

Sharing the impact of your support

Thank you to Gafael Llaw for bringing magic to Alder Hey

The oncology distraction room is used daily by patients undergoing treatments such as chemotherapy, injections, nasogastric tube insertions, and other procedures, helping to alleviate the stress and anxiety often associated with medical treatments, providing a calming environment that supports patients' emotional and psychological well-being.



Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool

The room has had a transformative impact on both patients and their families, offering a safe, immersive, and engaging atmosphere that enables relaxation and reduces procedural distress.

In constant use throughout the day, the room accommodates many of the children and young people that we treat every day, serving as a space for preparation before treatments, distraction during procedures, and recovery afterwards. The interactive display scenes — such as aquariums, cityscapes, and nature themes — create an engaging distraction from the procedure that is being carried out.



The technology allows children to engage with the soothing benefits of nature from their hospital bed

Patients can choose their own visuals, with aquatic life being popular among younger children and cityscapes appealing to our older patients. Soft background music and dim lighting further enhance the calming atmosphere, helping patients and families relax before or after procedures.

The distraction room has reduced anxiety and improved coping for many patients. By providing children with engaging visuals to focus on during procedures, the room has helped minimise anxiety and discomfort in what can so often be a difficult and distressing time for both patient and families.



The aquarium setting is incredibly popular with patients

The room has also helped to enhance procedural outcomes. By calming patients beforehand, staff can perform procedures like inserting cannulas or administering injections more effectively.

The distraction room has become especially valuable for challenging procedures which require a greater level of cooperation from our young patients, which can be challenging for them at such a stressful and unusual time. Post-procedure, the room provides a soothing environment for recovery, ensuring patients leave in a relaxed state.

Our Senior Health Play Specialist
Pip Bradshaw told us:

One of our patients found great comfort in watching a cityscape that reminded him of a trip to Barcelona, transforming a stressful experience into a manageable one. Many of the parents and families have also expressed gratitude for the distraction room, which offers them a moment of calm during emotionally taxing situations, with mums and dads often spending some time in the room after a procedure to take a breath and to recover from a stressful day.”

“One young boy, nervous about an upcoming procedure, found comfort in watching an animated digger on the screen. His fascination with the scene helped him stay calm throughout the process. In another case, a dad who was overwhelmed after his daughter’s treatment spent time in the distraction room. With dimmed lights and soothing visuals, he was able to relax for 20 minutes, enabling him to face the rest of the day with renewed strength.”

The oncology distraction room has proven to be a vital resource, enhancing the treatment experience for both patients and their families. Its calming environment, interactive features, and ability to provide distraction have significantly improved patient outcomes and emotional well-being.

Thank you!

Your generous contribution has made this possible, helping us create a space that truly transforms the care experience for our patients.

Our door is always open to you; if you would like to visit Alder Hey and see first hand the impact of your support, please contact Charli Canfer on 01519530181 or charli.canfer@alderhey.nhs.uk.