The Design & Dignity Project
Transforming End of Life Care, One Room at a Time

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Background

The aim of the Design & Dignity Project is to fund exemplar capital projects in public hospitals in Ireland, transform the way hospital spaces are designed for people at the end of life and set the standard for other hospitals to follow.

This is a partnership project between the Irish Hospice Foundation and the Irish Health Service Executive (HSE).

The Design & Dignity Project originates in the award-winning Hospice Friendly Hospitals (HFH) Programme which was launched by the Irish Hospice Foundation in 2007. Ground breaking research commissioned by the HFH Programme found that many Irish hospitals are old and poorly designed. The impact of this can be immense for the person who is dying, for their family and for hospital staff. To address this, the Design & Dignity Project was launched in 2010 and so far has awarded grants to 17 Irish hospitals to fund 23 capital projects.

Phase 1
Through Phase 1 (2010-2013) over €1,500,000 was awarded to 11 hospitals to fund:

5 family rooms (2 with adjoining gardens)
4 mortuary renovations
1 bereavement/viewing suite in an emergency department
1 bereavement room for parents in a maternity unit

Upon completion, Design & Dignity projects have secured local and national media coverage.

Project Impact and sharing knowledge
A style book was developed from the phase 1 projects. The style books gives guidance and advice for building projects relating to end-of-life care in hospitals.

Design & Dignity Guidelines were updated. These guidelines have now been adopted by the HSE for all new building and refurbishment projects.

Phase 2- building on what we’ve learned
Further funding was secured in 2014 for the Design & Dignity Project. Via a revised application process €570,000 was awarded to fund 12 projects across 9 hospitals including:

8 family rooms (2 with adjoining gardens)
2 mortuary renovations
1 bereavement suite (comprising of a viewing room, family room and garden)
1 patient en-suite bedroom

Building work will commence in early 2015.

For more information, video footage and photos see www.designanddignity.ie or contact jackie.crinion@hospicefoundation.ie

February 2015