



Beneficial Art in Hospitals with Masking Tape Initiated from University Hospital

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Abstract

Art therapy has attracted attention in the medical field. Among them, authors have been engaged in various activities including art in hospitals. We have started the artworks using masking tape, which has various colors and the pattern. It can be also used for craft making, wrapping, decoration, and original goods such as art exhibitions. Our current work was performed on the corridor and staircase walls of Tokushima University hospital. It has psychologically three important perspectives, which are i) healing: relieving anxiety, healing the mind, ii) comfort: creating a pleasant and comfortable image, iii) wayfinding system: the wall sign can give a walk direction guide without confusion such as pilgrim walking. We plan to develop the performance in various opportunities.

Keywords

Art in Hospitals, Masking Tape, University Hospital, Art Therapy, Wayfinding System

In recent years, art therapy has attracted attention in the medical field. It is an era in which appropriate treatment is required not only physically but also psychologically [1]. The authors and collaborators have been engaged in a wide range of activities in the fields of medicine, art, and education associated with the development of social movements [2,3]. As an application of art in hospitals, we would describe the outline, background, and future development in this article.

Japan has 4 main islands, and one of them is Shikoku island consisting of 4 prefectures. The word shi-koku stands for shi (four), and koku (country, state). The Tokushima University School of Medicine, Dentistry, and Hospitals is a five-minute drive from the Tokushima Station of Japanese Railway (JR) [4]. Its campus has about 500 m x 500 m square, and the university hospital is situated just in front of the entrance. Authors and colleagues have continued the activity of “art in hospitals (hospital art)” using convenient masking tape in corridors and stairways

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[5]. Furthermore, we have developed art workshops for citizens from social and educational points of view. Many people have participated and felt impressive experience together concerning health, medicine, medical care, culture, education, and the purpose of life.

Studies on art in hospitals have been rather prevalent in recent years [6]. Although this concept has been not so generalized, a variety of practices in advanced hospitals have been already present. Thus, art in hospitals has been in focus for the healing power of art in medicine. As regards to the background, social needs in the light of cultural and psychological aspects may be required in addition to medical effectiveness and performance. These problems have been more observed in Japan, where the aging society is progressing rapidly.

From a historical point of view, art therapy was recognized as a form of psychotherapy in the 1940s [7]. After that, similar concepts had been born such as clinical art, healing art, art and health, art in hospitals, and others. Some reasons for this would be that medical care has become prevalent with a remarkable aging society. In recent decades, aging society has been progressing in developed countries, then medical and social problems have been an urgent issue. In these

situations, art in hospitals has been receiving particular attention.

As to Tokushima University Hospital, new wards and outpatient clinics have been recently built at Tokushima University Hospital. That was more beautiful and brighter than ever as Japanese university hospitals, and the waiting space had a high ceiling, creating a comfortable space. It is worth noting that several galleries were included with lots of paintings displayed on the walls. In this regard, the book "Hospital Galley" has been published [8]. The authors are Takaaki Bando, a well-known graphic designer, and Susumu Kagawa, the former president of Tokushima University.

As a matter of fact, the authors have been involved in art exhibitions, music concerts, and sign display projects in Tokushima university hospital. From these experiences, we have come to start a new project. It is Masking Tape Art, which anyone can be easily involved in creating the artwork. The project was successfully completed with the cooperation of hospital staff and others (**Fig-1** and **Fig-2**). The beneficial points include simplicity, convenience, and low cost, with a pleasant mood to perform together (**Fig-1**) [5]. We had investigated adequate designs for the hospital circumstance. Among them, the theme seemed to be



Fig-1:

Practice of art in hospitals using masking tape in Tokushima University hospital. The presentation period was from August, 2018 to March, 2019.

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better with Eastern culture than that of the Western one. Japan has seasonal beauty of flowers and nature, which are preferred by many Japanese people. The scene of a pilgrim walking in four seasons would be accepted (Fig-1). Because a patient is obliged to stay in the hospital for long, he may feel relaxed when observing a pilgrim walking in the seasonal scenery. Furthermore, a patient can move together with a pilgrim (Fig-2).

Our current work was made on the corridor and staircase walls of a hospital [5]. Its purpose was to give some comfortable and kind messages to many patients, families, children, hospital staff, and others. In fact, these arts in this hospital showed three important perspectives from a psychological point of view [9]. They are i) healing: relieving anxiety, healing the mind, feeling familiarity, ii) comfort: creating a pleasant and comfortable image of the mind, iii) a wayfinding system: human beings originally have the ability to recognize space, and then, the wall can give a walk direction guide without confusion [10]. As an example of a wayfinding system, there is a scene of a pilgrim walking in this direction in Fig-2.

The material we used this time is masking tape. It was originally developed as an industrial curing tape. In recent years, it has become rather popular mainly for children and young women because of its variety of colors and designs [11]. Masking tape used for art in hospitals has been rare. The author paid attention to some advantages of i) keeping hands clean, ii) hygienic, iii) no odor, and iv) removing and trying again at any time. Therefore, it seems to be suitable for use in hospitals.

There was a historically impressive comment on the art in hospitals. It was published in the *British Medical Journal* in the early 1980s [12], describing “of course we must humanize hospitals.” Interactional aspects of art in hospitals and health were investigated by anthropological methods. Among them, the well-being and satisfaction of the patients and the guideline for the application of art in hospitals were studied [13]. The protocol included user-oriented 20 paintings with fieldwork for two weeks. The methods have a subject observation, informal conversation, semi-structured interviews, and research observation by monitored cameras. As a result, the presence of visual art in hospitals can contribute to patients’ health outcomes with improved satisfaction as one of the extended situations of health care [13].



Fig-2: Pilgrim walking for art in hospitals with the concept of a way finding system. The presentation period was from August, 2018 to March, 2019.

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In summary, an experience of art in the hospital was described in this article. Authors have utilized convenient masking tape for art in the university hospital, and plan to develop the performance for various opportunities in the future.

Conflict of Interest

All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript. The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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