

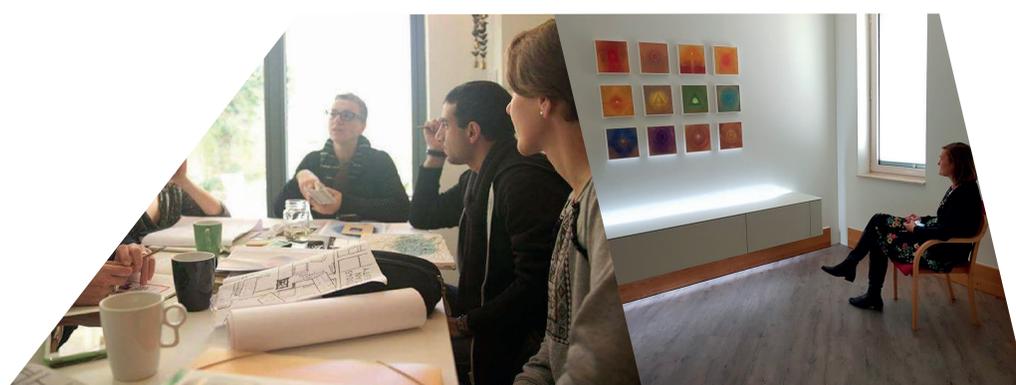
# Design and Art Interventions

## Interview Room Day Ward

### Company: Deep Shelter Project (DSP) Artist residence programme at the Sir Anthony Mamo Oncology Centre (SAMOC)

## What was the challenge?

When patients are informed about their condition and the therapy that will be put into place, they are invited to the interview room. It is a small room, without windows and with bare walls. It is positive to have a private room for this delicate procedure, but it does not really ease the anxiety of patients and relatives. The challenge was to make the room a more welcoming and bearable space, keeping in mind infection control measures.



## How design helped?

A group of staff, artists and designers was brought together to reflect on the challenge. The first exercise was to identify the positive elements about the room, then problematic issues were identified and finally the group looked at what needed/could be changed. Obstacles to possible change were also identified. A mapping scenario was created showing all possibilities, opportunities or threats and all negatives outcomes. This led to the identification of minor interventions that could be put into place immediately, and changes to the room that needed a bit more time to realise.

A series of other workshops, this time only attended by artists, focused on the latter. They looked at the room following the session with the staff. As mentioned the room presented two main problems; it has a very small size and no window present, which leads to it feeling claustrophobic and desperate. Thus the group focused on how to attenuate this problem and support the emotional and psychological processes happening within the interview room. Thus to respond to these physical and psychological challenges, possible strategies and approaches were outlined and a way forward was identified.

To get inspiration for the designs and the art works that could lighten up the space the group of artists went into the countryside. The pictures taken and the impressions gathered at Gnejna Bay and Dingli Cliffs became the basis for the creation of possible art works and design interventions for the interview room.

The whole process to arrive from challenge to final installation of the works will take about a year, because the collaborative and reflective process are key and because implementing the works within a hospital setting takes time.

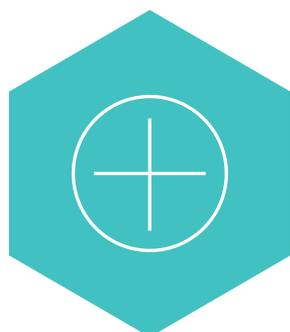


## What is the impact?

As yet, the art and design interventions for the interview room are not in place. Instead we can look at a similar project - the Multifaith room in the Palliative Care Unit, which has been completed recently. This room has had a very positive impact on the patients as well as the staff. It is a space that is free of religious symbolism but has a strong spiritual, containing feel to it. It is a place where one can feel held and where one can find the aesthetic balance that helps one to connect with the self.

The interventions to the interview room are part of a broader project entitled 'Deep Shelter Project' (DSP), an artist in residence programme at The Oncology Centre (SAMOC). Using collaborative research, it aims to bring art-based modalities through a series of sensory-based workshops for patients and staff, as well as art works and design interventions into this clinical space. Together they aim to support the patients in their journey and the staff in their daily work.

The programme started mid-2016 with artist Pamela Baldacchino as coordinator. It is part of Valletta 2018's Artist in Residence programme. By now one notices that DSP is slowly changing the atmosphere in what was a bare and clinical building. It shows that collaboration and interaction between artists, staff and patients can lead to a more liveable environment.



*Improved hospital environments*

**Design4Innovation partner: Valletta 2018 Foundation**  
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