

Selecting Hospital Venues

During each residency, you need to consider locations for performances. One of these should be the most public area of the hospital that is appropriate for performances. It should be an area that has a heavy flow of traffic and that is accessible to as many people as possible. Considerations for selections should include the number of people the area can hold (your Safety and Security or Facilities Department can tell you what the Fire Marshall's capacity limits are for a particular area), how sound will impact people working in the area, and appropriateness of the area for the particular performance.

Other events can take place in patient care areas. These areas should be selected based on the scheduled artist and the type of performance planned. Some artists are obviously most appropriate for young audiences, some for older audiences. More subtle are the considerations of the types of experiences that the patients and staff in a particular unit are having and what will be most appropriate for them. For example, music with a percussive element might not be the best choice for an oncology unit where people undergoing chemotherapy are more sensitive to loud noise. Work with the staff on any unit you are considering for performances to decide if the planned event is appropriate.

Also take into consideration the experience and interests of the artists. Plan to have phone conversation with the artist well ahead of time to determine what their experiences and interests in healthcare are so that you can best place them in the hospital. If an artist has lost a family member to cancer, an oncology unit may or may not be the best choice for them. Talk openly with the artist to make this determination. The success of your programs will depend strongly upon your ability to place artists in the best areas for them – areas in which they can feel comfortable and relate well to audience members.

Areas common to most hospitals that work well with almost any artist:

- Lobbies
- Longer-term care unit hallways, conference rooms, or family rooms
- Bedside visits on non-intensive care units
- Pediatrics units (depending upon performance content)
- Infusion centers/rooms

More challenging areas that should be carefully considered:

- Intensive care units (ICU's, bone marrow, burn unit)
- Oncology units (depending on the artists' personal experience/comfort)