Bedside Manners: Lessons learned from Design Practice in Healthcare

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Workshop theme

No one can doubt the unique situation in which Design practice finds itself in healthcare. It is heralded by some as the panacea for an ailing system that demands innovation whilst experience suggests that 'health and social care' is a context with its own particular set of challenges to the design approach. In recent years there has been growing interest in the potential of design approaches to transform health care. Reports by UK organisations including NESTA (Horne, Khan & Corrigan, 2013), Demos (Parker & Heapy, 2006) and The Design Council (Cottam & Leadbeater, 2004) discuss the need for and benefits of both using design methods and involving a wider group of patients, communities and health professionals in the development of public services. However, these papers focus on the results of such co-design (or co-production) to demonstrate their value and there is little discussion of how designing operates to explain its unique usefulness and assist its adoption. There are many drivers for health service reform; a rise of long term conditions, an aging population, a health service that has evolved to deliver acute care rather than primary care, reduced funding and increasing expectations from an increasingly informed population. These are some of the key challenges to society today, and ones that require a new way of thinking, a radical step change in the ways we deliver care, innovative approaches.

Workshop description

This workshop is the opportunity to bring together practitioners delivering service design in 'health and social care' to critically reflect on the highs and lows, the successes and challenges of working in this area. The workshop is facilitated by the User-centred Healthcare Design (UCHD) Team. UCHD is a five-year project funded by the United Kingdom National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) as part of the Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) for South Yorkshire. The project is multidisciplinary, drawing on experience in health and design; specifically methods that come from a rich tradition of participatory design research. Over the past five years UCHD have undertaken a

series of case studies exploring the use of design in health culminating in the Better Services by Design project, which looked at sharing design methods with teams from 'health and social care'. UCHD have undertaken a comprehensive evaluation identifying the aspects of the design process that resonated with partners and identifying the key differences that design brings to a service improvement/service design project.

Health and social care as stated previously has a unique set of challenges for design and designers, these might include:

» Issues around access to vulnerable populations, the ethical and governance framework that surrounds such access.
» The language barrier between health care and design, from both perspectives.
» Barriers from different professions to particular methodological approaches.
» Perceptions from health and social care as to what design is.

The workshop is the opportunity for the service design in health community to identify the range of these challenges, and to reflect on strategies that have worked, or might work, drawn from experience.

The workshop participants along with the facilitators will be encouraged to bring stories that describe challenges from their own practice. Participants will deliver short presentations describing the context for the challenge and then a consensus process will prioritise the top five challenges.

Participants will move between the five challenges and be facilitated to devise strategies to address them and describe the practical steps required for each of the five case studies to overcome the challenges. The presentations of context and the final five solutions will be presented as scenarios and recorded to produce a short film that will be edited and shared with the service design community.

Workshop outcome

Using service design methods is not straightforward in the context of health and social care and there are unique challenges for designers and design researchers working in this area. There is a critical mass of activity taking place in this context and it is paramount that as a community we learn from each other. Using experience and recognising the contribution from other professionals and professions there is a great deal of learning and knowhow that the community can draw upon. This workshop looks to pull this experience together to develop practical advice that will allow service design to move forward and to leverage the benefits of these approaches for staff, patients and carers.

UPDATE: The Outputs of the workshop can be found at http://www.bsbd.org.uk/lessons-learned/ thanks to all our participants!

References

Cottam, H. & Leadbeater, C. (2004). *RED Paper 01 Health: Co-creating Services*, Retrieved from: http://www.designcouncil.info/RED/health/REDPaper01.pdf.

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