

KICKING UP OUR HEELS

A project at Great Ormond Street Hospital
March 2019 – March 2020

www.gosh.nhs.uk/wards-and-departments/departments/gosh-arts

Artists: Emily Speed, Emily Underwood-Lee, Brian Lobel
Fabrication: Plaey
Graphic Design: Europa
GOSH Arts: Caroline Moore, Susie Hall
Reflection & Evaluation: Anna Ledgard

Kicking Up Our Heels was an arts research project conceived by Dr Emily Underwood-Lee and Dr Brian Lobel with Emily Speed and created in collaboration with GOSH Arts and parents and carers with children attending Great Ormond Street Hospital. Fabrication was undertaken by Plaey and Graphic design by Europa. The project was supported using public funding by Arts Council England and GOSH Arts. Dr Emily Underwood Lee is a research fellow at the University of South Wales. Dr Brian Lobel is a lecturer at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London.

The team thanks the parents and carers for their input into the project and their generosity in sharing their stories.

Report written by Anna Ledgard
April 2020

1. SUMMARY and PROJECT VISION

Kicking Up Our Heels (KUOH) used performance and visual art to involve parents/carers (PCs) of children at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) in considering their own wellbeing as primary carers. Artists Brian Lobel and Emily Underwood-Lee invited PCs to take part in a playful performative 'survey' about how they nurtured and looked after themselves whilst caring for a child in the hospital. In their responses parents were encouraged to get beyond the notion of the 'good parent' who subjugates their needs for those of their children. The responses were used by Emily Speed to design a permanent artwork, *Cocoon*, which was installed at GOSH in February 2020 and was accompanied by a paper booklet *You are Doing a Great Job*, which incorporated ideas and activities offered by parents to improve their own and others' wellbeing.

2. PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- to engage parents/carers at GOSH in creative activity (a group until now not involved in GOSH Arts activities) and help GOSH Arts make the case for funding more provision for this group
- to commission experienced performance artists thus developing GOSH Arts' breadth of art form practice and approaches to engagement
- to support parents/carers to engage creatively with their own self-care
- to find out how parents/carers are currently supporting themselves/each other whilst at GOSH
- to create an artwork generated in consultation with parents which encourages them to take time for themselves
- to create a paper resource which includes advice from parents for parents in taking care of themselves
- to facilitate an integrated reflective process to develop GOSH Arts understanding of parents' needs and creative ambitions and therefore support us to be bolder and more responsive in our delivery and future programming for the family as a whole.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 GOSH Arts

GOSH Arts is a cross arts participatory programme offering meaningful cultural opportunities across a variety of art forms for patients, families and staff. GOSH Arts sees the hospital as an arts centre, it is a place where families receive not only world class health care but, whilst they are here, they will also experience and have the opportunity to engage with world class culture as well. GOSH Arts' work plays an essential role in enhancing the hospital experience at GOSH. Engaging with visiting artists and having art integrated into the buildings helps to create more relaxed spaces, less clinical environments and contributes to reducing stress and anxiety for visitors and staff.

3.2 PROJECT RATIONALE and DESCRIPTION

Evidence suggests that self-care by parents and carers is of benefit not only to their wellbeing, but can also improve health outcomes of their child, as seen in Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing APPG Report, July 2017, pp 85. The experience of those working on this project suggests that parents and carers don't invest in their wellbeing because their attention is on their children. Hospital resources too are predominantly and naturally focused on supporting patient wellbeing, with less consideration of parent and carer needs.

Performance artists and academics Brian Lobel and Emily Underwood-Lee spent five days talking to 100 parents and carers at GOSH over a period of two months. They wore colourful dressing gowns and masks, and adopted personas, heightened versions of themselves, and invited parents to have a conversation with them about how they look after themselves. A carefully and deliberately planned playful approach encouraged parents and carers to take a momentary break from their role as 'parent' and to consider themselves first. The planned 10 minute encounters sometimes lasted for up to 40 minutes and were reported to be overwhelmingly enjoyed by parents. Each intimate encounter allowed participants to imagine their desires and to visualise the places and activities that brought them comfort, whilst then considering ways in which their own needs might be addressed without creating feelings of guilt at putting their needs before those of their children. They were also invited to give advice to other parents on taking care of themselves. The 100 encounters generated a rich resource of imaginative and practical information to inform the next stage of the project (see Appendix 1).



Figure 1 Brian Lobel and Anna Ledgard talk with a parent

After the interventions Brian and Emily worked closely with visual artist Emily Speed. In response to the collected conversations and ideas of parents, Emily Speed devised an immersive visual artwork *Cocoon* representing a metaphorical parent/carer playground which has been installed as a space for parents and carers in Bear and Panther Wards at the hospital. The installation was accompanied by a booklet, *You are Doing a Great Job - Advice from parents for parents on taking care of yourself at Great Ormond Street Hospital* which, alongside the artwork, encourages parents and carers to engage with self-care and can be used by staff at the hospital to promote self-care conversations with families.

"ADVICE FROM PARENTS

1. You have to eat properly and sleep well, as much as you can.
2. As they say, 'If you are going through hell, keep going'.
3. You're not on your own.
4. You can do this!
5. When you hit the wall, remember....you are here.
6. Sometimes we don't need to say anything.
7. Don't be shy to ask! People want to help"

- Extract from '*You Are Doing a Great Job*'

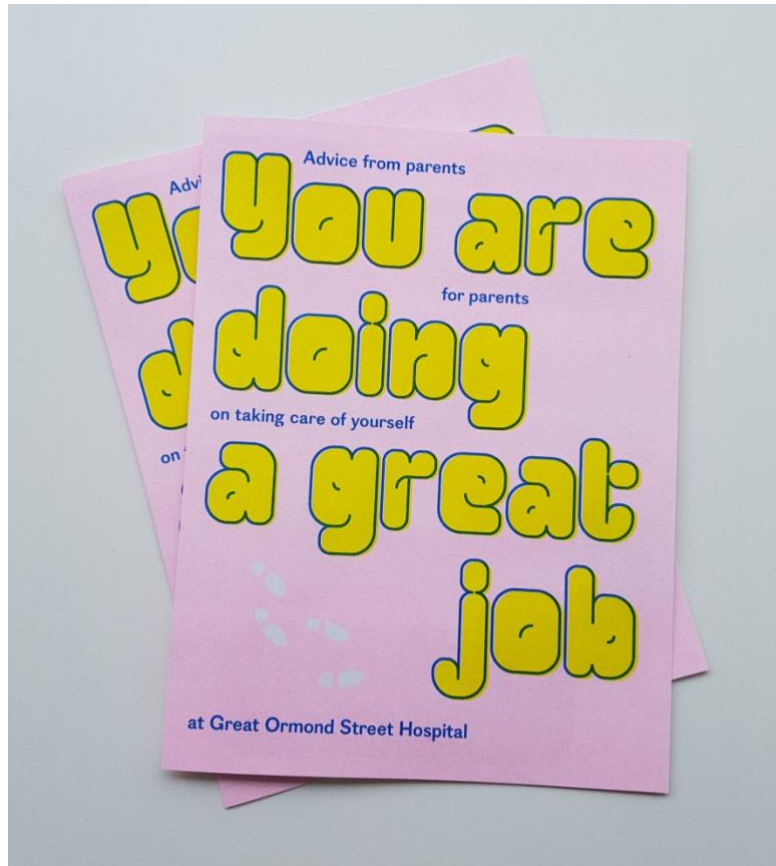


Figure 2 You Are Doing a Great Job - Advice from parents for parents on taking care of yourself at Great Ormond Street Hospital

4. LEARNING: Planning and Project Conception

- 4.1.1. An experienced project coordinator (Caroline Moore) led on project development with consultation at each stage with artists, play team, nursing staff and patient experience leads. The 'translation' in this role between the languages of clinical care and arts practice was an important factor in the success of the project and resulted in a collaborative approach to planning and a project which both met the priorities of GOSH Arts and the hospital and gave artistic freedom to the artists. GOSH Arts also took on the practicalities of the ACE application process and financial management leaving the artists free to focus on the job of making art.
- 4.1.2. Experienced Team: Caroline had curated the team who had not worked together before, but some of whom had considerable experience of working directly with patients within the NHS and/or had their own experiences of illness or caring for a sick child. The team worked very well with shared values and a high degree of trust. Caroline was responsible for the liaison with staff and play workers to ensure that the

hospital staff understood the purpose and schedule of the project.

- 4.1.3. Institutional Preparedness for art: The perception of the visiting artists and team was that interactive, relational art is supported and valued by GOSH as an institution. GOSH Arts is a familiar and valued part of hospital provision so staff expect artists to be present in complex clinical settings. Artists reflected that they felt secure and 'embedded' within the hospital.
- 4.1.4. Reflective framework: Anna Ledgard had been brought in to shape a reflective framework around the work. This involved regular facilitated individual and group reflection both during planning and whilst artists were working on the wards. When working in a complex NHS environment this enabled flexibility and responsiveness so that artists felt supported and able to adjust activities in response to their own and others' needs without compromising their artistic practice. All collaborators reflected on the rich learning that was taking place throughout the project across the team, and noted that the reflection process was of great value and the role of the external evaluator was essential in this project.
- 4.1.5. Issues:
 - NHS email accounts cannot accept certain external emails – lead to problems in communication.
 - Scheduling meetings with a busy team from across the UK was time-consuming.
 - A responsive approach requires flexibility and the project manager invested more time than she had anticipated in this project.

4.2. LEARNING: Artistic Approach

- 4.2.1. Both Emily Underwood-Lee and Brian Lobel had their own experiences of hospital illness, and, for Emily Underwood-Lee, caring for a child in hospital. Whilst most staff in hospitals would be encouraged to leave their personal experience at home, the artist in this instance had a different role. Clear that they were not in the hospital to share their own stories, both artists acknowledged that they were leading from personal experience and this could be important to building trusting relationships with parents/carers. Occasionally when it felt right Emily introduced the fact that she had also been the parent of an ill child in hospital, and Brian was able to say that he had been an ill child in hospital. The revelation of these personal narratives served to strengthen moments of empathic connection, thus building trust between artists and

parent or carer. Both artists also reflected on the risk for them of such work in difficult intensive care contexts taking them back to their own negative experiences of illness, but they acknowledged that they felt safe and were grateful that their own wellbeing was considered in the reflective debrief conversations and flexible planning which was responsive to emotionally draining time on the wards.

4.2.2. Interestingly some parents and staff reflected that the project was 'not really art' and therefore were more prepared to engage with it. This is a reflection of the perception of art as requiring particular skills and not for everybody. In fact parents were being invited to imagine another reality, to visualise an alternative present or future, and to imagine how things could be different – all vital aspects of the creative process.

4.2.3. Issues:

- Artistic approach - Less is more. Emily Underwood-Lee and Brian Lobel learnt that their 'artistry' was about getting the invitation to engage right. The original plan for a cabaret style approach was not necessary. The dressing gown and light costume touches were enough to signal that the artists were bringing something novel and different. Instead of the familiar uniforms of hospital roles, they were clad in the domestic garments of comfort and care: soft slippers, fluffy dressing gowns and sleep masks. Brian and Emily's warmth and humour sparked curiosity and engagement from the majority of the parents/carers they approached.

4.3. LEARNING: Engagement with Parents and Carers

4.3.1. The project offered a formal approach to encouraging parental self-care. A funded external project can focus attention on a key issue, in this case prioritising parental self-care which can be seen as secondary to the care of children. An artist reflected 'it was strangely radical to work with parents in a children's hospital'.

4.3.2. Introductions of artists to the wards: it is vital for the artists to be introduced on the wards either by someone who knows the setting and the staff or by someone who knows how to advocate for the arts in a clinical setting. On the one occasion when artists were introduced by a less experienced host fewer parents took up the offer of engagement.

4.3.3. There was a high take up of parental involvement (80% of those who were approached took part). Most of those who declined did so for understandable reasons (clinical

procedures/other visitors etc.). When compared with the uptake of other parental surveys the artistic approach had a considerably higher uptake. Some analysis of why this is so would make for an interesting piece of research.

- 4.3.4. The team experimented with coming in at different times of day to find out what worked best for parents in different parts of the hospital.
- 4.3.5. The focus on the parent was much appreciated but often parents would play safe, initially agreeing to see the artists for 5 minutes, but on many occasions stayed for up to 40 minutes. Staff could see the project's importance for parents and made sure their children were supported during this time so that parents could have time for themselves. Both artists were struck by the deep shame felt by parents about deserving self-care when their children are so sick.
- 4.3.6. Brian Lobel and Emily Underwood-Lee spent time observing on the wards and talking to staff before the project began, observing the way the wards worked, and the demands on staff and parental time. This was vital to project design, and final art works design.
- 4.3.7. Issues
 - Flexibility on the part of the artists was essential as they learnt when were the best times to talk to parents.
 - The team did not collect contacts of the parents we had worked with on the ward, so could not then go back to them and show them what came from the conversations.

4.4. LEARNING: Translation into *Cocoon* design, construction and installation

- 4.4.1. The project was ambitious and complex in terms of combining two separate artistic practices into one physical outcome – the installation on the ward. The process of translation from a set of encounters with parents/carers led by Emily Underwood-Lee and Brian Lobel into a design concept made by Emily Speed was generally smooth, although delays and difficulties in scheduling face to face meetings hampered progress at times. Emily Speed's openness, interdisciplinary approach and capacity to listen and embed the ideas and views of parents into *Cocoon* were vital to the success of the collaboration. Emily Speed appreciated the way the artists distilled the parents' views into a series of needs and priorities. Feedback from staff and parents at the draft design stage was also facilitated with adjustments made in response e.g. USB port and cup holders.

- 4.4.2. An unexpected and very positive addition to the collaboration was the involvement of Plaey. This brought another dimension to the design team. However both Plaey and Emily Speed needed more time at each stage.
- 4.4.3. The production of the booklet *You are Doing a Great Job* was smoothly managed by graphic design studio Europa. The only regret was that there was a limit on how many of the parents' comments could be used.
- 4.4.4. Issues
- The site was key to the design of *Cocoon*. Could this have been identified earlier?
 - An 'arts' group made up of hospital staff could have been convened earlier to consider the technical/health/safety aspects of the design of *Cocoon*.



Figure 3 Cocoon – Installed in Plaey's Workshop

- 4.5. LEARNING: Unexpected outcomes at GOSH
Caroline Moore, GOSH Arts Manager, has identified a series of additional outcomes. She suggests that the approach of the artists and its success in eliciting parental experiences of GOSH have changed the attitudes and behaviour of staff across the hospital in a number of ways.

- 4.5.1. By observing the artists at work, the project created space for clinical staff to reflect and share practice and learn from each other about their approaches to caring for the parents/carers of sick children.
- 4.5.2. It has encouraged non-clinical staff groups to consider and discuss how they support parents/carers better whilst they are at GOSH.
- 4.5.3. The focus on parents has raised awareness across the hospital of the importance of supporting parents/carers.
- 4.5.4. GOSH Arts has been able to demonstrate the ways in which creative consultation can effectively and efficiently gather information from parents and carers.
- 4.5.5. Caroline also pointed to the useful contribution of the material generated by the project reflecting parental experiences to the development processes for 2 new building projects at GOSH.
 - The design brief for the Children's Cancer Centre, a new £258 million clinical building
 - A patient experience led review of the parent/carer spaces in the Morgan Stanley Clinical Building and Premier Inn Clinical Building.

5. PARENTAL AND STAFF FEEDBACK

At the point of writing this report *Cocoon* it had been in place for 2 weeks. Gathering responses was then interrupted by the Coronavirus pandemic. It is suggested that further feedback is gathered once *Cocoon* has been in place for 6 months.

5.1. Play Therapists

Feedback from the first week:

- improve signage to the Cocoon
- make it clear that this is a resource for parents
- label the feedback box and make more visible
- encourage staff to point it out to parents as a resource for them
- pillows could soften the edges and make it more comfy
- feels peaceful and calm
- would be easier to unwind and disconnect if it was more enclosed

5.2. Parents/Carers

9 parents/carers offered feedback, either circled words on feedback form or suggesting ideas for changes.

- private calming space
- now we know what it is, we will use it
- not keen on the holes, like that it is tucked away
- calming, useful
- tranquil, quiet, peaceful

- idea is great – make it larger and with quiet music
- fantastic idea
- make it more comfy and enclosed...looks like somewhere for kids, make seat higher
- relaxed
- I caught up with emails there
- different
- surprising

In response to the question: In the Cocoon I felt:

- relaxed, calm, great little secluded area
- enjoyable, calm
- comfy, feels happy
- safe, calm. I like the way it faces the window



Figure 4 Cocoon Installed at GOSH

6. INVOLVEMENT FIGURES

A total of 94 parents, carers, children and siblings took part in the project and met the artists on the wards. This represented a range of

different clinical ward settings including oncology, renal, cardiac, gastro, neurology, respiratory, dermatology and orthopaedics. Of these there were extended encounters with 57 parents and carers which took place without children present.

Location	Parents Met	Date	Parent/carer/children/siblings	Adults only
Giraffe, Lion, Elephant	5 encounters	11/6/19	10	5
Bear	6 encounters	11/6/19	13	7
Eagle	9 encounters	18/6/19	17	8
Squirrel	4 encounters	18/6/19	9	4
Unknown	12 encounters	8 & 9/7/19	15	12
Eagle, Pelican, Koala, Elephant, Lion, Leopard	Unknown	8/7/19	17	10
Unknown	Unknown	9/7/19		3
Sky Ward	5 encounters	15/7/19	13	8
TOTAL			94	57

7. FINANCES

Total cost of the project was £23,234. The ACE grant £14559 and GOSH Arts contribution £8675.

8. CONCLUSION

Arts participation in hospital settings can bring meaningful engagement across the dimensions of patient care; in this case valuing the experience of the parents and carers of patients, giving the professionals around them an opportunity to see them in a different light, as well as producing sensitive and beautiful art works. This collaboration had at its core a number of foundational principles explained in this report and summarised here.

The project was led by an experienced project coordinator who understood how to 'translate' between the languages of clinical care and arts practice and who facilitated a collaborative planning process which both met the priorities of GOSH Arts and the hospital and gave artistic freedom to the artists.

The artist team was highly experienced and well-prepared. Before the project began they had visited the wards as observers and met staff. They brought confident communication, warmth and humour to the wards, sparking curiosity and engagement. They stayed faithful to the ideas and contributions of parents and embedded them in the artistic outcomes.

Experienced team members with skills to advocate for the arts and mediate with both parents and clinicians accompanied the artists on the wards, ensuring high take up by parents and carers. The hospital demonstrates an institutional preparedness for art and offers a genuine welcome to artists in its most complex clinical wards.

Acknowledging the challenges of working in complex, and at times emotionally draining medical environments, the project included a reflective practice framework with opportunities for regular debriefing and a flexible approach to scheduling activities, responsive both to the needs of parent/carer participants and the artists themselves.

The project successfully demonstrated the ways in which creative consultation can effectively gather information from parents and carers. It also raised awareness across the hospital, both with clinical and non-clinical staff, of the importance of supporting parents/carers, who play such an important part in the whole care of the child, often neglecting their own needs in the process. The valuable information gathered from parents about their self-care needs will be used in the design brief for the new Children's Cancer Centre and the patient experience review of Morgan Stanley Clinical Building and Premier Inn Clinical buildings.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

PARENTAL RESPONSES (full)

Places that might go on a map of the hospital and local areas

- Playroom
 - The staff here will play with your children
 - Parents can do a jigsaw too
- Sainsburys/waitrose / 24 hour tesco
 - Buy food
 - Be around people who are normal.
 - For somewhere to walk to
- Bed 10 (sky ward) has amazing view from Balcony over London
- The Shabbat room.
- In the canteen outside there is a Xylophone – for playing together
- the park
 - for breakfast
 - for a latte
 - to observe people
 - to sit on a bench
 - to sit on the grass
- The Mary Ward café
 - Good value
- Coram fields
 - For a walk with or without your child
- Brunswick Centre
 - To create a ritual
 - To buy food and get an ice cream
 - For a meal out
- underneath the archway
 - Nipping out for a fag, or chatting over a vape
 - To get fresh air
- the lagoon,
 - to chill out in the day and be around people
 - to go at night when it is quiet
 - to listen to the animal sounds
 - there are vending machines here
 - to get food
- Costa.
- Digital space, social media
 - To share fears,
 - For a pick me up
 - For community
- The Reef
 - To be with other kids.
 - To take sibblings
 - To play
 - To see other people
- The Chapel

- it's nice to sit there and take in life
- Morgan Stanley garden
- The parent's kitchen/sitting room
 - for tea or water
 - to sit down
 - to read a magazine
 - to play cards with other parents after the kids have gone to sleep
- In the empty bathtub
 - Just to feel it around me.
- Oxford St
 - To go for a meal with other parents
 - For fun shopping in Zara
 - Close enough that you can get back quickly if your child needs you
- the parent hotel
 - For a good night's sleep when the children are being looked after
- Colour in the hospital (perhaps we could also indicate where artworks are installed)
- the Queen's larder pub
 - does a nice ploughman's"
- the church the other side of the square
- the corridors
 - to talk to the nurses, play workers and other parents
- Covent garden
 - To go to the cinema with my child
 - For fun shopping

Advice from parents that might go into a parent leaflet

- I have found that people in London are not all rushing and busy, they are incredibly helpful.
- Don't be shy to ask! People want to help.
- the medical care is amazing
- request bed number 10 in Sky Ward
- don't worry about any medical issues, this is a safe place, everyone is here for you, everything is ready for you
- If you share and speak together with other parents it would be relaxing
- Sometimes we don't need to say anything.
- Your local hospital is likely to be worse.
- This place has money that the Royal Free doesn't.
- This is the best hospital in the world for children. The most child-friendly hospital. When we finally got here we was...well, wow!. Whoever gets to GOSH I can say you are lucky.
- I will make you a cup of tea and a biscuit
- He Will Get Through This
- It Will All Be Worth It
- I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
- I put my child first, that makes me happy
- When you hit the wall, remember... you are here.
- You look after you.
- You'll get better.
- This is the best place.
- Talk to other parents.
- Be social.

- What are you in for?
- It will all be ok.
- Keep yourself busy.
- This is the best place. Not one I like to stay but...
- There are other options. There are always options
- Be at ease
- Just ask
- You know where we are
- No worries
- Be Positive
- Relax
- God will do good for us
- Go with the flow. How the water goes
- Never give up
- You're never alone
- Just think about today
- it won't last forever
- we are in a boat together
- you'll get through this – you will get stronger
- you can do this
- Talk to one another
- try not to get too stressed out
- there's a camaraderie in it
- Talk to other parents
- you're not on your own
- It's been a journey
- Don't get too stressed out
- It's not the end of the world
- Think positive thoughts
- if you are going through hell, keep going
- do you want a cup of tea?
- do you want to play a game?
- you are in the best possible place you can be
- Have faith in yourself and the doctors and nurses
- there is a big lift that can be fun
- you can do this, you can
- you have to eat properly, as much as you can
- you are such a good parent
- your child will like coming here
- Be positive, what god does for us is always good
- Don't be afraid to ask
- I'm here if you need me

Fantastical environments that people want

- -Technology is an escape – can keep in touch with friends, without having to talk about whats going on here. Normal life is escape.
- -It would be a beach, white sand, clear sky, just the noise of the water and maybe family nearby. Cold drink, a sprite or a 7up. I don't want any music, just sea and birds.
- A proper bed, a separate room for the patient and family with a nice view
- Lying down, resting

- I'd go to a spa with my daughter. At Christmas, maybe a week in a spa, with a sea view, palm trees, the Caribbean,
- a bit of the Amazon (I'm from Bolivia), the sounds of birds, and water (no music), eating mangos and tropical fruit with my daughter. Leaving the men behind.
- Or by a Salt Lake in Bolivia.
- A fairly large room comfy sofas, beige, head sets, art therapy, a balcony and greenery and a view. A cappuccino with chocolate (of course), back massage, swimming pool, gentle exercise on your back. Because we parents have to lift and handle our children and it is our backs that go.
- Don't Worry Be Happy
- You Are My Sunshine
- Birdsong
- Night Fever
- Nice sandy beach, having a drink by the pool. Smell of lavender. Sunglasses. Big summer hat. Place to drop the child off - don't want them far away but want some quiet.
- Disco lift - maybe only 2 minutes in length. With this mother, we spoke about a Friday night disco dance party at Addenbrooke - when they brought in music and lights to have a bit of a dance.
- Sensory Room for Adults.
- A Marshmallow Couch
- A really modern, really chilled out, like boutique-hotel vibe space. With LED Lights, and lots of freshly washed, clean linen. No disinfectant smell. No bleaches. Surrounded by photos of my family, especially those who are not here every day.
- Have a vape, watching telly, massaging arm chair/lay-z boy, cup of coffee, low music... no distractions. Watching really mind-numbing television like Bargain Hunt. Because dad is ex-military he doesn't really ever relax. "We're supposed to protect and provide."
- Just like you're at home. Smells like a spa... Smelly candles. Mood lighting. Colors. Reading a book with slippers. Listening to the radio. You get used to the beeping,
- Holiday, with the kids. Big villa. Swimming pool. Infinity pool. Peaceful so you can hear the birds. Soothing. No phone charger. Archers & Lemonade. All the alcohol.
- HOME. Most of his life was here in hospital.
- America, for treatment, anywhere for her.
- Cricket pitch. Outdoor. Good weather. With light food, sandwiches, chicken, tuna sweetcorn.
- Game Space. 42" or 50" decked out with snack machines, crisps, chocolate, coffee bar. Proper gaming chair. Xboxes. All by myself.
- Disneyland, want him to enjoy the space with a parade. FULL OF PEOPLE THAT YOU CAN SEE BUT DON'T NEED TO INTERACT WITH.
- Having 4 hands (helper always) which is better than 2 hands. Dream space: sleep, with someone to look after them.
- GOSH needs a concierge.
- Bright, peaceful, nice settees and a coffee bar. My dream space would be screen-less, with Kiss FM or other peaceful music, with nice images and pictures of people. In the space, I want to be treated like everyone else.
- Spa. The sea. Madeira. You can see the sea all around. Stormy waves, dangerous. But on the other-side, a lagoon. When you're at the sea, you

receive good energy. Go to listen to the sea. You feel at home. Here (in the hospital) you don't feel peace so you need to stop and breathe in.

- Home for a normal day. Laundry. Washing. Cooking in my own kitchen. My stuff. Eating Mac +cheese.
- An indoor/outdoor situation with a fairly large room with a comfy sofa and bays so that you could either be around people, or be by yourself. Everyone who is listening or watching something is wearing headsets so it is silent.
- There is an art therapist helping with a crafting corner, and someone who helps you so that you don't feel embarrassed. There is a balcony with greenery and a coffee machine with biscuits. Back massages are free and there is a swimming pool available. There is also gentle exercise (pilates / yoga) for those with bad backs (particularly for those who have developed a bad back via lifting their children).
- I'd like a Tuesday spa day – or something regular to look forward to in the week
- A park with open air and rain and mist and sun and heat – I really miss the rain and the cold
- an aspect to look out on, looking away from somewhere comfortable and quiet
- somewhere to have a breakdown when your child is asleep
- a brain emptying machine
- a space to forget about my situation
- a racing car and a sofa made of marshmallows
- A space where I could take [child's name] with me
- somewhere to go for a walk with her in the buggy in the sunshine
- Colourful flowers – daffodils and purple crocuses
- A disco in the lift as you come in, just for a couple of minutes
- I need to feel the touch of rain
- I'd like a space with fish and a space with art
- a mural of kids work to see what the children are able to do
- comfy sofas
- a big TV
- art from then the kids have finished treatment
- a hot bath on my own
- a night in a hotel on my own
- I don't care what space or what bed – so long as I am left alone to sleep
- a dark room and someone to look after my child... anyone, someone who doesn't hate children and has no criminal record
- a floaty sensory deprivation space
- greenery instead of Disney characters
- I want house plants
- fresh air
- open sky
- a video game store
- a spa
- a Jacuzzi
- a big fluffy cloud that's soft for sleeping floating in the sky
- a social space for other parents
- Jasmine growing
- Issy Miyake perfume
- smells of outside

- somewhere to smoke and drink coffee by myself
- white and purple flowers
- pink clouds – like the Shrigley room at Sketch
- a dressing gown
- a facial and massage – a really good head massage
- a coffee machine
- a water machine
- lots of juice
- somewhere you can smoke
- Comfortable chairs
- a picture of a sunset
- complete quiet
- silence
- I really want to have no sound
- You are my Sunshine
- Tina Turner – Proud Mary
- Eminem – Venom
- Slow jams
- 'adult music'
- Whatever the latest music is
- Sea sounds
- 70's disco – night Fever
- Music to sing along to
- home with my child, my blue and white couch and food that I make myself
- everywhere around the world, near water and lakes
- a temple near water makes me feel near my parents event though they are far away
- a room for parents, to get your eyebrows and hair done – straightened or plaited, in here I just shove it in a bun. I'd like threading and waxing or a cut and colour. Purple colour.
- A massage
- A space where kids are allowed but I wouldn't take mine
- Australia, it would be my daughter's dream. Anything that makes her happy makes us happy. A beach, relaxing, great cafes, great nature, great friends, whales in the ocean and decent coffee
- private pods where you can't see grief on people's faces, the sound of the ocean. Somewhere I can cry without people seeing me and where I don't have to see my own grief reflected back on me on their faces. I don't look in the mirror anymore
- a massage. The massage therapist is always booked up. I'd like a massage, a spa where you could go for a swim, a ladies only pool. I would get restless in a hot tub. I'd like calming music and watermelon juice.
- I'd like a platform where you can meet other parents
- a beach, sand, waves, sun. A Greek beach. Aqua sea, cliffs round the edges. A nice cocktail. Sex on the beach. In a bikini. My family are there but doing their own thing. I have a book
- horses, I'd ride horses
- Steel band music