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'HOSPITAL PASSPORT' HELPS COMFORT YOUNG PATIENTS

SPORT & FITNESS

Developed at Scotland's Royal Hospital for Sick Children, the scheme aims to make young patients feel more at ease when being passed from department to department.

UK children's hospitals, such as London's Great Ormond Street Hospital, have been featured on these pages before thanks to their innovative schemes to help kids deal with the stress of medical treatment. Now Scotland's Royal Hospital for Sick Children has also come up with the Hospital Passport scheme, which aims to make young patients feel more at ease when being passed from department to department. Based in Glasgow, psychologists at the NHS institution developed the initiative as a way to help visitors feel more involved in the care they receive. Rather than being transferred to different parts of the hospital without an explanation, the gamified approach encourages children to get their passport stamped and collect stickers when moving around the building, or visiting a different department. Filling up the passport is a good thing, as it means kids are getting closer to completing their treatment. Parents are given a separate Hospital Passport Coping Kit, which includes information on how they can help to discuss with their children the reasons they're having the treatment, further reducing any anxiety. It also acts as an aid for adults to keep track of their child's hospital history. A parent involved in a trial of the scheme said: "It definitely helped me and my child talk more and made it easier to approach what is wrong with her and why she has come to hospital." Although currently running as a pilot at the Glasgow hospital, there has been interest from Great Ormond Street Hospital and the National Children's Hospital in Dublin. How else can hospitalization be made less traumatic for younger children? Spotted by: Murtaza Patel

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