

Breast Cancer Haven, London wins 'Healing Spaces Award'.

Sunand Prasad, President of RIBA and Sarah Waller, Director of the Kings Fund's Enhancing Healthcare Environments Programme presented the British Holistic Medical Association (BHMA) Nutri Centre Good Practice Awards on 18th April at the University of Westminster. The competition was for buildings that reflect the ways architecture and interior design can support patients and staff in delivering holistic healthcare. The competition was a highlight in the BHMA 25th anniversary conference 'Medicine as if People Matter'.

Entries came from general practices, hospices, hospitals, cancer care units, complementary medicine clinics; even a travelling homeopathic collective working out of a marquee! In their very different ways, all twelve finalists showed how work-space design could support innovative holistic healthcare.

The first prize of £2000 went to the London Breast Cancer Haven, a lovely conversion of a Fulham chapel which has created an urban cancer support centre offering complementary therapies, counselling, teaching and group work. One judge said. *"...A wonderfully effective conversion whose interesting use of artwork and colour celebrates life and renewal. You just know that you would feel good here...Some of the spaces feel inspirational, special chapel spaces which Haven's architects have made the most of confidently and with a strong sense of purpose..."*

A special mention went to Breathworks a Buddhist-based charitable centre housed in a fine conversion of an inner city centre warehouse transformed from an industrial space into a social meeting place, with rooms for training and complementary treatments. The judges saw Breathworks which teaches mindfulness-based stress reduction and meditation to people with stress related problems, persistent pain and long term conditions as an example of a new kind of urban healing space that could play an important part in improving national wellbeing.

A small projects award of £500 went to the Kai clinic, who have made a cost-effective acupuncture service possible in an NHS GP setting in a run-down area of North London. This Dr Who telephone box approach produced a communal therapy room where one or two practitioners can treat several patients at once, in a space that used to be a store-room!

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The Travelling Homeopaths Collective received a special mention. This remarkable outreach project has been taking homeopathy and earth-centred values to nomadic communities (e.g. music festivals!). The clinic is probably a unique example of sustainable healthcare delivered in tents with renewable energy sources (and a mobile herb garden) provided from the Collective's bus! The judges applauded the flexibility, mobility and open-ness which this healing space so clearly represents.

A healing garden in Cleveland Ohio was given an international commendation, for providing beautiful healing, contemplation and learning areas within a botanical garden. Though not a healthcare space as such, it has been designed for disabled access, and clearly represents a powerful wellbeing resource for the whole community.

BHMA Chair Professor David Peters said. *'These awards have been a celebration of how good spaces can truly enhance the healthcare environment and help us deliver medicine as if people matter!'*

"The Nutri Centre was delighted to sponsor these awards, which reached out to all areas of holistic healthcare," commented senior nutritionist Juliet Hayward from awards sponsor The Nutri Centre, one of Britain's leading resources for complementary medicines and nutritional advice. "Those involved showed fantastic enthusiasm and commitment to providing special places for healing and we were impressed with the breadth and depth of the scope represented by the local and international winners."

If you would like to receive details for the 2009 Good Practice Awards please contact Diana Brown at the BHMA office on 01278 722000 or email admin@bhma.org

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Journalists Editors Note:

The BHMA was founded in 1983 to educate mainstream healthcare professionals, complementary therapies practitioners and members of the public in the principles and practice of holistic medicine. The organisation is chaired by Dr David Peters, Professor of Integrated Healthcare at the University of Westminster.

Images available on request.