



KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this inquiry was to develop an understanding of the way nurses travel in the common areas of a unit and inform future design decisions.

Design lessons from the analysis of nurse journeys in a hospital ward

Nazarian, M., Price, A., Demian, P., Malekzadeh, M., 2018 | *HERD: Health Environments Research & Design Journal*. Volume 11, Issue 4, Page 116-129

Key Concepts/Context

This article outlines a method that was used to determine how nurses travel in the corridor and common spaces of a single nursing unit. The purpose of exploring nursing travel was to understand routine activities and use this understanding to design units that support shorter walking distances.

Methods

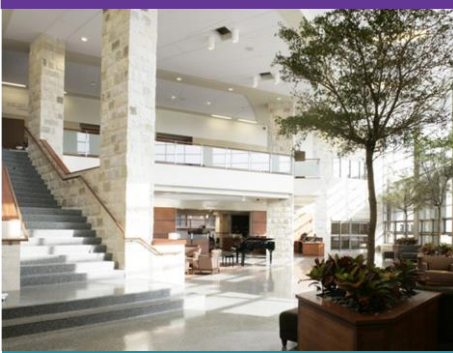
Researchers observed nursing unit staff to understand the impact of the unit layout on nursing operations. Head nurses, nurses, nurse assistants, and housekeepers were observed and recorded using researcher-developed forms. Forty-two staff members were observed over 120 hours during different shifts. Patterns of travel and frequencies were analyzed to inform recommendations for future design considerations.

Findings

The centralized nursing station was the location most travelled to and from. There was a 5-way tie between the locations with the second-most frequent visits (staff room, isolation room, double-occupancy rooms). The third most frequented locations were more routine in nature and fell into two different categories: a) trips to provide care to patients in single-occupancy rooms, and b) rounding activities including medication administration, reporting, linen changes, and cleaning. The fourth and final category of frequency occurred rarely if at all during a shift.

Limitations

Data were collected from a single nursing unit in a single facility and therefore cannot necessarily be generalized. Furthermore, the article would have benefitted



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from an operational definition of ‘treatment room’ which seemed to be a combination of medication room, supply room and documentation space which may not necessarily reflect universal unit design.

Design Implications

The authors recommend that patient rooms be located such that they are near the nursing station and in a way that would allow them to be accessed in one round trip from a centralized location. Furthermore, the authors summarize their conclusions in a proximity matrix that might allow designers to prioritize adjacencies. A final design implication from this manuscript emphasizes the need to work with nursing teams to understand work patterns before and during redesign projects.

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