

ECHO launches new Cardiac Psychology room & Play Space at Evelina London: 'The Lodge'



ECHO are very excited to announce that from today, Monday 10th August, a dedicated cardiac psychology room and play space 'The Lodge' is open at Evelina London Children's Hospital.

ECHO have worked tirelessly with the hospital's Cardiac Psychology and Play Specialist team to fund the launch of a bright and relaxing room for children and young people with congenital heart disease and their parents to use when accessing psychological support services and for play specialists to hold play sessions for children while they visit hospital.

Prior to today, there had been no dedicated psychology space to see young people and families within cardiology. The team have relied upon accessing rooms within the wider paediatric psychology service. However as this service has grown, they can no longer accommodate this usage and are incredibly stretched for room space.

The new 'Lodge' themed space includes a playful and calming arctic-themed mural, comfortable sofas and seats, a foldaway table, room for books and toys, cushions for mindfulness practice, therapeutic resources such as play kits.

We are so excited for you to see it!

‘The Lodge’ launch video:

Take a look at the room and hear from the hospital staff who will be using it.

Photos of the new room:

Why is a dedicated space so important?

Many young people and families feel nervous when they first come to meet with a psychologist. They may not have met with a psychologist before and may not know what to expect during the session.

During play specialist sessions, children have an opportunity to use play to prepare for their upcoming surgery, and help them to express their worries or thoughts about it.



Our work with young people and families often involves discussing sensitive and confidential information about their thoughts, feelings and experiences. It is therefore essential to provide a confidential space where interruptions will not occur and where the young person and family can feel listened to and safe to share their thoughts and feelings.

NIKKI GREGG - SPECIALIST CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST, EVELINA LONDON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

The room would not have been possible without the support of:

- Kaya of [KaVaRa Home Styling](#), the dedicated interior designer who worked passionately to ensure the room met the hospital's needs.
- Our incredible team of specialists who helped decorate the room: Sebastian and Pawel, our carpenters who went above and beyond, and heart granddad Keith and his son Luke, who did an excellent job of painting the room.
- Wendy, our volunteer mural artist for her amazing Lodge-inspired artwork.
- All our donors in the ECHO heart community - we could not have achieved this without you.
- Plus of course Nikki Gregg, Specialist Clinical Psychologist in the Paediatric Cardiology team and Clare Perrett, Senior Play Specialist at [Evelina London Children's Hospital](#).

I was delighted to help create a comforting and happy environment for children in hospital. I'm a trained architect and also an artist and therefore wanted to use my skills to help children ease any pain, recover and move forward. I was also excited when I heard that the room theme was the Arctic, being a big fan of the Arctic and snowy landscapes. When designing the mural I wanted to make use of my experience, having spent some time in log cabins and saunas in Northern Scandinavia, to bring cosiness to the room.

WENDY - MURAL ARTIST

Photos before refurbishment:

How you can support ECHO

This room is only possible because of the generosity of people like you who donated, shared and supported ECHO - enabling us to completely redecorate, furnish and open this new space designed exclusively for cardiac families at the Evelina London Children's Hospital.

ECHO is an independent charity and receives no government or NHS funding. You can help us to support children with congenital heart disease and their families with a regular donation.

£5 a month can help us to provide 1:1 practical and emotional support to a parent whose child is living with a heart condition.

£15 can help us give one family each month an ECHO Welcome Pack to help them feel less anxious and isolated when they attend hospital while their child undergoes surgery.