

that's too much information!

Enhancing family education at Pittsburgh Children's Hospital

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INTRODUCTION

Information overload at CHP has always been a problem, especially with families of patients having to go through the critical care units, where medical diagnoses, treatment, and care outside the hospital become more complicated. This project will aim to improve current methods of family education. The goal is to understand the current state of family education at Children's Hospital and how families feel regarding their education. I will specifically be focusing on families in the Intermediary Care Unit (7IMC), a new step-down unit from Critical Care at CHP that opened in October 2007. This unit houses children who are not listed under critical care but still require constant monitoring. Because of the nature of this unit, lots of opportunities exist to study the information flow of families' journeys up until this point; families of children in the 7IMC often feel more obligated to know more about their child's care as the patient to staff ratio increases as patients move from Critical Care to the 7IMC.

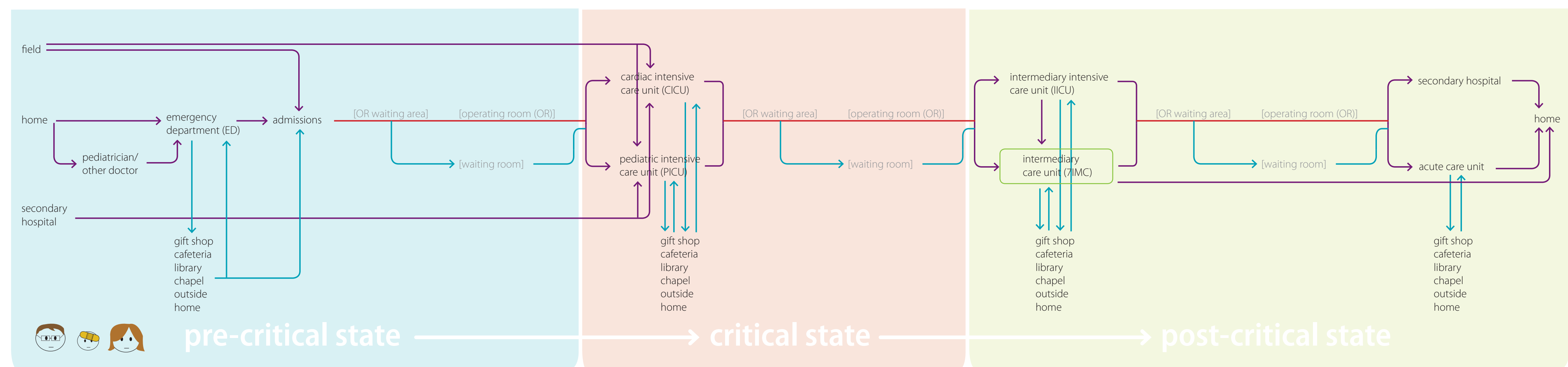
The implications of this project will not only help the new Intermediary Care Unit at the hospital, but will hopefully be used in any hospital in need of better ways to educate their patients regarding their care.

As there have been unexpected waits during the course of the past four months (see project timeline below), I have not yet been able to talk to families at CHP. However, upon speaking to a number of staff at the hospital, I have been able to gather an overview of the family and patient journey, as well as what the staff sees as the information flow for families. From this I developed a set of research activities for the families at CHP which will enable me to learn about their experiences regarding information gathering, understanding, and retention throughout their journey.

RESEARCH

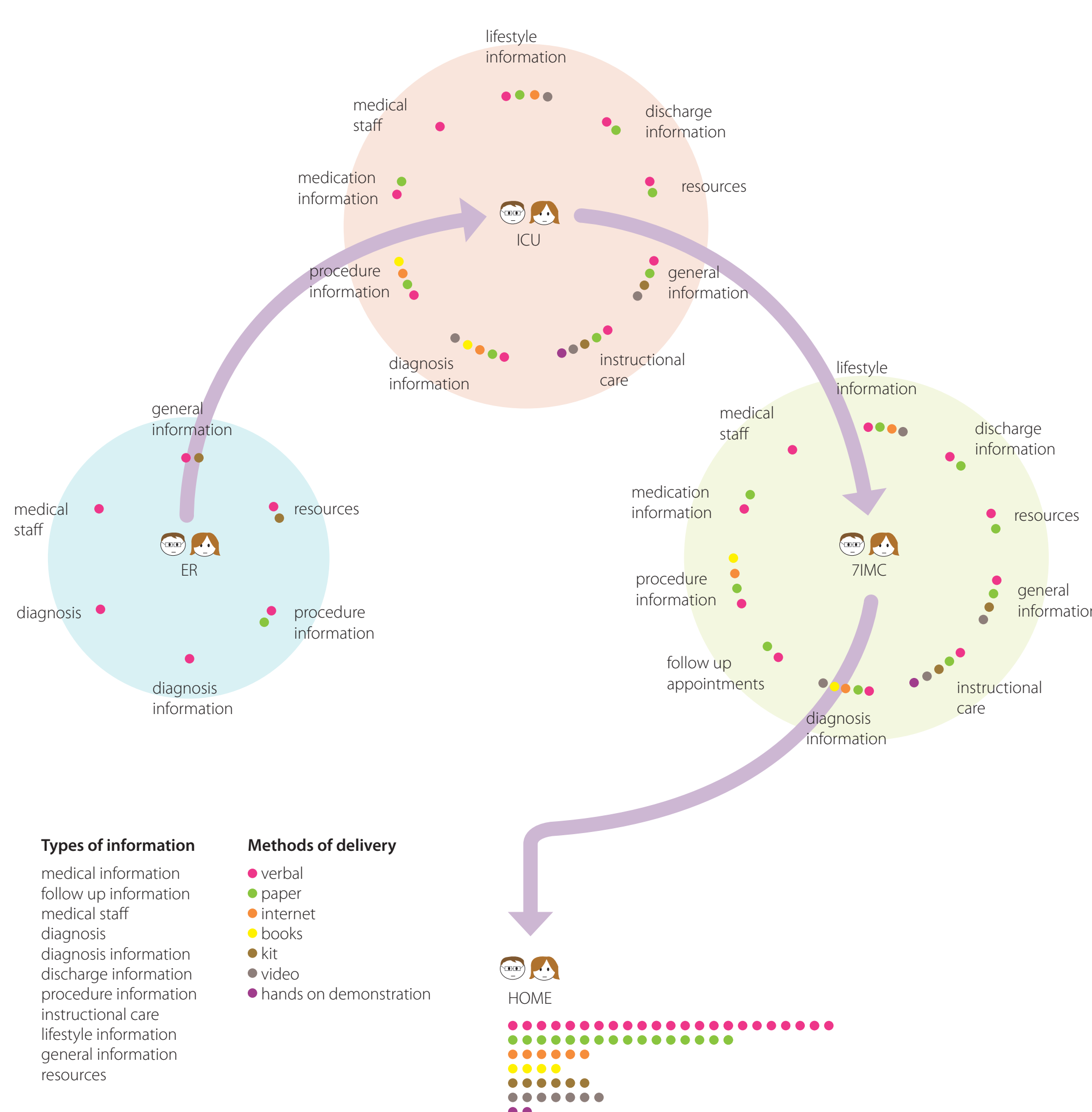
FAMILY AND PATIENT JOURNEY

An overview of what the journey of a 7IMC patient and family is like, from beginning to end, as viewed by CHP staff



INFORMATION FLOW

Information flow through the major stages of a family's journey



RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

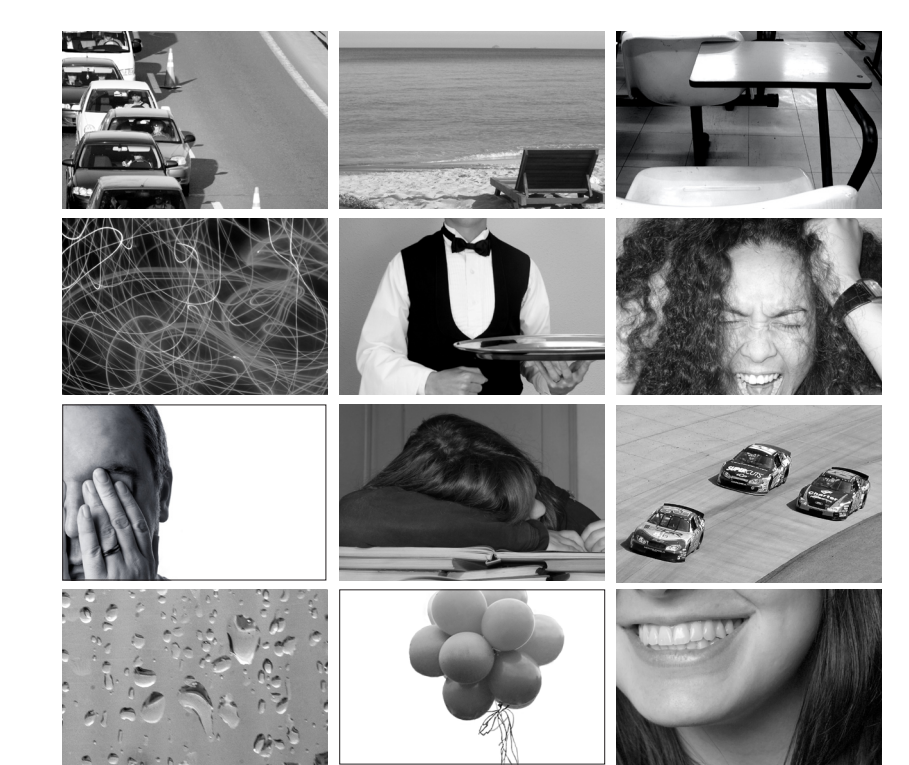
Activities to gain insight into families' experiences during their journey

Rating cards



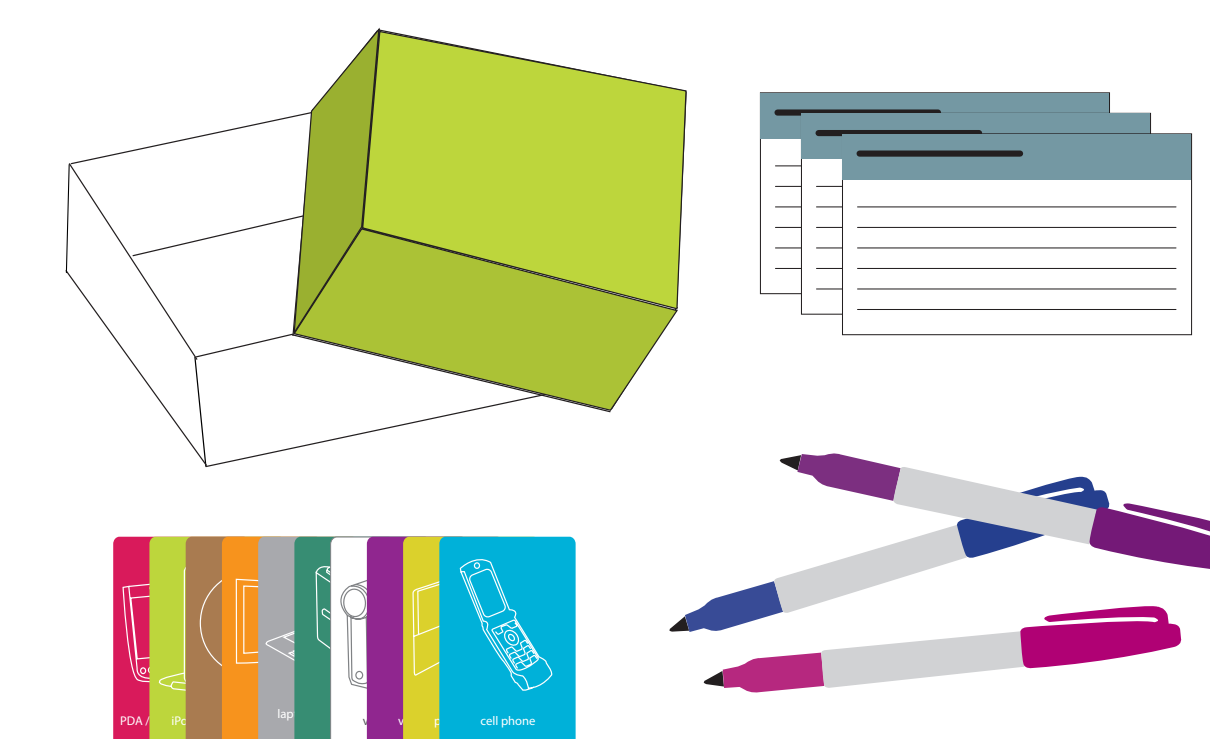
To provide a higher level view of what it is like to be a family member of a patient at Pittsburgh Children's Hospital, these cards contain general questions regarding a family member's background, their overall experience so far, what types of information are important to them, and how much they feel they know about certain information.

Experience cards



To gather a deeper level insight into their experiences at each step of the journey, these cards contain images meant to evoke different emotions and states. Family members will be asked to choose cards that correspond to different stages of their journey and describe why they chose the card.

Designing a care kit for other families



To provide a deeper understanding on the connection between information and emotion, family members will be asked to design a kit for other families going through the same experience as them. Knowing what they know now, what would they tell other families? If they could give any sorts of products, technology, or advice, what would they think would help?

Technology cards



To provide a deeper understanding of how family members deal with information, each of the 10 cards contains a different technological product. Family members will be asked to think about the information given to them so far, and whether or not any of these products would have helped the information gathering, understanding, or retention throughout the journey. Towards the end, family members will also be encouraged to design their ideal information device/system.

WHAT'S NEXT

PROJECT TIMELINE

