“KEITH”

St Vincent’s Hospital/RMIT University School of Art DVD Project

A world first concept to improve the environment for patients waiting in emergency department beds is being unveiled at St. Vincent’s Hospital in Melbourne on Thursday the 30th of March.

“KEITH” is a unique initiative between St Vincent’s Hospital and emerging artists from RMIT University’s School of Art.

It is a specially developed DVD project designed for a six bed ward at the Accident/Emergency department of St Vincent’s Hospital, with animations and videos created specifically to serve as a positive distraction for the patients.

It involves the installation of TV screens in the short-stay unit at St. Vincent's Hospital emergency department, linked to a central DVD player playing a series of short videos and animations. They were produced by RMIT University School of Art students, and patients will hear audio through disposable headsets kindly donated by Qantas.

St. Vincent’s Health emergency director Dr Andrew Dent said that “Boredom and lack of stimulation are two of the problems facing patients in emergency departments. After they have received their initial treatment, they may have to wait several hours to be further observed or admitted to a ward.”

“By their nature, emergency department cubicles provide very little environmental stimulation,” said Dr Dent, “so patients can easily become bored, frustrated, worried or restless.”

RMIT University School of Art Lecturer Keely Macarow said, “Art students enthusiastically grasped the initiative to create new videos and animations for the emergency department. They spent 2005 researching, producing and project-managing this innovative DVD project as a coursework initiative.”

“Groups and individual students have made input to both the artistic and developmental aspects of the DVD”, said Ms Macarow, “and the diverse range of works they have produced address themes from the boredom of domestic routines to adolescence and obsession. By providing a DVD featuring a broad range of creative short features, we hope that patients will be more relaxed and their time in emergency will pass more quickly,” said Ms Macarow.

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