

P4 Reflection

Children's palliative care (CPC), and adolescent palliative care, is an ever evolving field. It is predicted that more children's diseases and chronic conditions are going to develop in the upcoming decades. In the light of this discovery, the Dutch Knowledge Centre for Children's Palliative Care is rapidly expanding its structure, beyond the existing facilities. My graduation project strives to make use of the opportunity created by the expansion, and rethink the typology of care facility, which responds and tackles an issue of care fragmentation within the CPC. As such, the project aligns with the studio's focus on finding solutions to existing and future problems within the realm of health and care architecture.

My research into adolescent palliative care relied on a number of methods (literature review, observation, case studies, interviews) but the most important one was the participatory design workshops. Workshops also follow the architecture industry's growing inclinations towards community engagement.

Guidelines allowed me to immerse in my target group and gain a much deeper understanding of their needs and wants. The research was translated into design guidelines, which heavily influenced my final design. Guidelines directed my choice of the site, informed design decisions for the communal spaces in the buildings and led me to doing a transformation of the existing building, rather than a new build.

Although the research and design guidelines were focused on the palliative care facilities, findings that emerged through the participatory workshops in particular could be implemented in other buildings occupied by the adolescents. Their preferences for colours schemes, atmosphere and privacy levels will be similar in other public buildings, thus making them transferable for other future projects.

The design process began with an exploration and analysis of the site and the building located there. I created a list of materials and building elements used in the structure, which could later be reused in the

proposed building. This, in turn, informed the plan of the new build and its structural make up. Guidance and support of the tutors on the subject of renovation was incredibly valuable and helped me elevate my final proposal. As my graduation project is dedicated to young adolescents, involving young in the design decisions early in the process, particularly on the topic of interiors, colours and function, helped to make the final proposal more suitable for the intended users.

This year has been a challenging, exciting and fulfilling time in my architectural education. I learned a lot about not only the technical and design aspects of the process, but most importantly about connecting and understanding the future users. To me, this was the pivotal point of this education process. The final part of the graduation period will be focused on explaining the design more thoroughly, through visualisation of spaces and model making.