

Neuropsychologically Friendly Environments

Physical Environment Checklist

People who are homeless often have cognitive difficulties due to factors such as brain injury, learning disability / educational issues, physical health problems. These can result in problems with:

- Vision
- Cognition (e.g. memory and attention)
- Hearing
- Physical / mobility

The following is a cursory checklist for supporting the development of a neuropsychologically-friendly environment.

Outside space

- Wheelchair accessible
- Doorbell / intercoms at an accessible height
- Ramps in place of steps
- Well-lit
- Paths, doorways and other entrances contrasting in colour / lighting to other areas
- Safe and secure communal area, both sheltered and open
- All visitors, regardless of ability, able to access the same entrance

Office area

- Clearly labelled function
- Staff photographs, names, and roles easily visible
- Reception desk at a height suitable for wheelchairs

Wayfinding and function

- Clearly labelled rooms
- Colour-coded hallways and rooms, with contrasts between different areas
- Rooms with the same function (e.g toilets) have the same colour décor / same doors
- Accessible office area enhancing connection
- Signage in large print
- Good colour contrasts, light against dark (e.g. light yellow / dark blue)
- Different textures as a marker between rooms
- Plain, not patterned flooring

Internal space

- Light switches, door handles, and handrails at an accessible height and in contrasting colour to other surrounds
- Wheelchair accessible doorways, tables, and other furnishing
- Seating accessible to people of different heights and physical abilities
- Multiple communal areas, range of sizes
- Options for light dimming
- Accessible lifts between floors
- Transparent panels between doors
- Suitable number of accessible toilets
- Hearing induction loops
- Soft furnishings, pictures etc in good condition and regularly updated

Additional spaces

- Counselling / Therapy room
- Medical treatment room
- Storage spaces
- Occupational therapy kitchen area
- Workshop space for vocational activities
- Recreational activity spaces with a range of activities in good condition and regularly updated