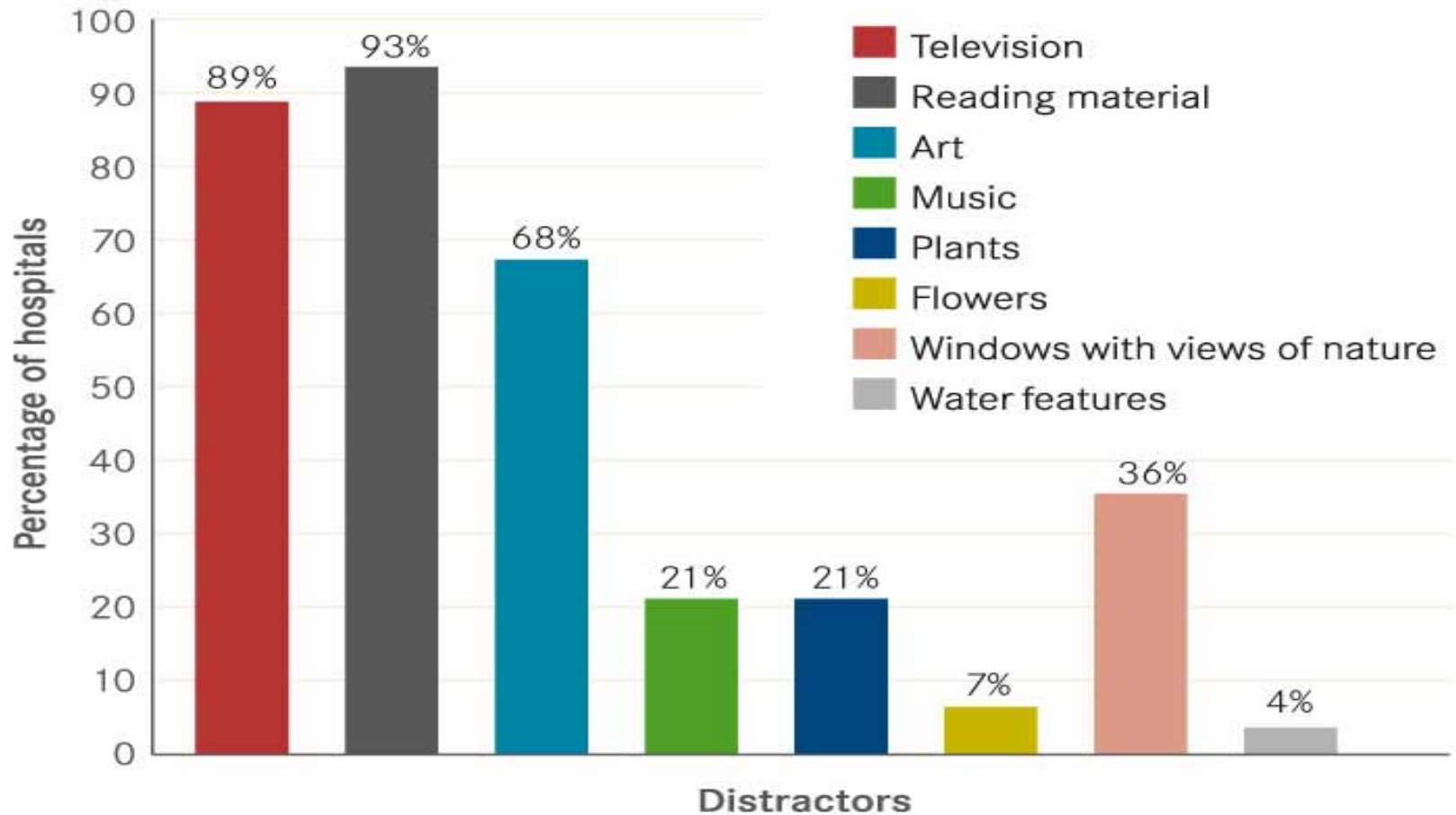


Children and Families – Good Practice

Designated areas designed and furnished for children in 54%



Positive Distracters



Consulting Rooms

Most rooms had phones 93%, computers 89%, basic examination equipment 86% and design features to maintain privacy 79%



Communication Practices

- Reminder system in use or on trial for 46%
 - Letters (21%), phone calls (25%) and SMS (14%)
- Waiting time notification provided in 61%
 - Verbally (57%), PA System (11%) and Visual Display (7%)
- Call-back systems used in 7%



Information materials

- Patient health information materials usually available (86%)
 - Half provided in languages other than English



Staff Communication Training

- Training programs were often available for outpatient staff, however these varied in terms of content, comprehensiveness and frequency:
 - Customer service 82%
 - Aggression management 89%
 - Cultural diversity awareness 64%
- Many had a one-off programs without a review process



Feedback and Recommendations

- Individual site specific feedback
- 21 system-wide recommendations
- Areas recognised as a priority for targeted improvements
 - The state of physical amenities
 - Communication training for outpatient staff
 - Way finding systems

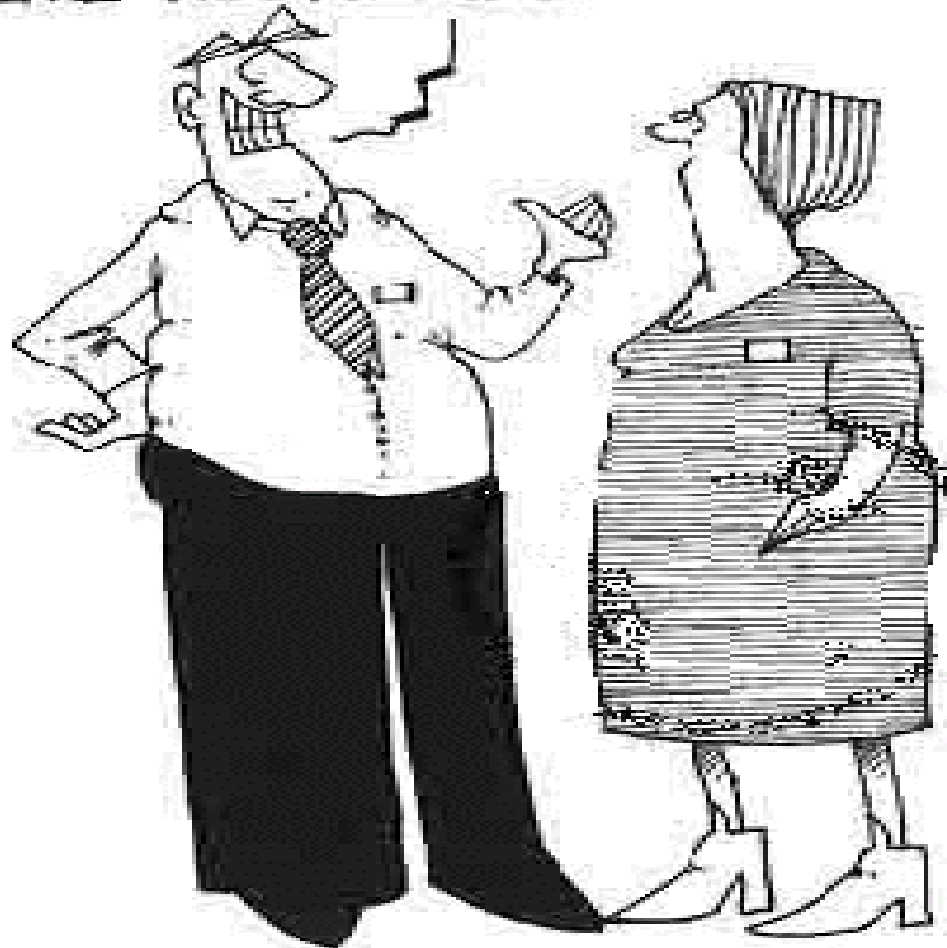


Upgrade Physical Amenities

RECOMMENDATION:

Health services should consider an upgrade of physical amenities to improve the comfort and safety of outpatient areas. Particular attention should be given to meeting the special needs of patients (e.g. children and families, disabled patients and elderly patients)

THE REDESIGN HAS MADE THE WAITING ROOM A MUCH MORE TRANQUIL PLACE...WE SEALED UP THE ENTRANCE!



Improve Way finding and Signage

RECOMMENDATION: Hospitals should consider increasing the effectiveness of their way finding systems to promote simple navigation to and from outpatient areas. This may include clear external building cues, a logical physical layout, signage, verbal directions and informational handouts/maps.

A statewide standard for signage should be developed by The Department of Human Services to encourage consistency across all outpatient departments (for example, standards outlining type, size, placement and frequency of signage).



Enhance Staff Communication Training

RECOMMENDATION:

A standardised training package should be developed by the Department of Human Services that incorporates customer service, cultural diversity and aggression management modules and is delivered to frontline staff across outpatient services in Victoria.



Next Steps

Improving the Outpatient Experience Program
(September 2007)



Key Priorities

Physical amenities
upgrade

Communication training
For outpatient staff

Way finding and
signage improvements



The Future - A Positive Outpatient Experience



Further Information

- Outpatient Reform Team
- <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/outpatients/>
- Report
- Poster



Questions

