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# Design for Patient Dignity

17.08.2009 Briefing note

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To: Patient Groups

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From: Design Council

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The NHS is committed to providing patients with privacy and dignity, as well as excellent standards of clinical care, during their stay in hospital.

The elimination of mixed sex accommodation is an important aspect of this commitment and the government has pledged to accommodate all patients in segregated facilities unless there is an overriding clinical justification for doing otherwise.

Hospitals have made great progress in providing single sex accommodation in recent years and the Department of Health has asked the Design Council to develop a programme that will identify how good design practice can help support its strategy for eliminating mixed sex accommodation and improving patient privacy and dignity. With particular emphasis on achieving retro-fit solutions for existing estates, the department has asked us to explore how the effective use of design could:

- **Help hospitals eliminate mixed sex accommodation.** This will generally be through physical or environmental design concepts such as new forms of partitioning or model layouts for wards or bathroom areas
- **Help hospitals maximise privacy and dignity where it is not possible to provide complete segregation immediately.** This may include looking at issues such as the design of acute wards and would encompass service or process design as well as physical design concepts.

## Patient group interviews

As part of our wider research and to assist us in this project we are keen to talk to NHS patients who have recently come out of hospital/care to discuss their thoughts and experiences (regarding mixed sex accommodation and wider dignity issues).

We need to conclude these interviews by **1 September** and are considering arranging them either in an informal round-table session in Central London or through one-to-one interviews with up to 10 recent patients in their homes (reasonable expenses will be paid).

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