

Wood in psychiatric in-patient rooms may reduce the length of stay for patients

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Please observe: There is an on-going discussion about the design of the study and if the suggested outcome could be used as a measure for recovery. Today there are no approved ethical state or formal decision made by the hospital.

Abstract

Objective – To explore healthcare outcomes for psychiatric patients within an in-patient psychiatric ward. This planned study was initiated as a follow-up from effort during the design process to add interior surfaces of wood in a new Swedish psychiatric building.

Background –The influence of the physical environment for treatment outcomes within somatic care has been acknowledge for decades [1, 2]. Today there is also a growing amount of research within the field of psychiatric health facilities [3, 4, 5, 6]. View of, and access to, nature have shown to be of the major importance. Recent research suggests that wood in patient rooms may have a healing effect [7, 8, 9].

Research question – May wood in psychiatric in-patient rooms reduce the length of stay for patients?

Method – The quantitative study will be executed in a new Swedish psychiatric building consisting of 96 in-patient rooms in 4 wards, each divided into three modules (6 patients/module). The study has a comparative approach; treatment outcomes in a module where patient's rooms with wood covered facade-walls (n=3) will be compared to rooms with painted plaster façade-walls (n=3). Patients in the module, intended for a special but general diagnos, will be placed randomly in rooms with or without wood surfaces. The staff and how rooms are orientated are identical between rooms. All patient rooms are en-suite rooms.

Results – Final outcomes from the study will be carried out first after the new psychiatric building is inaugurated in 2020. A reduction in length of stay is expected related to lower stress level in wood furnished rooms.

Conclusion – As the design of the study is on-going, no conclusion can be presented at this point.

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Keywords

Healing architecture, Psychiatric wards, Wood.

To be considered within the guiding topic of:

1. health promoting architectural and urban design

In relation to the research approach of:

- A. evaluation of the design's quality

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