

creating productive spaces for
**COMMUNITY
CORRECTIONS
& FAMILY VIDEO
CONTACT**

CONCEPT REPORT

Designing Out Crime Research Centre
January 2017





CONTACT

UTS Building 15
Level 2, front office
622-632 Harris St
Ultimo NSW 2007
Australia

rohan.lulham@uts.edu.au

DESIGN TEAM

Rohan Lulham
Douglas Tomkin
Kevin Bradley
Tasman Munro
Kiran Kashyap

CONTENTS

SETTING THE SCENE

The Project.....	5
Research.....	6
Prototype Location	7

FRAMING

Framing Practice.....	10
Framing Space.....	11
Framing The FVC Service.....	12

FAMILY VIDEO CONTACT

The Service.....	15
Glossary of Roles.....	16
Process	17
Volunteer Service.....	18
Community Corrections Office.....	19
Difficult Situations.....	20

CONCEPT DESIGN

Reception & Waiting Area.....	22
<i>Current Plan</i>	22
<i>'Meet Half Way' Concept</i>	23
<i>Look & Feel</i>	24
<i>Furnishings</i>	26
Group & Training Room.....	28
<i>Current Plan</i>	28
<i>Proposed Scheme</i>	29
<i>Furnishings</i>	32
Large Interview Room.....	34
<i>Proposed Scheme</i>	34
<i>Look & Feel</i>	35
<i>Furnishings</i>	36
<i>AVL Equipment</i>	37
Children Engagement & Toys.....	38
<i>Off The Shelf Toys</i>	38
<i>Social Games</i>	39
Staff Spaces.....	40
<i>Analysis</i>	40
<i>Concept</i>	41

CONCLUSIONS

Overview.....	45
Recommendations.....	45
Next Steps.....	46
Timeline.....	46

REFERENCES

Reference List.....	48
---------------------	----

APPENDICES

A - Site Visits.....	50
B - Therapeutic Environment.....	51

SETTING THE SCENE

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this project is to research, co-design and prototype more effective staff-client interaction spaces and a service to enable families and friends to have video contact from Community Corrections Offices with prisoners across New South Wales.

The prototyping location for the project is Campbelltown Community Corrections Office. Through a collaborative process, a framework and processes were developed for a Family Video Contact service in Community Corrections Offices that is supported by a volunteer service. We developed design concepts for the reception & waiting area, large interview room and a multipurpose group room spaces at Campbelltown Community Corrections Office (CCO). These spaces were designed to better enable and support the current functions of CCOs as well as the Family Video Contact function. This report seeks to succinctly describe the project and clearly articulate the various concepts developed in the project.

OBJECTIVES

Through a rigorous research and co-design process, develop a pilot project with the objectives of:

- engaging local staff in the design and implementation of the project to draw on their knowledge and enable the project to have value for them
- enabling families and friends to have quality video contact with NSW prisoners through a FVC service and CCO spaces that for families are comfortable, support meaningful conversation and are safe

- re-designing key staff-client interaction spaces in the CCO so they better support the important work staff do with clients, while also accommodating the FVC service
- informing the development of principles for the design of other CCO offices and the FVC service

BACKGROUND

Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) and the family and friends of prisoners recognize the value of having the option for video contact particularly when large distances make face-to-face visiting difficult. Currently CSNSW offers some families and friends the opportunity to use family video contact facilities to contact inmates in prisons. This primarily occurs through the Community Restorative Justice funded program in inner Sydney and some select regional courts. The scale of this program however means it is only accessible to a limited number of families. An initiative was trialed where families would use other government agencies video conferencing facilities but it was costly and difficult to manage. Part of this project seeks to explore and prototype the use of Community Correction Office (CCO) video facilities for family video contact.

Through considering the CCO family video contact service, but also independently, there was also recognition that many client spaces in Community Correction Offices do not provide appropriate amenity for families or for general clients of the service. The Assistant Commissioners involved in the briefing for this project identified that reception and waiting room facilities at most CCOs were sterile, cold and uncomfortable. It was identified these client and staff spaces did not reflect values or create an impression of the Department consistent with what they want to achieve.

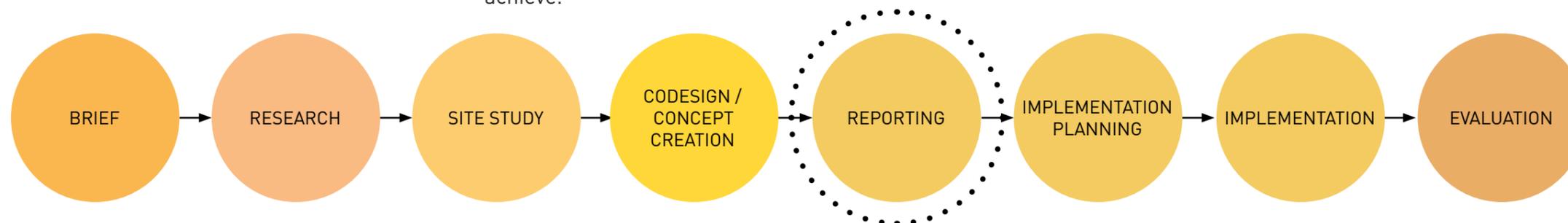
SCOPE & DELIVERABLES

At the outset, the scope for this project was to develop at the prototype location concepts for:

- re-designing CCO waiting & reception space
- re-designing group program room with family video contact AVL functionality
- family video contact service process and guidelines for CCO staff to operate the service
- amenity and toys to support children's being in CCO spaces

Through the site research and consulting with staff at a number of Community Corrections Offices, it was identified the scope and deliverables needed adjustment. In some CCO facilities the large group room was not an appropriate space for the FVC due to its location or design. In these offices a large interview room was often a more suitable location. It was also identified that demands related to the meet, greet and monitoring aspects of the Family Video Contact service could be difficult for local staff to manage at some offices. Due to these concerns, a model based broadly on the volunteer visitor information service at MRRC has been designed to undertake the meet, greet and basic monitoring aspects of the Family Video Contact service. In collaborating with staff at the Campbelltown CCO fundamental issues also became apparent regarding natural light and access to views outside from the staff only work areas. As a result the final scope of the project extended to also include:

- redesigning large interview room with family video contact AVL functionality
- FVC volunteer service processes and guidelines
- initial design concepts for increasing natural light and visual access outside from the staff areas



PRIMARY RESEARCH

Fundamental to this project is conducting primary research and involving stakeholder in the design process. This is critical to ensuring the design concepts respond to the needs and aspirations of stakeholders and users.

Some of the specific primary research and codesign activities included:

- Visit site, interview staff and document design at Newcastle/Lake Macquarie, Sydney City and Kempsey Community Corrections Offices (see Appendix A for more details)
- Focus group with Campbelltown CCO staff
- Two workshops with Campbelltown CCO staff
- Two focus group sessions with 15 CCO male clients attending group programs at Campbelltown CCO
- Focus group with three Corrective Services staff delivering offence based group programs at Campbelltown
- Multiple discussion and consultations with the Campbelltown CCO manager
- Two workshops with CSNSW head office staff
- Consultations with staff at the Community Restorative Centre (CRC) Broadway
- Consultations with Prison Fellowship staff
- Access to primary research conducted by AVL Justice group using a diary method to explore the experiences of families in visiting and contacting family members in NSW prisons

FROM THE LITERATURE

Maintaining connections with community

Clear research evidence exists about the importance of people in prison maintaining quality relationships with family and friends in the community (Moran, 2013). Prisoner family contact is associated with prisoners' desistance post-release and the well-being of the partners and the children of prisoners in the community (Perry, 2012; Poehlmann, Dallaire, Loper, & Shear, 2010). Within NSW, a recent report "Maintaining the Link" details the findings from a survey of visitors and indicates a range of experiences from positive to quite poor (Perry, 2012). While this report and much in the literature has a focus on contact in the form of face-to-face visitation (Moran, 2013), many of the environmental, emotional and customer service components have parallel relevance to family video contact.

Family – prisoner contact via video conferencing

The emerging academic and practice literature on 'video visits' is particularly relevant to the family video contact aspect of this project. This literature is in response to the rapid expansion internationally of this use of this technology for family-prisoner contact. Prominent throughout the literature is that 'video visits' or contact can be a 'double edged sword' (Fulcher, 2013). On the positive side it can be another mode of contact between families and prisoners that is private, less stigmatising than prison visits, more sensorial than phone contact and possible when large distances between the family and the prisoner limit face to face visiting (Beazar, 2008; Crabbe, 2002; Phillips, 2012; Poehlmann-Tynan et al., 2015). On the negative side, there is a tendency for prison jurisdictions to restrict the amount face-to-face visiting through the substitution of video contact. Additionally in some jurisdictions the video contact service is also monetised and operated as an enterprise. The literature strongly suggests the introduction of family-inmate video contact should not be associated with any informal or formal reduction in access to face-to-face contact. Replacing face-to-face visiting with video contact is suggested as a dehumanising approach

that would impact significantly on prisoner-family relationships and the accountability of prisons to the public (Fulcher, 2013; Phillips, 2012). It is envisaged that providing families with the option of either face-to-face or video contact without additional restrictions will ultimately result in visits related saving as some families opt to use video visiting in some instances.

Community Correctional Design

In navigating the design challenges in this project we also consulted relevant literatures on correctional design. An emerging discussion in criminology about the design of community corrections offices is particularly relevant (Carr et al., 2015; Harrison, 2015; Moran, 2013), with J. Phillips (2010, 2014) exploring how CCO architecture can impact on practice and communicate meaning both to clients and staff. In the design literature there is an important design research report 'From waiting rooms to resource hubs' that suggests a rethinking of the 'dirty waiting rooms & plastic chairs' typical of community corrections offices in New York City to thinking of these spaces as resource hubs to help 'people take control of their lives' (NYC Department of Probation, 2011).

In considering the design of spaces where families could use a video conferencing facility to contact a family member in prison, we drew on a range of literature. This included Rowden et al (2013) research on AVL facilities in courts, a precedent study of similar spaces in different contexts (see Appendix B) and a broader study of technical and environmental considerations for video conferencing (see Kashyap et al, 2016).

SETTING THE SCENE

CAMPBELLTOWN COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS OFFICE

The prototype and piloting location for the project is Campbelltown Community Corrections Office 22 Minto Road, Minto NSW 2566

PLAN

The office is spread across two buildings. There are two entries, the main for visitors is on Minto Road. Staff and people attending offender program meetings in the rooms located at the rear of the office utilize the rear entry.

SPACES

The plan is functionally divided into three operational spaces. Two public access areas and one general office area. The front public access area houses the main reception and 5 interview rooms. The interview rooms are accessed from the reception area and the rooms have staff access back into the general office space.



PROTOTYPE LOCATION

The reception floor plan is unusually proportioned in length. The reception desk is positioned to the rear of the gun-barrel floor plan and suggests a destination on the plan.

The rear public access area has a small reception and kitchenette that serves the offender program rooms. There are four rooms, but only three are suitable for use with access to both the public space and the general office space. One room is then used for storage as it has only one door to the public space.

The general office is centrally located between the two public access spaces and has limited access to daylight in one part of the office, and none in the other. This was raised as a concern by staff and has been included in our considerations.



“You only get one chance to make a first impression. Many of you are clearly making a difference in the lives of people on probation. Unfortunately, when they think about the Department of Probation, many still think about ‘dirty waiting rooms & plastic chairs’ and too much wasted time. We can do better.

The devoted members of The Waiting Room Improvement Team will create a blueprint for public spaces that reflect our commitment to helping people on probation take control of their lives.”

Vincent N. Schiraldi, Commissioner,
NYC Department of Probation

(New York City Department of Probation, 2011, p. 2)

FRAMING

Framing is central to the design innovation approach undertaken in this project. Framing provides a basis on which to think about both what happens in the space and how it is designed. The design of the space and services should compliment and support the desired practices. We articulate frames for practice, the space and the Family Video Contact Service in Community Corrections Offices in this section



Conversations to promote good lives

These conversations can be difficult, the services and environment should help them to happen as smoothly and productively as possible

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Staff:

"We're not here to punish people, they've been through that. We're here for them to serve out their sentence and help them understand and learn".

"Supporting relationships with families is one of the best ways to keep the guys out of gaol"

"We're trying to create a therapeutic alliance, it's comfortable and safe but also gently challenging"

"It's about thinking change"

FRAMING

It is clear that staff see the CCO as a place which moves beyond the supervision and management of offender sentences. It is a place which seeks to move clients toward the development of enriching lives that are meaningful both for the individuals as well as their families and the broader community.

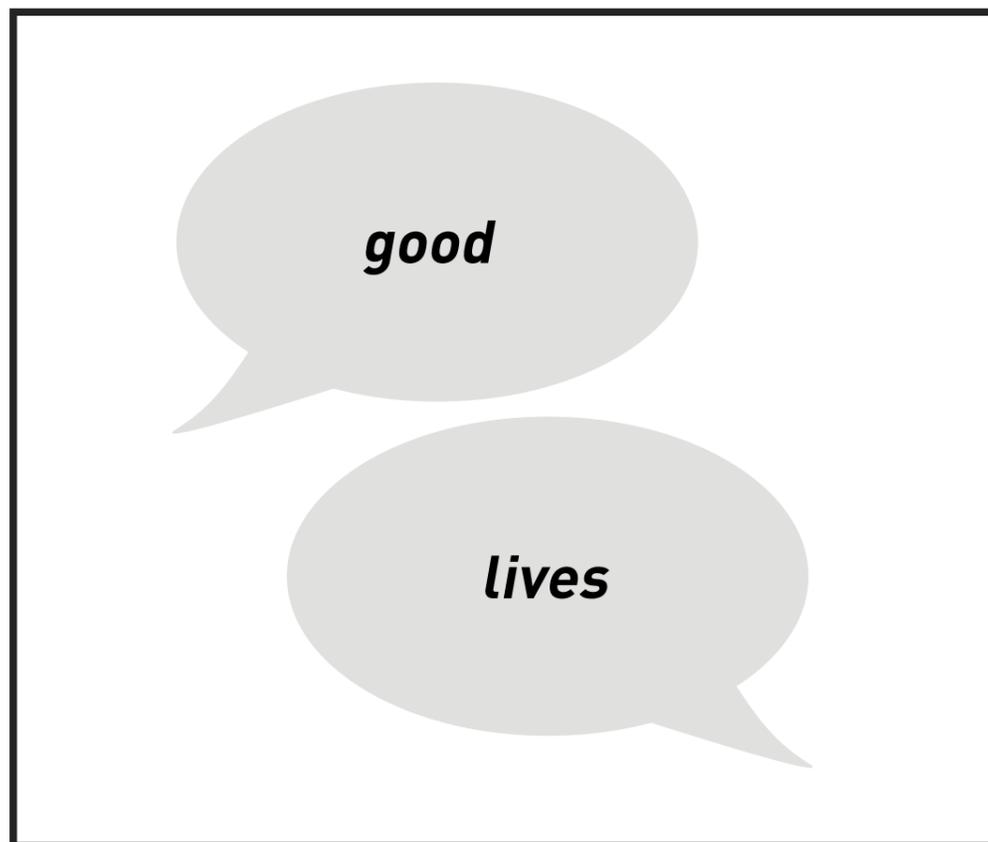
We frame the practice as 'conversations to promote Good lives'. The CCO provides a dedicated place to host these challenging but important conversations.

APPLICATION

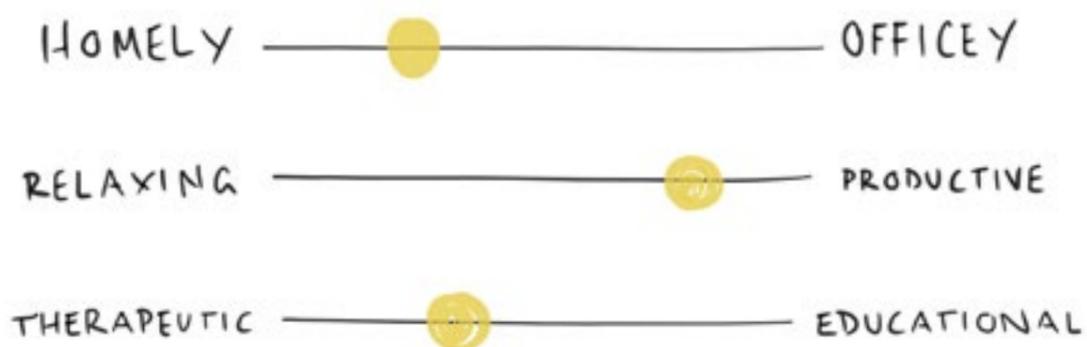
Under this framing, the development of each practice, interaction and spatial design principle should be considered against the guiding question:

"would this help to promote good lives?"

These conversations can be difficult, therefore the service and spatial design should not create any additional barriers, instead they should seek to support and motivate these conversations to happen as smoothly and productively as possible.



A PRODUCTIVE PLACE



WHAT WE HEARD

Program facilitator:

"I ask them whether they feel like a hostage, a tourist or explorer"

Clients:

"At first I thought they were all against us, but I'm realising they're on my side. I want to build knowledge and share it with my kids so they stay on the straight and narrow"

"I want it to feel welcoming, safe and not judgmental"

"homely, not like an office"

"we're here to learn"

FRAMING

The CCO provides a dedicated physical space to work on the development of good lives. It can therefore be framed as a productive place - a place of personal growth, but the word productive has been carefully chosen as it's more neutral than an "educational" or "therapeutic" space which may be emotionally loaded.

APPLICATION

It should encourage people to enter a productive mindset. Feeling comfortable, safe, well resourced and future focused. The aim is to put people in a setting which exemplifies the aspired life qualities rather than a place that echoes and reinforces past unproductive behaviour and identity.



Enabling inmates, their families and friends to have quality contact via video conferencing between a remote prison and a community corrections office

WHAT WE HEARD (indicative)

CCO Client recently released from custody:

'I would have used video conferencing if it meant my missus and kids didn't have to travel for six hours (and then it's in a dingy visits space). I don't want my kids to see me like that. I want to be able to speak with them properly'

Partner of prisoner:

'Its really important to me the time we spend together – I look forward to it all week. It's our time together'

Correctional Centre administrator:

'The conversations families and prisoners have can be really hard but also really important – particularly prior to getting out.'

FRAMING

Contact between families and a prisoner is really important. It's their time they have together to strengthen and maintain their relationships. 'Our time' as a frame for the service reflects this sense of personal importance. It places the focus appropriately on the quality of the time people are spending together.

APPLICATION

The frame 'Our time' works as a tag line for the service that can underpin how the service is operated and how the spaces are designed. It creates a language that clearly conveys the service is about families and prisoners having their own time together – it not about the bureaucracy that makes it happen. It provides families, prisoners and staff with a new way to refer to the service "Our Time sessions" that reflects its important and personal nature.

“If video visits are an addition [to in-person visits] they will be a help to all and a God-send to many. But, if video visits are a replacement for the current visitation, their implementation would be a painful unwelcomed change that would be impersonal and dehumanizing.”

(Beazar, 2008)

FAMILY VIDEO CONTACT

PURPOSE

The Family Video Contact (FVC) Service is a pilot project that enables inmates, their families and friends to have quality contact via video conferencing between a remote prison and a community corrections office.

Family Video Contact sessions are a supplement face to face visiting. The clear intention is that no inmate or family will receive less access to face-to-face visiting as a result of the service.

In line with the framing of the FVC service, when appropriate we also refer to the service and sessions as the 'Our Time' service and 'Our Time'.



Enabling inmates, their families and friends to have quality contact via video conferencing between a remote prison and a community corrections office.

A SERVICE CHARTER

Consistent with Corrective Services NSW's existing Customer Service Charter for in-person family contact, the following Charter is articulated for the FVC service:

- The Family Video Service and CSNSW is committed to providing family, friends and inmates with the opportunity to continue and strengthen their relationships
- To achieve this Corrective Services NSW and FVC service information volunteers will welcome you and:
- Provide a relaxed, friendly and comfortable facility for families, children and friends
- Treat people in a professional manner, consistent with fairness, courtesy and sensitivity
- Communicate information and expectations clearly in a friendly and understandable manner
- Be positive and helpful and provide reasons for any decisions made
- Ensure all personal information is treated in confidence

PILOT PROJECT

Campbelltown Community Corrections Office at Minto is the pilot location for the service

The duration of the pilot is 3 months.

During the pilot period:

- the Prison Fellowship will operate the volunteer service
- the Community Restorative Centre will provide family support services (as part of their broader service)
- monthly meetings will occur during the pilot between the relevant parties

After the three-month pilot period:

- a formal review will be undertaken
- an EOI process will be undertaken if the service continues to establish the ongoing providers of the volunteer service

PILOT SERVICE DESCRIPTION

FVC sessions will occur once a week in one 3.5 hour block (i.e. every Wednesday 9 to 12.30)

A maximum of three separate family sessions will occur in the 3.5 hour block each week

A CCO staff member (ie manager or delegate) will be assigned as the primary contact whenever FVC sessions are being held at the office

Two FVC information volunteers will always be assigned to attend the CCO when FVC sessions are being conducted

Both inmates or families/friends are able to request an Our Time session

A maximum of four people (including children) who are approved for visits can attend an Our Time session

Each inmate is eligible for one Our Time session per month and this has not impact on their access to face-to-face visiting

A booking for an Our Time session must occur at least one week in advance

A formal, objective review of the FVC will be undertaken after the three month pilot period

FVC The Family Video Contact (FVC) Service requires the coordination of a number of actors each with a specific role. The roles are:

Family and Friends Family and Friends – participate in arranging a FVC date/ time, attend and engage in quality interaction with inmate

Inmate Inmate - participate in arranging the FVC sessions, attend and engage in quality interaction

FVC-VS FVC Volunteer Service (FVC-VS) – manage team of volunteers to set-up CCO room, greet and welcome FVC participants, explain process, assist with technology, provide information and farewell

VCSS Video Conference Scheduling Service (VCSS) – coordinate and maintain the booking process between family, inmate, CC and CCO

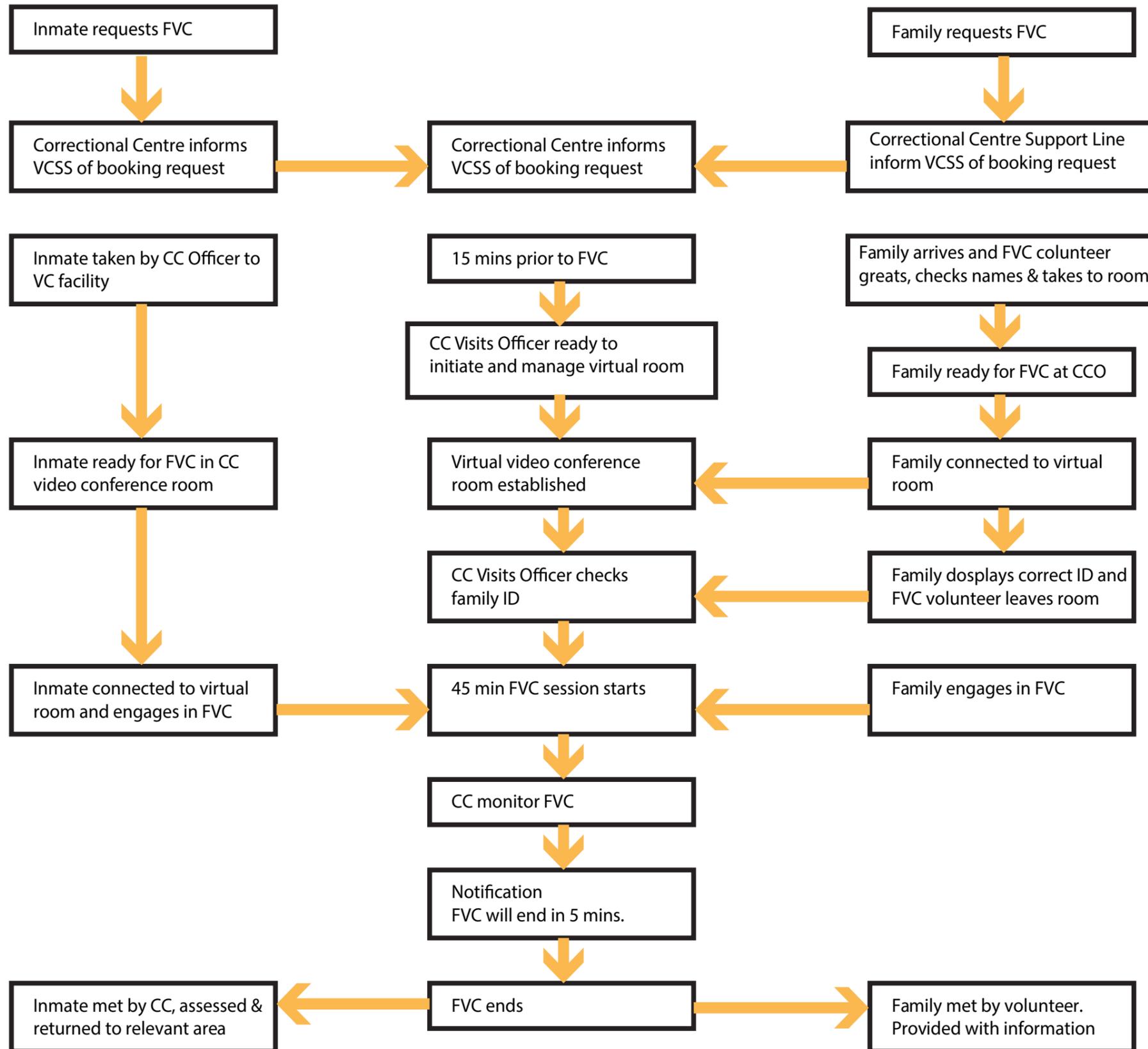
CCSL Correctional Centre Support Line (CCSL) – contact, arrange and confirm FVC booking with family and VCSS

CCO Community Corrections Office (CCO) – provide an appropriate space for FVC, communicate relevant local information to FVC-VS and contribute to maintenance of local FVC procedures

Correctional Centre Correctional Centre – provide an appropriate space for inmate participation; contact, arrange and confirm FVC booking with inmate and VCSS

CRC Community Restorative Centre – in circumstances of distress or specific need CRC are available to provide families with specialist support and assistance

Police Police – in circumstances where there is a concern regarding the safety of a participant or staff member, NSW Police provide respond and



This is a process overview of the Family Video Contact service. Both an inmate or a family/friend can book a FVC session. The booking process is coordinated by the Video Conference Scheduling Service. At the arranged time the inmate attends an AVL studio at the CC and the family/ friends attend the CCO office. The identity of family/ friend participants attending the CCO is checked over the video link by the CC staff member (or similar).* The FVC session is primarily monitored by the CC staff member (or similar), and they have the delegation to stop the visit at any time.

*clarify who initiates and manages of the sessions. CC staff member or VCSS staff member or similar.

PURPOSE

The FVC Information Volunteer Scheme is established to assist in meeting the Service Charter for the Family Video Contact service. In particular, the volunteer scheme seeks to ensure relevant information and a relaxed, friendly and comfortable environment is available to those using the service.

BACKGROUND

The FVC Information Volunteer Scheme is broadly based on the Visits Information Volunteer (VIV) scheme currently operating at the Metropolitan Reception and Remand Centre. A previous Service Partnership Agreement for the VIV scheme was used in developing this document.

Similar to visiting a correctional centre, attending a Community Corrections Office to participate in FVC session can be stressful. This may particularly be the case for participants unfamiliar with the AVL technology, the Community Correction Office context or those who may be fearful interacting with government authorities.

SERVICE PROVIDER

The Prison Fellowship has offered to enter into an agreement with CSNSW to operate the volunteer service for the duration of the pilot. This includes recruiting, training, managing and monitoring the team of volunteers to operate the service. The Prison Fellowship currently operates the Visits Information Volunteer scheme at MRRC.

At the conclusion of the pilot, and if the continuation of the program is indicated in the evaluation, an ongoing service provider will be selected through a formal expression of interest process.

VOLUNTEER ROLE

The volunteer role includes:

- Attending a briefing session with the responsible CCO staff member prior to the commencement of CCO sessions on the day
- Each day set-up the waiting room and FVC room for the FVC sessions
- Greet participants arriving to attend FVC sessions and guide to waiting area
- Provide participants with relevant information about the FVC sessions, expectations and (if relevant) support service information in a friendly manner
- Where children are in attendance, ask the parents/ guardians if they would like the children to have access to toys/games etc
- At the appropriate time guide participants to the FVC room and (if necessary) assist them with using the technology
- Once participants are connected to the FVC system, the volunteers are to leave the room
- During the FVC sessions at least one volunteer should be located in the adjacent waiting area in case the participants need additional assistance, have an issue or finish early
- At the end of the session, greet participants, provide relevant resources and information and guide participants out of the building
- Notify the responsible CCO staff member of any actual or potential difficult situations immediately using mobile phone
- If any person's safety is in immediate danger, activate duress as well as notifying responsible CCO staff member
- At the completion of the FVC sessions on a day, return rooms to their normal arrangement and meet/ debrief with the responsible CCO staff member

The volunteer role does NOT include:

- Supervising children before or during the FVC session
- Any authority to impact on the operational decisions of CSNSW staff

VOLUNTEER SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Selection of volunteers

- will occur through a formal and documented selection process reviewed by CSNSW
- consideration will be given to the ethnic diversity of the FVC participants in selecting volunteers,

Training of volunteers

- On-site orientation training designed specifically for the FVC volunteers.
- Specific training related to how to respond to difficult situations (see 4.1)
- CSNSW Security Awareness for External Service Providers e-learning module

Required resources

- duress alarm for each volunteer on site
- badge identifying person as a volunteer
- a mobile phone for each volunteer on site with relevant numbers
- information booklets etc for distribution

Local rostering and management

PURPOSE

Community Corrections Offices are used as a location for family and friends to access a purpose designed video conferencing facility to contact a person in a NSW prison.

BACKGROUND

Currently CSNSW offers some families and friends the opportunity to use family video contact facilities to contact inmates in prisons. This primarily occurs through the Community Restorative Justice funded program in inner Sydney and some select regional courts. The scale of this program however means it is only accessible to a limited number of families. An initiative was trialled where families would use other government agencies video conferencing facilities but it was costly, there were problems with connections between justice and non-justice IT systems and it was difficult to manage. Part of this project seeks to explore and prototype the use of Community Correction Office (CCO) video facilities for family video contact.

CONSIDERATIONS

- The CCO facility, as the location for the FVC service, it is important the CCO provides a relaxed, friendly and comfortable facility for families, children and friends using the service. This is addressed in the associated design concepts detailed in the following sections.
- While the FVC volunteers will be responsible for assisting participants/families using the service, local CCO management will need to have oversight of the volunteers while on site
- As family and friends participating in FVC will be on CCO premises, there are associated responsibilities for local CCO management in responding to difficult situations should they arise. This is addressed specifically on the next page.
- Through attending a FVS session, it may be apparent that participants/ families may benefit from the offer and access to additional support. A structure is formalised for the

Community Restorative Centre to provide this support under an existing arrangement

ROLE + RESPONSIBILITIES

When FVC sessions are occurring at the CCO there must be a nominated FVC responsible CCO officer present to oversee the FVC.

The responsible CCO-FVC officer will be the CCO Manager and/ or their nominated delegate. Any person in the role must receive specific training on the FVC service and the role of the CCO officer.

The role of responsible CCO-FVC officer on a day when the FVC service is operating includes:

- briefing the FVC volunteers at the start of the day and providing them with any relevant resources
- being available to manage, respond to and follow-up on any difficult situation associated with the FVC service
- debrief the FVC volunteers at the end of the day and document anything for follow-up

More broadly the CCO Manager and/ or their nominated delegate will be required to:

- Establish and maintain local procedures for their oversight of FVC service
- Attend monitoring meeting during the pilot and participate in the evaluation process

FAMILY SUPPORT - COMMUNITY RESTORATIVE CENTRE

It is recognised that for a range of reasons family and friends of prisoners can be economically, socially and emotionally disadvantaged. Supporting a person in prison and negotiating personal relationships with only periodic contact can also be very stressful. The Family Video Contact Service provides a touch point with families and friends where the offer of additional professional support can be made. As part of the Family Video Contact Service, volunteers will receive specific training and advice on providing information to the family and friends of

prisoners about support services. Where needed, such support is critical to the well-being of these families and reducing negative outcomes.

The Community Restorative Centre as well as a range of other services receive specific funding from Corrective Services NSW to provide support services to family and friends of people in NSW prisons. This is in recognition that CSNSW are not always the best placed to provide such services. As part of the FVC pilot program the Community Restorative Centre has offered to have a particular focus on ensuring they are able to support these families under their program. Drawing on their clinical expertise, the Community Restorative Centre is also able to assist with providing the volunteer service with training around how to engage appropriately with vulnerable people using the service.

BACKGROUND

- In other contexts where the Family Video Contact (FVC) service has operated in NSW (regional courts, CRC), there has been no reported incidents relating to difficult or dangerous situations involving participants
- It is, however, evident that having families and friends attending CCO offices for video contact sessions does present the possibility of difficult situations arising
- Difficult situations involving FVC participants that could arise include;
 - verbal abuse towards staff, volunteers or other participants
 - malicious damage to furnishings or equipment,
 - threats or actual physical assault of staff, volunteers or other participants
 - other disruptive behavior that seriously impacts on perceptions of safety and functioning of the community corrections office
- While rare, like in other CCO contexts, there is a duty of care to minimize and manage these risks as the impact on people's wellbeing could be significant

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Fundamental to preventing and managing difficult situations is that FVC information volunteers and CCO staff are clear about their roles, responsibilities and boundaries related to the service
- How the FVC service is operated, including how expectations are communicated to FVC participants, will assist to prevent many difficult situations
- Some difficult situations, however, can not be prevented and need to be managed
- In general, difficult situations involving a FVC participant would be managed in a similar manner to any other difficult client situation at a CCO office
- The primary consideration for staff and volunteers must their own and others personal safety
- Where it is assessed someone's safety may be in danger, the Police are to be notified

STRATEGY

Supported by training, the strategy for managing difficult behavior will include prevention, problem identification, initial response and follow-up components

1. Prevention

FVC information volunteers and assigned CCO staff will receive specific training on how to communicate expectations and interact with FVC clients to minimize the likelihood of difficult situations. CSNSW have existing training resources that could be adapted to this purpose

2. Identification of difficult situations

FVC information volunteers and CCO staff should only be concerned with difficult situations where people's safety is jeopardized. It is the Correctional Centre's responsibility to monitor and identify other criminal behavior that may occur during these sessions

FVC information volunteers will be the most likely to identify difficult situations before, during or after a FVC session. During a FVC session the volunteers will be seated outside of the room – they will not have visual access into the room or hear normal conversation. *

When a volunteer identifies a potential or actual difficult situation, they are to immediately notify (by mobile phone) the responsible CCO staff member assigned to FVC on that day. If any person's physical safety is in immediate danger the FVC volunteer should also activate their police duress.

3. Initial response

It will be the responsible CCO staff member assigned to FVC on the day to coordinate the response to a difficult situation (or a potentially difficult situation).

Depending on the difficult situation this could include:

- informing the correctional centre to stop the FVC session
- speaking with FVC participants and communicating concerns and potential consequences
- contacting the police and requesting assistance
- directing FVC participants to leave the CCO premises
- directing volunteers or staff members to leave an area

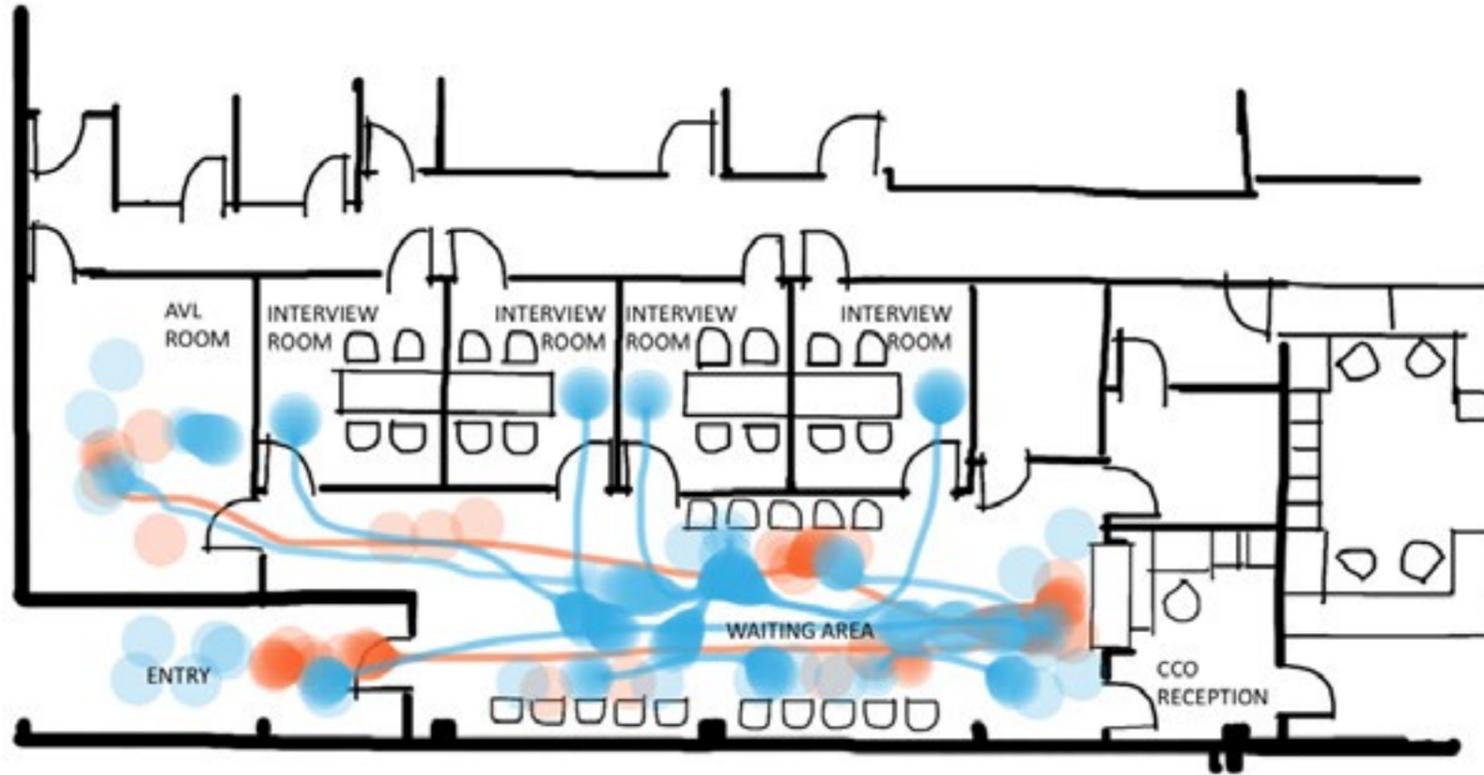
4. Follow-up

After a difficult situation incident there will be a requirement for follow-up. This will be in terms of:

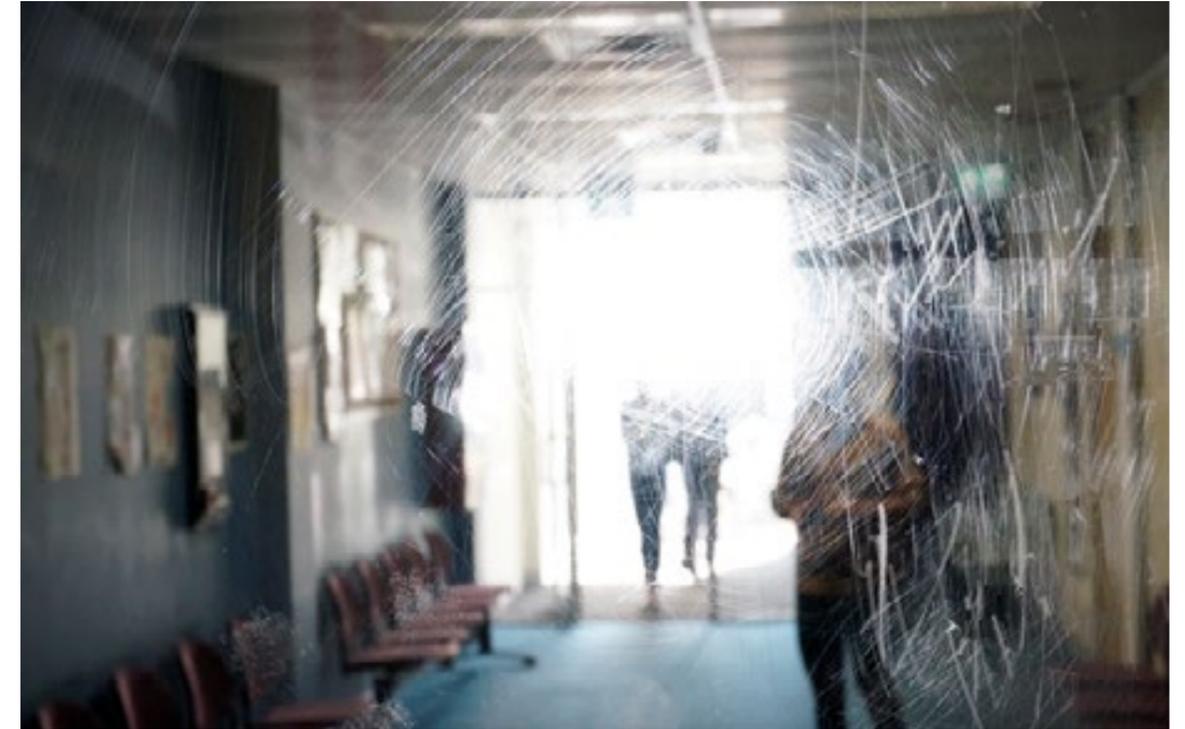
- local incident reporting at the CCO and reporting to the Correctional Centre
- informing relevant CS system for approving and monitoring family/ friend & inmate contact

* Consideration was given to providing volunteers or CCO staff with a direct video feed of the FVC vision on a screen or tablet. There were concerns, however, in terms of managing access to the feed, privacy issues and undue responsibility on volunteers/ staff. There are many similar situations in CCO and CC context where there is similar risk but such surveillance would not be deemed necessary

CONCEPT DESIGN



Campbelltown CCO reception and interview rooms with current visitor flow.



View from the reception desk; afternoon light and glare.

CURRENT PLAN AND MOVEMENT

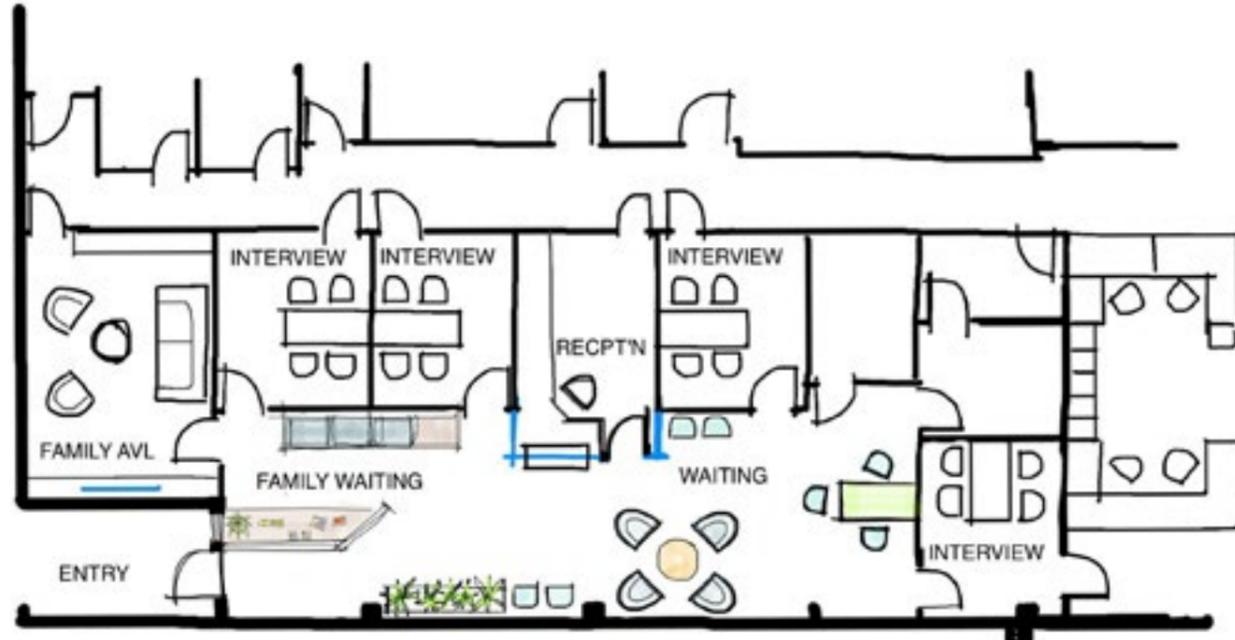
The floor plan resembles an extra wide corridor with a reception at the end of it. Seats and doors line either side of the room and the reception has Perspex sheet for security and holes for communication.

The movement through the space is to first visit the reception and then wait to be called for a meeting with staff in one of the interview rooms. All visitors are subject to this system whether they are offenders attending an interview or families attending an Audio Visual Link (AVL) session with a relative in prison.

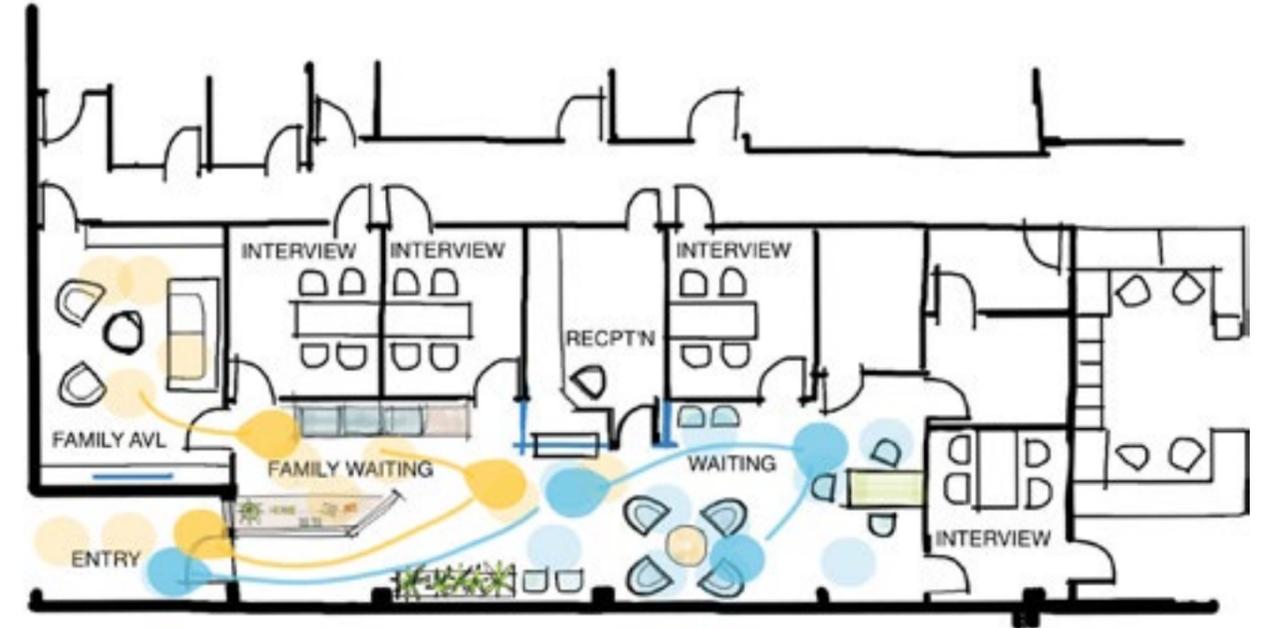
The space is monitored by CCTV from the office and there is a buzzer for the visitor if the reception remains unattended for a period after their arrival.

Information pamphlets for various conditions are provided and distributed from wall-mounted holders. There is a small wall mounted TV that is set on a commercial channel

The reception is orientated to the west and it was observed that at certain times of the day, glare entering the space rendered the visitors as silhouettes to the staff and a mirrored surface as the Perspex reflected the light to the visitor.



Campbelltown CCO 'Meet Half Way' Concept reception and interview rooms.



Indication of manipulation of the visitor flow.

DESIGN INTENTIONS

- Create a more assessable, non threatening space where the reception meets clients and families half way
- Discretely separate family and client visitors

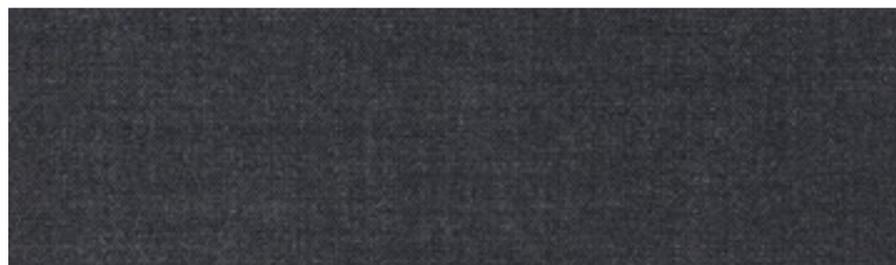
NOTE

- While the majority of stakeholders agreed with the value of the change in layout including moving reception, it is acknowledged that not all CCO staff were in agreement. In the next stage of detailed design and specification, a particular effort will be made to address these concerns where possible.

DESIGN ATTRIBUTES

Locating the reception half way down the corridor offers a number of other advantages:

- The remote reception as destination is removed.
- The glare and reflection issue is resolved.
- The floor plan is discretely divided into two spaces where there is a logical divide between offender visitors and family visitors.
- The division allows the information pamphlets to be more discretely organized and targeted to the offender visitors.
- The gun barrel shape of the plan is divided to offer a less confronting facing each other seating arrangement to more of a waiting room feel.



MATERIAL THEME

Although the final materials are not yet specified the intention is to create an aesthetic which creates a 'productive feel'. This has been achieved by taking influence from productive spaces like libraries or studios which provide visual cues that evoke respectful and productive mindset, behaviour and interaction.

Proposed material themes:

- Off white walls, colour used sparingly, preferably through art and material details rather than through traditional 'feature walls'
- Timber doors
- Black trim
- Simple bold wayfinding
- Materials which will not look tired quickly; ie Cork flooring that's hard wearing and easy to keep clean, dark canvass upholstery



CONCEPT SKETCH

The aim is to provide furniture which meets necessary safety and durability requirements without feeling institutional, governmental or correctional. Instead, more normalised furniture is proposed which contributes to a productive feel and communicates trust and value in the client.

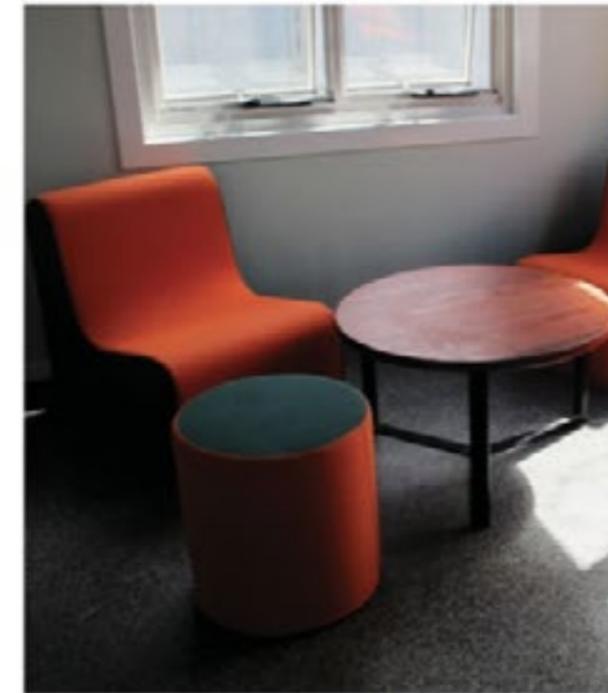
Communicating this message visually is not only valuable for clients and families but is able to project a progressive corporate image to all visitors of the space.

Varying floor treatments, seat direction and type can assist to separate different areas, visually suggesting different functions such as seating area, family area and reading area.

WAITING ROOM SEATING



low bench seating



fixed hard items, movable soft furniture



Kezu Andreuworld



fixed to timber panels - alternative to beam seating

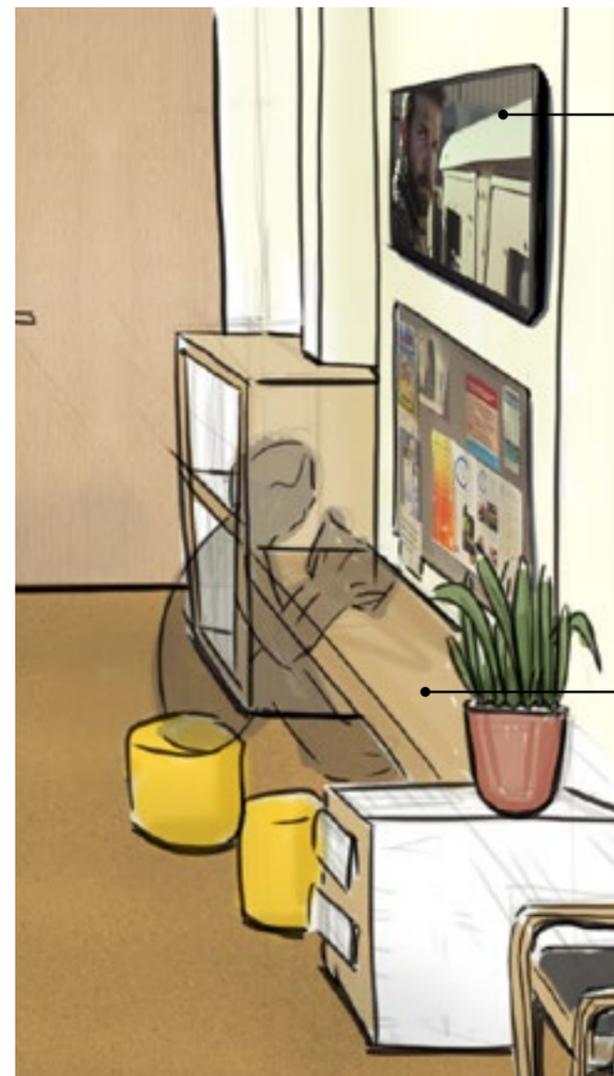
INFORMATION

- The pamphlet racks were often empty.
- One man hid a pamphlet in his hand as another faced him meters away.
- There is opportunity to make the information more approachable and engaging within the space by distributing it throughout the space and across various platforms

“They don’t often use the notice table as it’s up near the reception desk, it’s unapproachable”



distribute pamphlets amongst seating



places to read in privacy

notices displayed on monitors - between programs or on separate screens.



iPads with flush anti theft mount



Campbelltown CCO group rooms

CURRENT PLAN AND USE

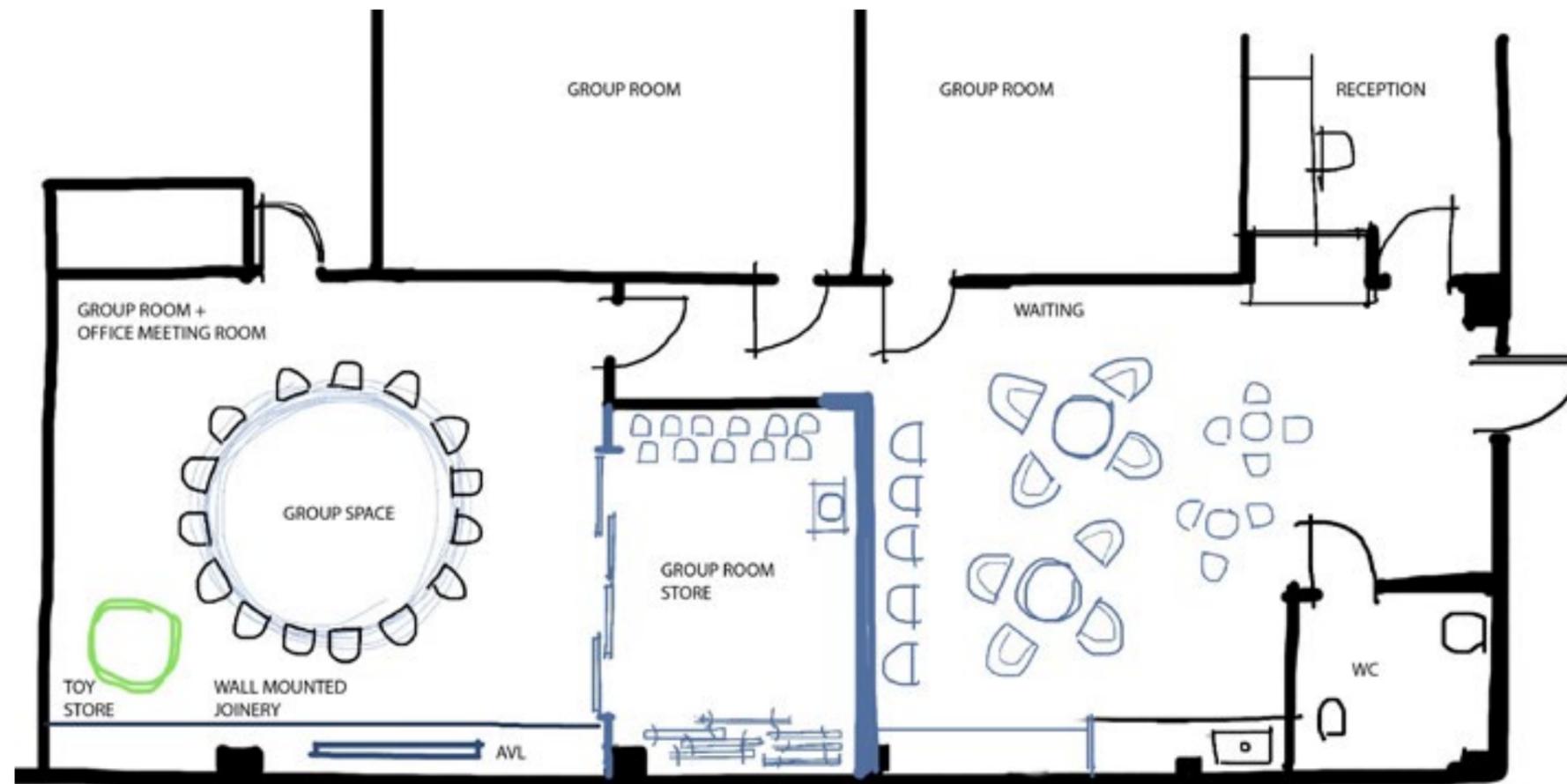
There are four group rooms. Three are used as intended and one is utilized as a store as it doesn't have the dual office and public access. All rooms are located at the rear of the CCCO tenancy and are accessed from a reception area that has an entry door off a small car park. The rooms are serviced by a small reception, waiting space, public toilet, and kitchenette.

Group programs can have up to 20 attendees. Programs are generally held after business in the evening.

One room in particular is utilized both by the CCCO office for meetings and for the group programs. The Group Room and Office Meeting Room was identified by CSNSW and CCCO as having potential for multiple functions, including FVC.

DESIGN INTENTIONS

- Increase amenity for a productive offenders program meeting space
- Increase amenity to support the needs of CCCO business including facility for meetings and training
- Provide a functional and welcoming large FVC facility



Offender program setup

PROPOSED PLAN AND USE

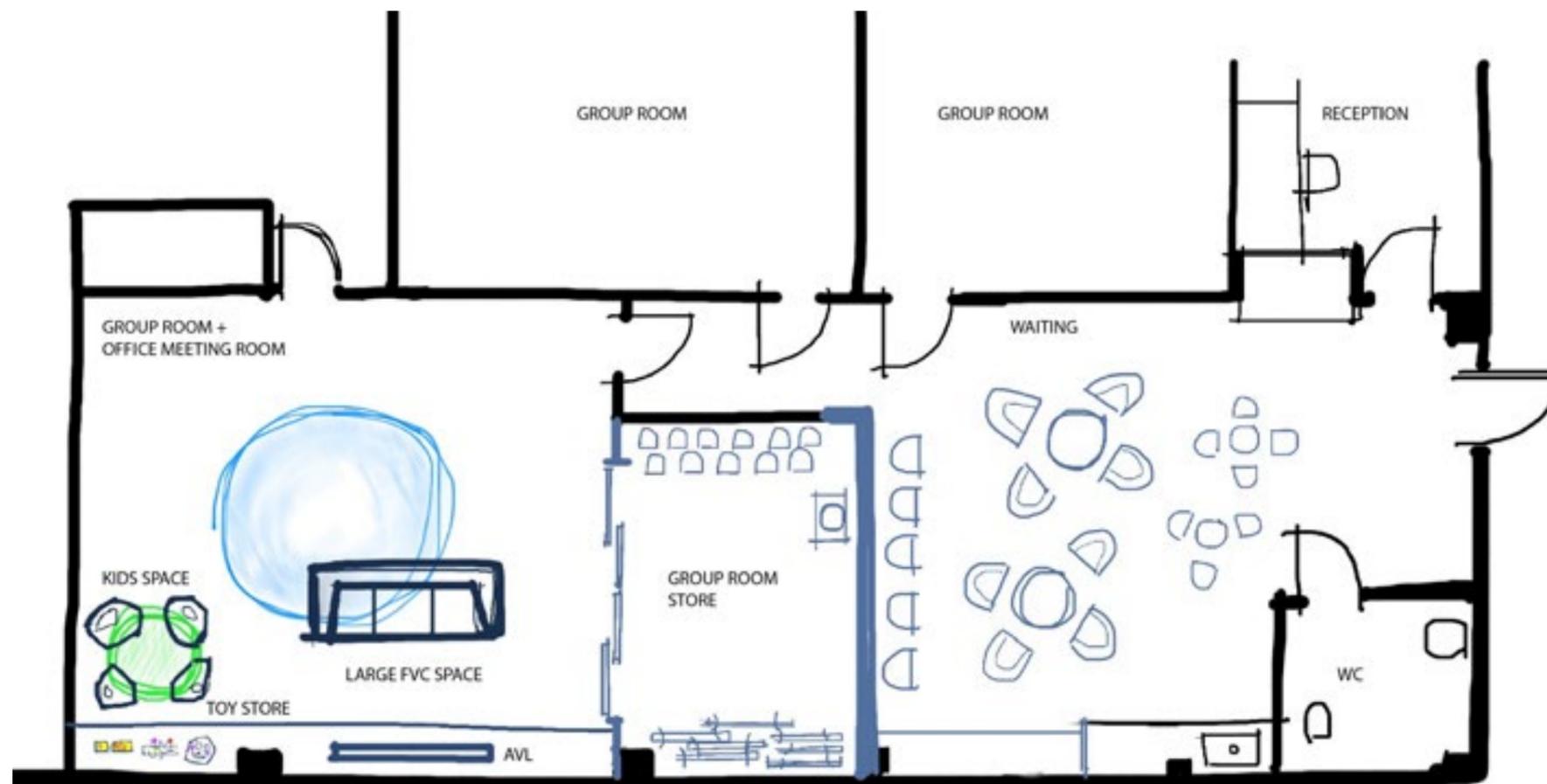
- The proposed changes look at the whole of the group, meeting and training facility. This includes the waiting, reception and the underutilized storeroom.

DESIGN INTENTIONS

- Increase the amenity of the group, meeting and training facility with minimum impact on the existing fitout

DESIGN ATTRIBUTES

- Increased amenity to support the needs of Campbelltown CCO business including a facility for meetings and training - storage for group tables and chairs for multiple configurations.
- Enlarged waiting room to meet capacity for offender program and regional business training location.
- Amenity for a productive offenders program meeting space - de-cluttered space with storage
- Large adaptable space for FVC
- Wall mounted joinery to accommodate AVL screen, other AVL equipment and kids toys
- Minimum impact on existing fitout



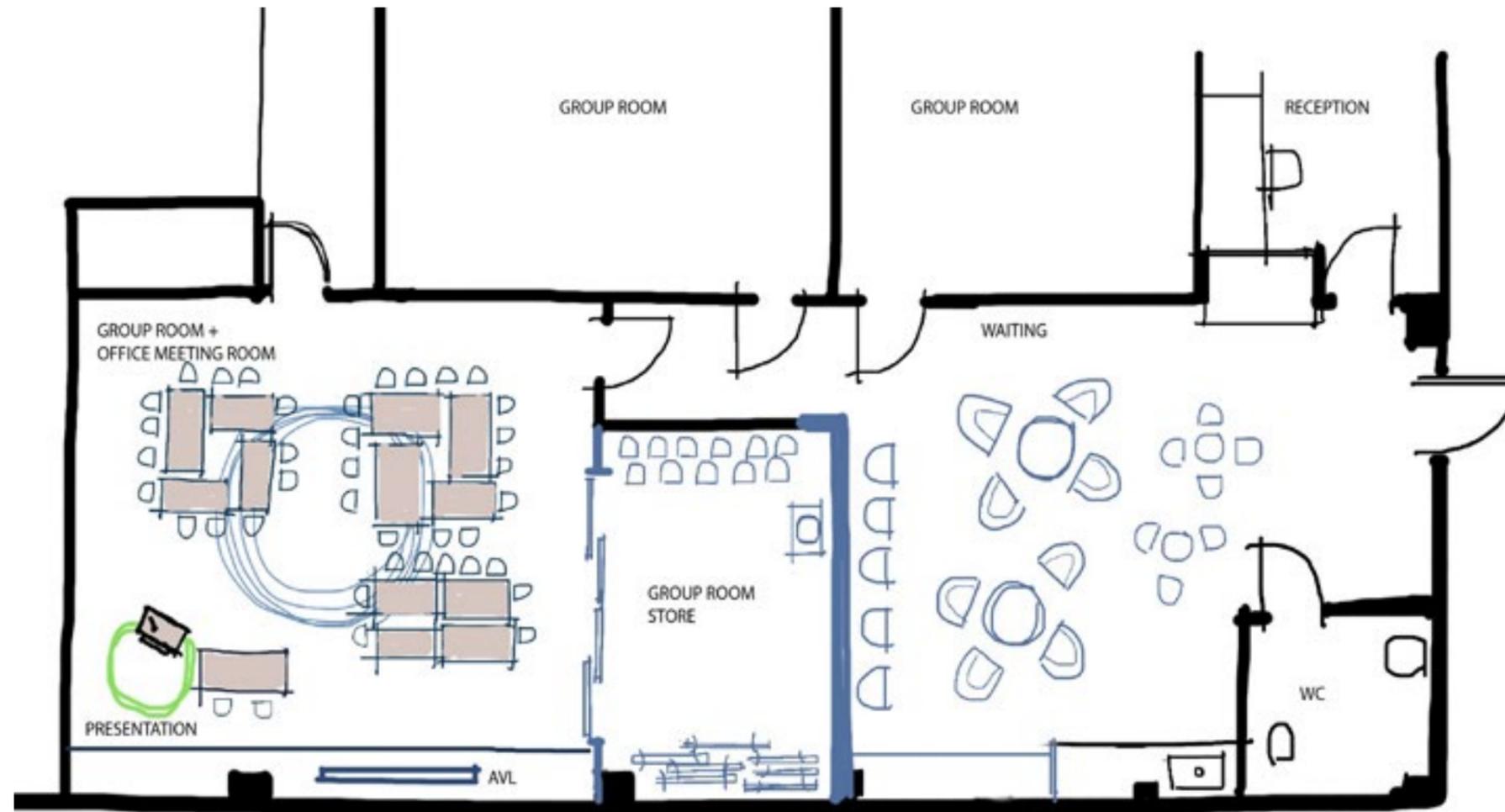
Family Video Contact setup

DESIGN INTENTIONS

- To create a comfortable space for families to attend FVC.
- To have other spaces where children can entertain themselves whilst parents communicate via FVC

DESIGN ATTRIBUTES

- The FVC setup features furniture of a domestic nature
- A lounge and some kids sized chairs are kept in the storeroom and maneuvered into position for the FVC sessions
- Toys and equipment are stored in the wall-mounted joinery



Regional meeting and training setup

PROPOSED PLAN AND USE

The Training Room setup includes furniture that is also used for program sessions. Depending on the set up, furniture can be kept in the adjoining storeroom.

DESIGN INTENTIONS

- To create a productive and flexible space for the Campbelltown CCO business requirements

DESIGN ATTRIBUTES

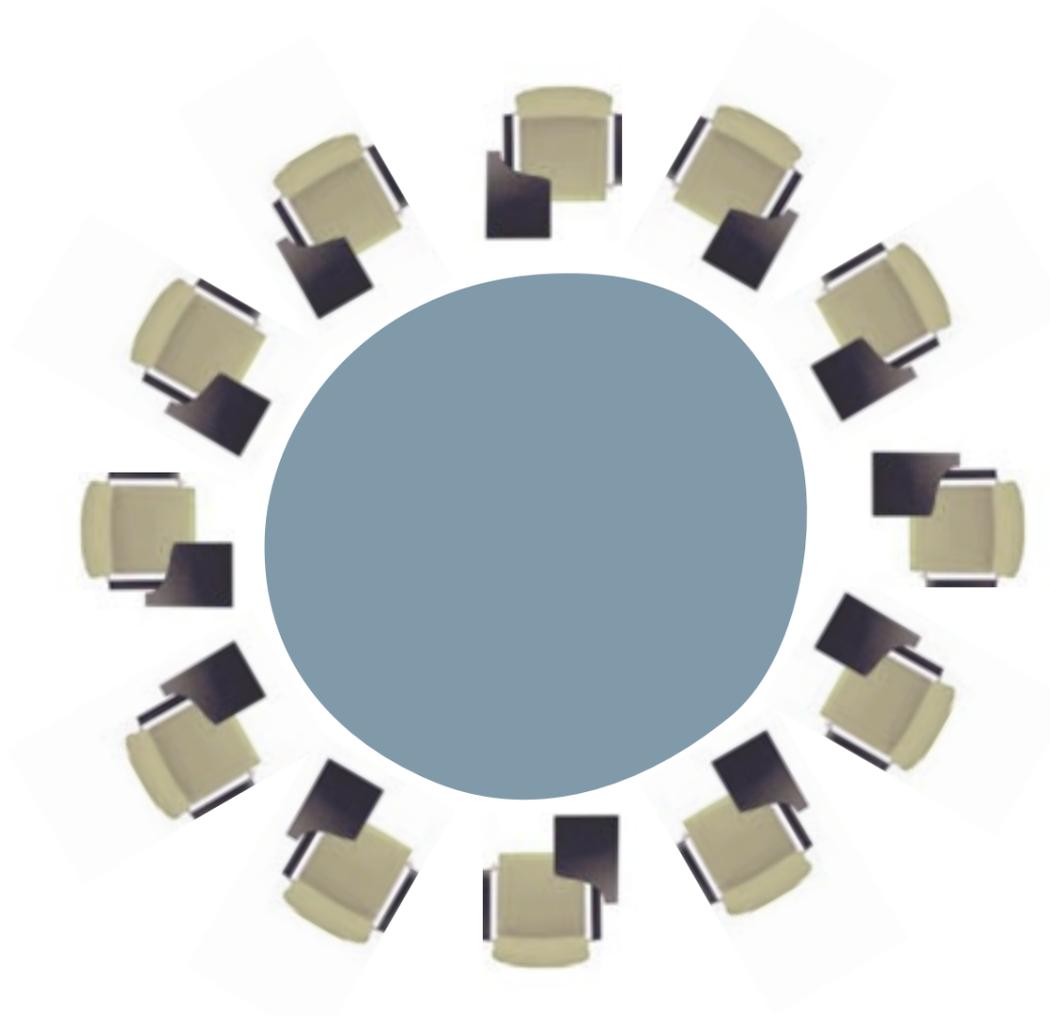
- Large waiting room for regional meeting and training events
- Multi-functional furniture that can be kept in the adjoining storeroom

“We usually don’t use the table, it creates a barrier. We’re only using it today because they’re filling out forms”

Many of the group rooms were filled with stacks of unused furniture. To prevent this issue, stackable chairs with fold out tables are recommended, along with tables which can fold up and be stowed in storage when not in use.



Wilkhahn 240 chair. stackable



Fold up tables can be used when writing is needed



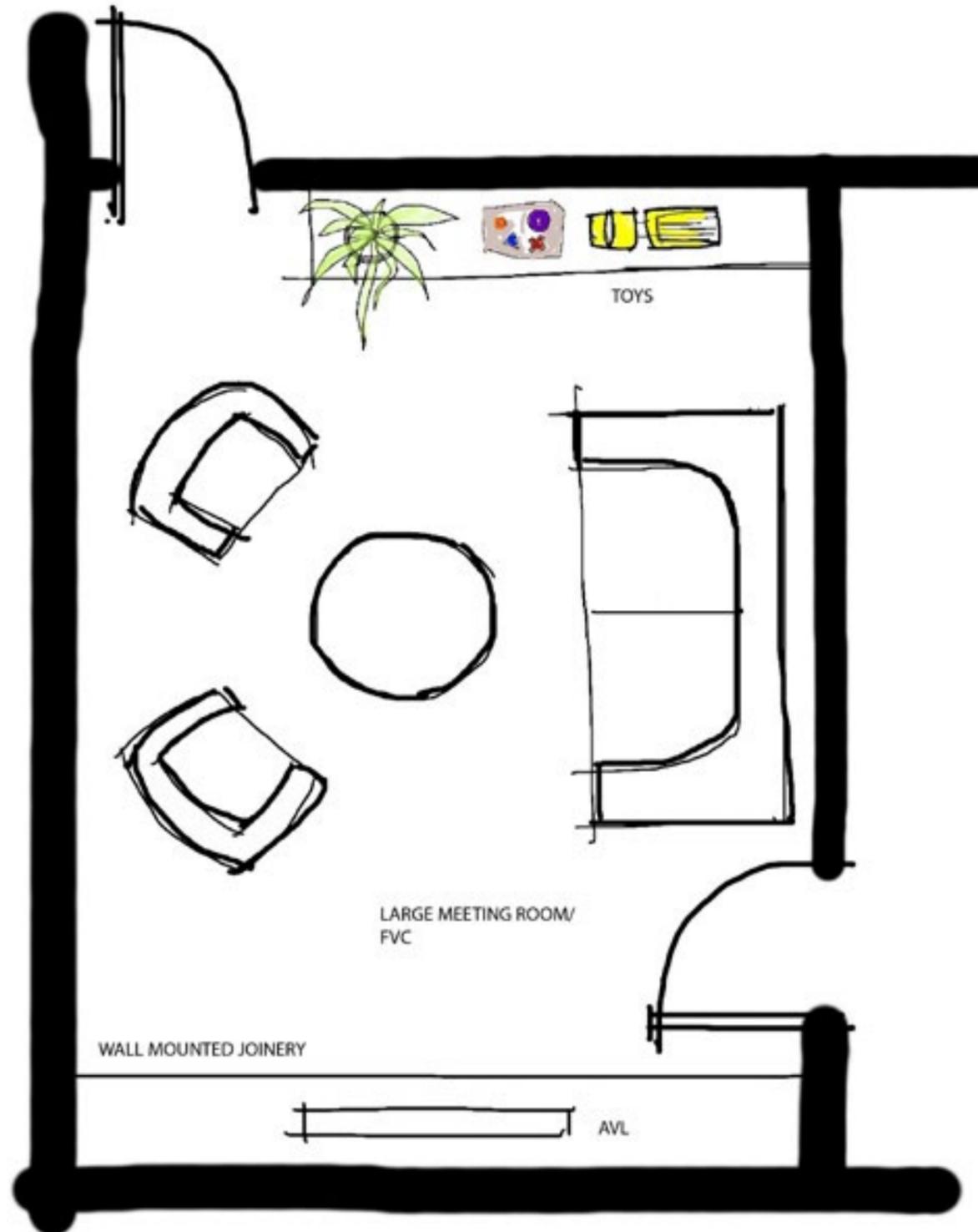
Wilkhahn fold up tables



PROJECT BOARDS / ROOM DIVIDERS

Large discussion boards on wheels can be used during group sessions. They can also act as room dividers, improving the flexibility of the space, allowing smaller spaces to be created if there are private discussions or in the case of family AVL contact happening in the group room.

One side can be upholstered to provide a backdrop for the AVL conversation as well as providing a sound baffle.



Family FVC [Meeting Room 5]

PROPOSED PLAN AND USE

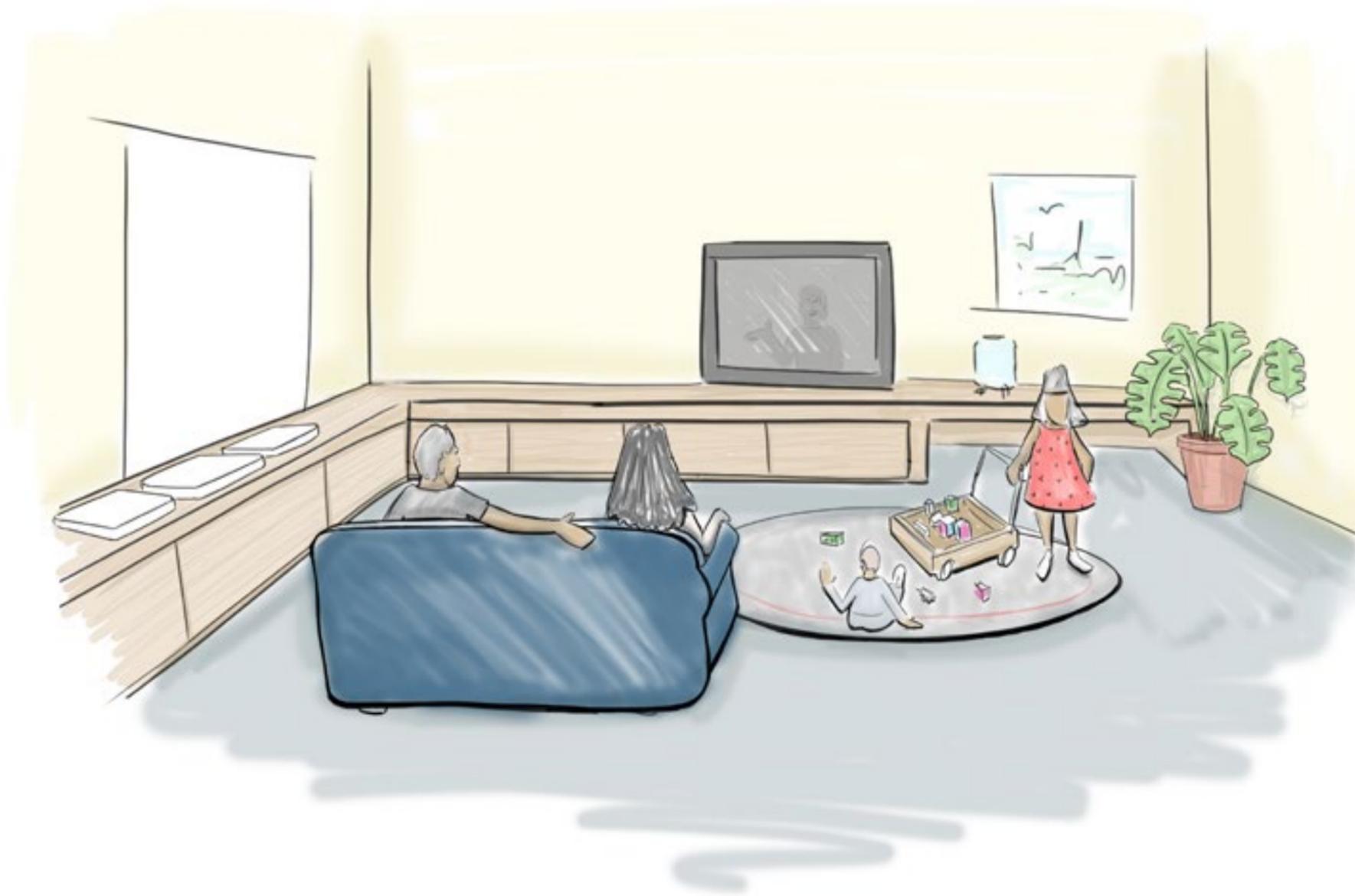
The large meeting room is identified as being suitable for FVC and less formal interview room. The change to the function is brought about by the introduction of the more domestic style furniture.

DESIGN INTENTIONS

To create a comfortable space for families visiting for FVC and an alternative interview environment for staff and offenders.

DESIGN ATTRIBUTES

- Furniture driven solution
- Domestic style furniture
- A more relaxed environment for families and
- An alternative environment for offender interviews
- Wall mounted joinery to accommodate AVL equipment
- Storage for toys



A NORMAL LOUNGE ROOM

The main positive quality of conversation through AVL is the ability to talk 'outside the prison'. Ideally, each space is carefully designed to create opportunity to talk within a 'normal' environment, with no visual cues of prison.

For instance children can see their father whilst they are sitting in a normal lounge room, without having to enter a prison and behave in ways which those spaces evoke.

Likewise, a father can see their children playing naturally in a comfortable environment.

"Kids aren't allowed to take toys into a correctional centre. It would be good for the guys to watch their kids playing with toys. They can see little Johnny playing with lego, or taking his first steps, or "look dad, I can draw a fish". They're just small things but they have a big impact on normality, they help things grow in a community".

(CCO staff)



Freedom furniture Bonnie Range

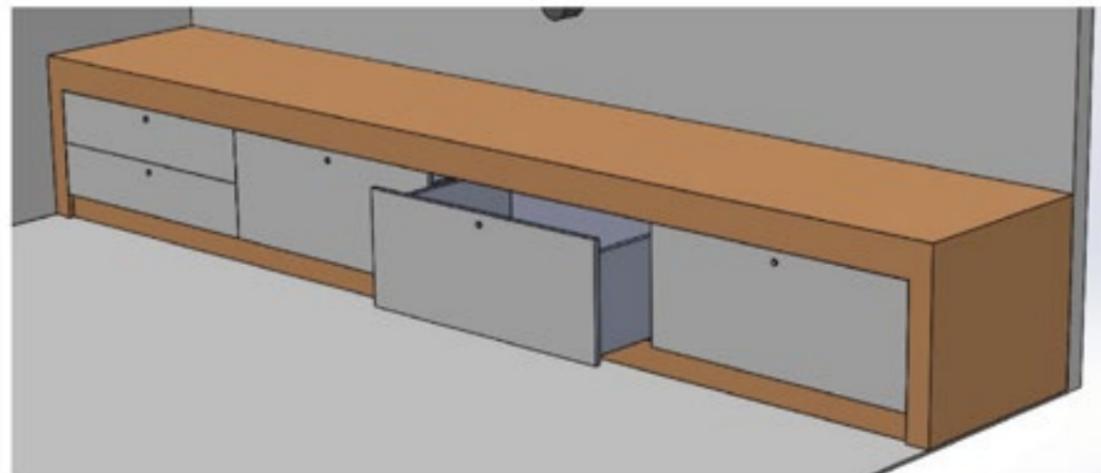


A NORMAL LOUNGE ROOM

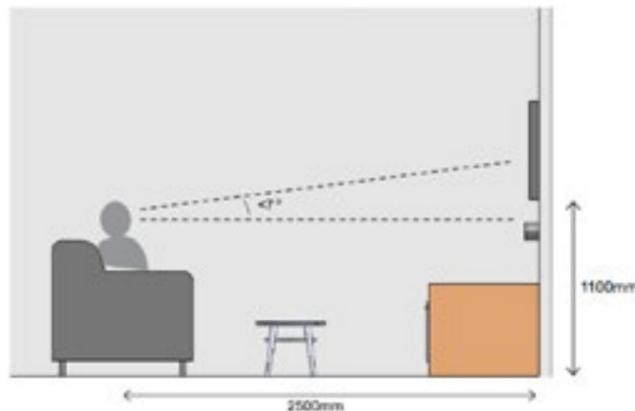
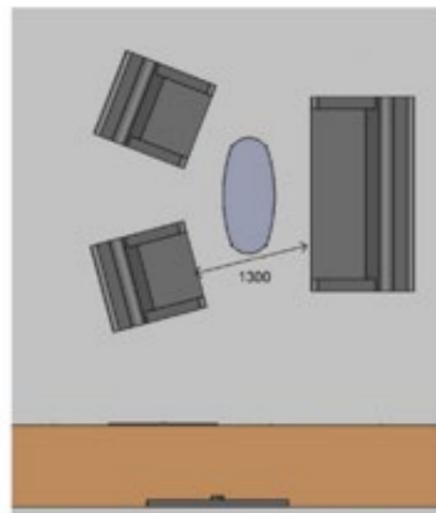
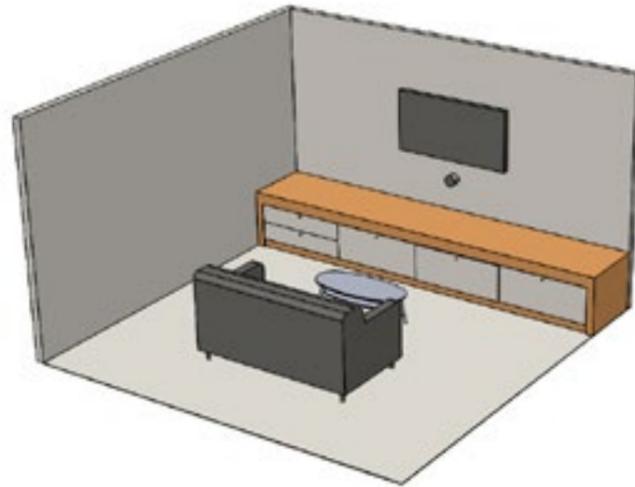
Comfortable mid-range lounge room furniture has been chosen along with modern timber cabinetry to contextualise and house the AVL equipment.

"You have to give people something to rise up to, but also you need to remember that Different families have different lounge rooms, it shouldn't make them feel inadequate"

(CCO staff)



Credenza with lockable cupboards



AVL set up - the furniture should be easily movable to allow effective FVC as well as standard interviews.



Cisco Telepresence SX20



Cisco Telepresence ceiling microphone



Cisco Telepresence swivel camera



JBL flush mount ceiling microphone

AUDIO VISUAL LINK TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Research was conducted into the technical requirements and specifications for equipment for the FVC service. Sources for this research include literature recommendations as well as equipment analysis. Some of the concerns and valued provisions outlined include:

- Camera that has two-axis swivel; in order to frame people of different heights, as well as kids around the room or anyone sitting on the floor; autofocus and a wide enough focal length to accommodate for all people in the space are other desirable camera features
- Display with a large enough diameter such that the inmate on screen can be viewed by his family with life size proportions; as with most displays on the market at this time features should include 16:9 aspect ratio and 1080p resolution
- Speakers should be co-located with the display in order to allow for a natural communication experience; the inmate's voice should appear to come from the direction of the display
- Camera should be co-located with the display in order to allow for a natural communication experience; the family's gaze should appear to be directed at the camera even when they are viewing the display
- Camera height should be ergonomically located such that it is at eye-level for the average seated family member; with low seating this may mean that the camera is situated below the display
- Picture In Picture (PIP) mode on the display would allow the family to see the image of them that is being transmitted; this could be provided in one corner of the display
- Ceiling mounted microphones may provide the best sound reproduction in this context; prioritise speech intelligibility by providing vibration dampeners and audio processing

GROUP/INTERVIEW ROOM



Rattle



Paper and colouring pencils



Stacking toy



Rubik's cube



Wooden blocks



Dinosaur figurines

Books:

- Where The Wild Things Are (Maurice Sendak)
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Eric Carle)
- One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish (Dr. Seuss)
- Possum Magic (Mem Fox)
- We're Going on a Bear Hunt (Michael Rosen & Helen Oxenbury)



This selection of toys and books has been chosen to help occupy children in the group room or interview room. Various ages have been catered for, while the toys and books should act to supplement rather than detract from the actual AVL visit. These toys and books could help to enable further conversation and games between offender and child.

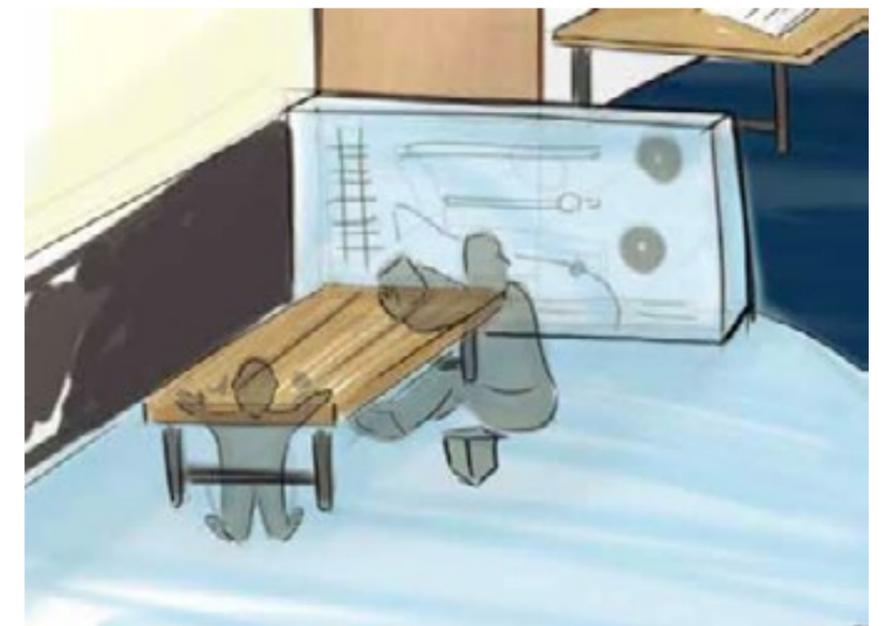
WAITING ROOM



Wall mountable marine puzzle



Wire wooden bead pathfinder



The toys listed above are recommended for CCO waiting areas in order to occupy children in a productive and engaging manner. Apart from the standard inclusion of a TV in reception, other options must be provided for children to prevent restlessness and boredom. Considerations for these toys include ease of maintenance, accessibility to various ages and demographics as well as security and theft concerns.

PARENTS GAME CHEAT SHEET

I SPY - During the AVL visit, have the father play 'I Spy' with their child. Spot something in the child's room, say the first letter of the word and ask the child to guess what it is.

THE EXHAUSTION GAME - Choose a category such as vegetables, cars, fruits, furniture, animals etc. Then take turns saying one example from that category until you exhaust the topic.

PICTIONARY - Write down some words, they could be anything (person, place, animal, object, action). One by one, have the child draw these and have the father try and guess what the word is by looking at the drawing. An alternate version of this game is 'Charades', where the child would act out a word instead of drawing it.

20 QUESTIONS - One of you thinks of a word, and the others have to guess the word by asking a maximum of 20 questions. Only yes or no answers are allowed. The winner then gets to think of the next word.

LAST LETTER - One of you starts by saying one random word, and then the other has to say another word that starts with the last letter of the previous word, and so on until the player can't find a word that starts with that letter. Words cannot be repeated.

Other activities to consider:

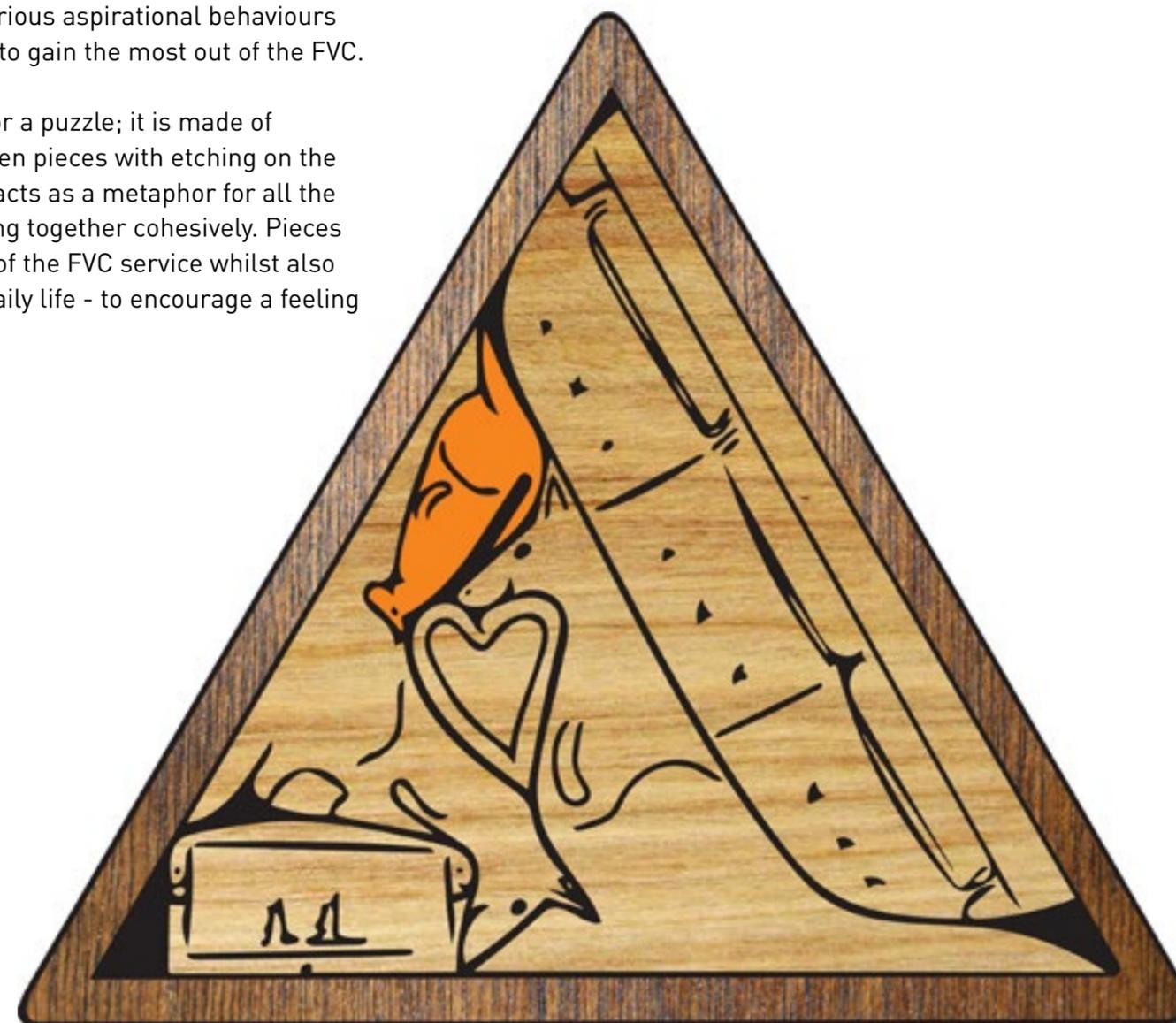
read books, sing songs/nursery rhymes, make faces, play with puppets, 'heads shoulders knees and toes', 'show and tell'.

AVL CONTEXT SPECIFIC GAMES

There is much potential to engage kids through toys that are directly specific to the AVL context. The toy could act as a medium to tell the child a story of what they are actually achieving during their FVC visit. The child's experience could be explored, with an attempt to speak to their activities in the CCO, their general life as well as their relation to their father and family.

A context specific toy should strive to explain details of the child's visit, while trying to put them at ease in this unfamiliar setting. Custom toys should encourage various aspirational behaviours and learning that can enable kids to gain the most out of the FVC.

The image pictured is a concept for a puzzle; it is made of simple, blocky, hardwearing wooden pieces with etching on the pieces to show detail. The puzzle acts as a metaphor for all the elements of the child's family fitting together cohesively. Pieces in the puzzle represent elements of the FVC service whilst also depicting family connection and daily life - to encourage a feeling of normalcy.





Front and rear access into the office.



Change in level in the tenancy only accessible by stairs



Office space with access to no natural light – nor external views.



Office space with limited access to natural light – no external views.

PROPOSED PLAN AND USE

The large meeting room is identified as being suitable for FVC and less formal interview room. The change to the function is brought about by the introduction of the more domestic style furniture.

DESIGN INTENTIONS

To create a comfortable space for families visiting for FVC and an alternative interview environment for staff and offenders.

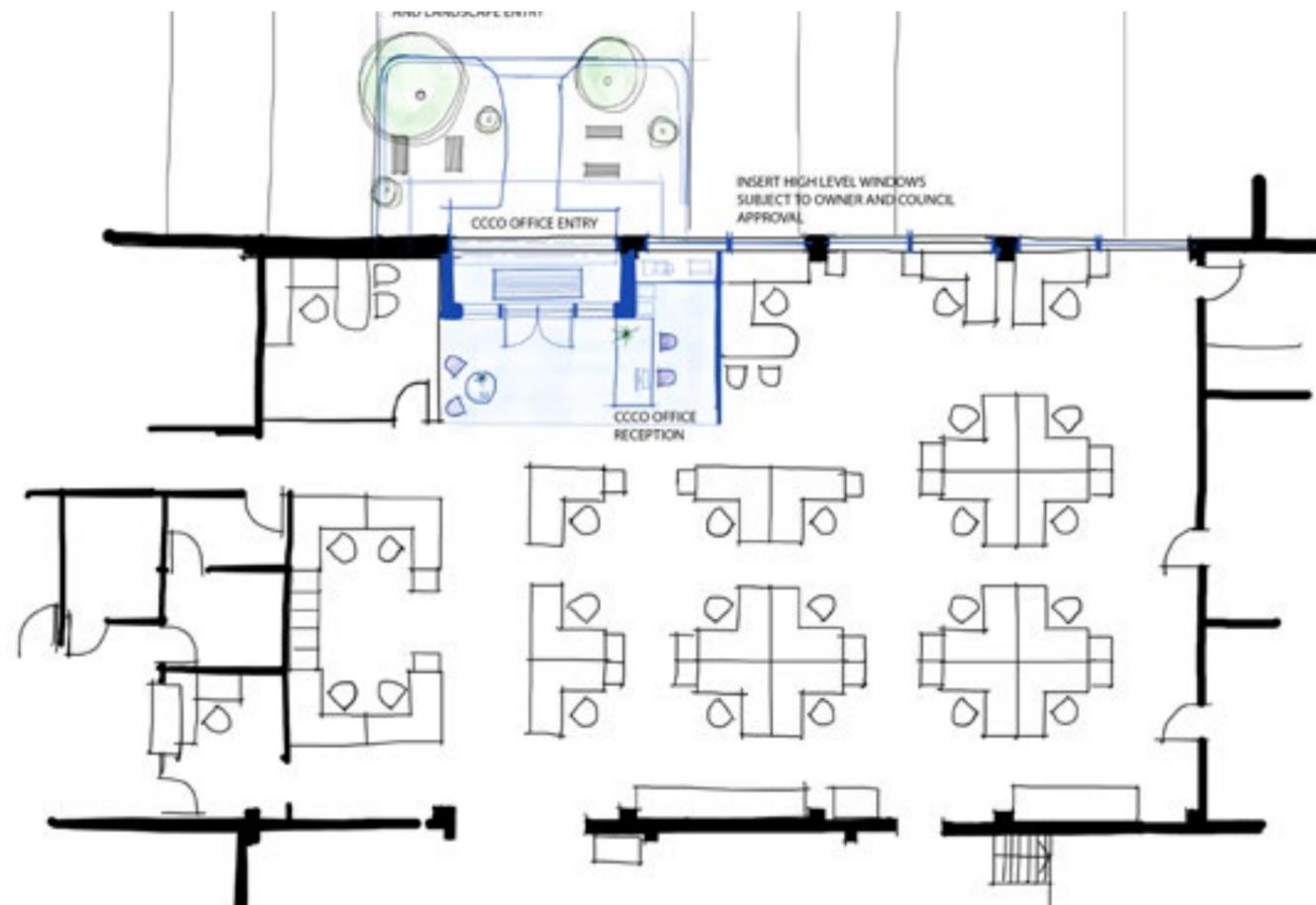
DESIGN ATTRIBUTES

- Furniture driven solution
- Domestic style furniture
- A more relaxed environment for families and
- An alternative environment for offender interviews
- Wall mounted joinery to accommodate AVL equipment
- Storage for toys



GENERAL PLAN

The plan indicates design interventions that make changes to the fitout or the building envelope. Changes to the group rooms require internal fitout alterations. The staff design interventions require changes to the building envelope and would be subject to owner and council approval.



Plan showing proposed improvements to building entry

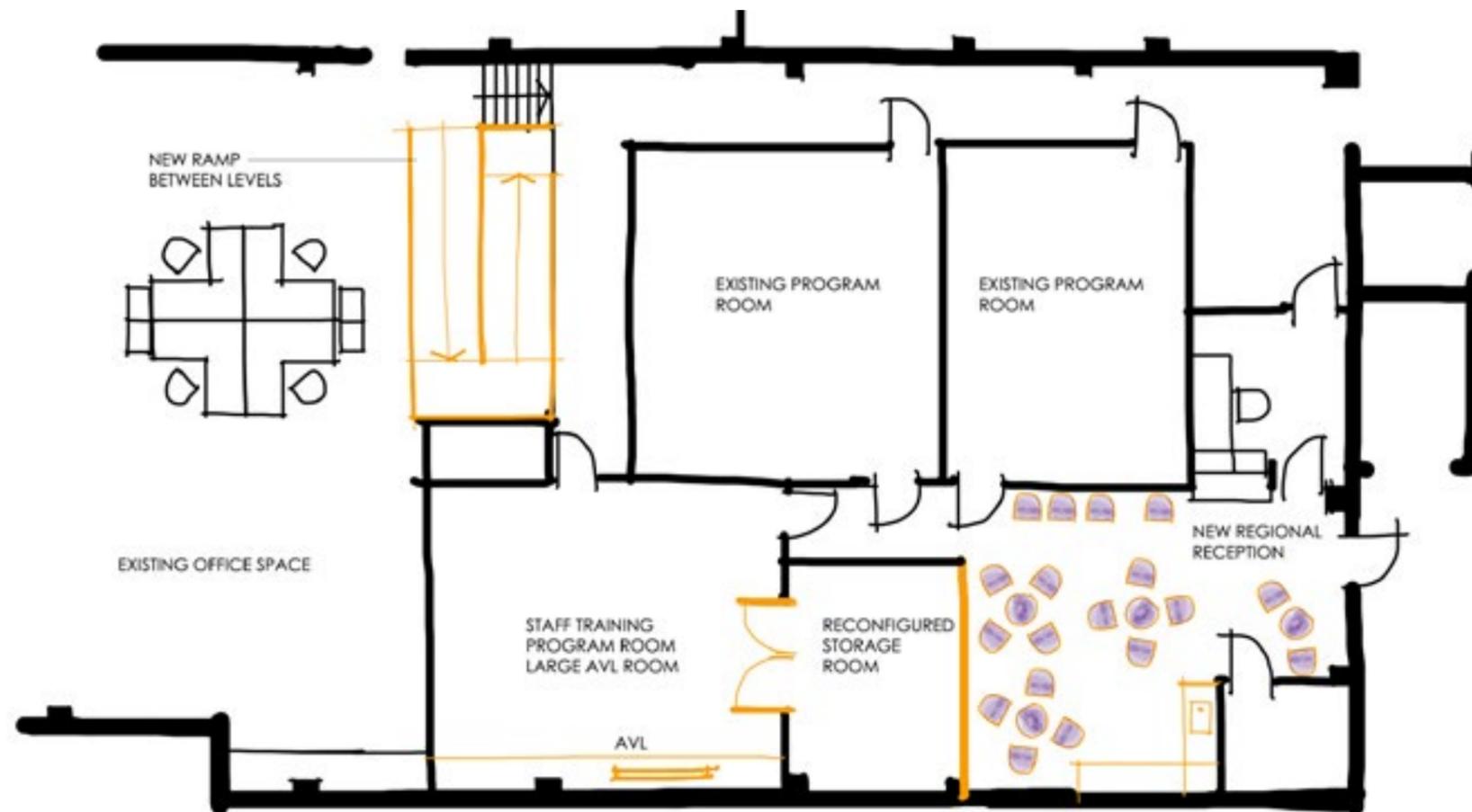
BUILDING ENTRY

Design intentions

- To provide an address/identity for the CCC0 business and staff.
- To allow for access to natural light and external views

Design attributes

- Access to light, views and potentially fresh air via high level windows and glazed entry doors.



EQUITABLE ACCESS

Design intentions

- To provide equitable access throughout the office

Design attributes

- Ramp to allow passage for people with disabilities - concept only and subject to design

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

OVERVIEW

This report details concepts for the piloting of a Family Video Contact (FVC) service and for the refurbishment of the office environment at Campbelltown Community Corrections Office. The concepts for FVC service and CCO refurbishment were codesigned with Campbelltown CCO staff and clients, CSNSW management, Community Restorative Centre staff and representatives from the Prison Fellowship. This report articulates negotiated concepts rather than fully specified designs. Additional design work, consultant reports and review with stakeholders will be required to finalise the designs. This report does however provide a strong basis on which to make clear design recommendations and articulate next steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Family Video Contact service pilot

Conduct a 3 month FVC pilot program at Campbelltown CCO in partnership with the Community Restorative Centre and the Prison Fellowship based on to the framework provided in this report.

2. FVC prototype space at Campbelltown CCO

The large interview room off the main waiting area at the front of the Campbelltown CCO is selected as the primary space for FVC sessions. This room, rather than the group program room, was selected for this prototyping exercise as it is also more typical of other CCO facilities.

3. Campbelltown CCO waiting room configuration

The recommended configuration for the waiting room is the 'meeting half way' layout where the reception counter is moved half way down on the left hand side wall (see figure on page 23). While the majority of stakeholders agreed with the value of this change, it is acknowledged that not all CCO staff were in agreement. In the next stage of detailed design and specification, a particular effort will be made to address these concerns where possible.

4. Campbelltown CCO waiting room fit-out

Develop furnishing, fit-out and fixtures specifications based on the concepts consulted and agreed to on pages 26-28 of this document.

5. Staff office amenity at Campbelltown CCO

Building on the initial work on pages 41-44, develop and implement design concepts to improve the amenity of the staff area particularly with regard to access to natural light.

6. Amenity of group program and training room at Campbelltown CCO

Develop the case to refurbish the Campbelltown CCO group program and training room with AVL capacity and additional amenity. This would support off site client group programming

and staff training being provided through the AVL facility in a purpose design space.

7. Review the Family Video Contact service pilot

After the 3 month FVC trial conduct a formal review to revise the framework and practices, and if indicated create a strategy for the expansion of the service.

CONCLUSIONS

NEXT STEPS

Brief Assistant Commissioners

Provide the relevant Assistant Commissioners with a briefing on the report and the associated recommendations. (Oct 16)

Building survey/lease documents and engage quantity surveyor

Obtain lease and survey documents for the Campbelltown CCO premise to inform design development. Engage quantity surveyor to provide initial cost estimates (Oct 16)

Create budget

Based on quantity surveyors assessment and available funds, create a budget and schedule for the proposed works. Architectural and FFF design costs will be between 10-20% depending on scope and nature of design work (i.e. furniture design can be more intensive at this scale) (Nov 16)

Review concept designs with inmates and families

The initial project plan included consultations with inmates and families (related ethics clearance obtained). While we drew on information related to their experience when designing the spaces, it is important inmates and families have a direct opportunity to review the concept designs. The DOC team will cover the cost of these consultation within the initial project funding. (Nov 16)

Stakeholder workshop

Run a 3 hour stakeholder workshop to review and refine the framework on the report with a view to implementation planning. Include a wide range of stakeholders including CCO staff, CS management, members of relevant CS committees, NGOs and other partners. (early Dec 16)

Detail design concepts

Detail the design concepts for final specification by the fabricator, architectural or building company engaged to implement the designs. (Feb 17)

Establish a project control group and establish implementation plans

Create a project control group to oversee and establish implementation plans for the building works and the piloting of the FVC service (March 17)

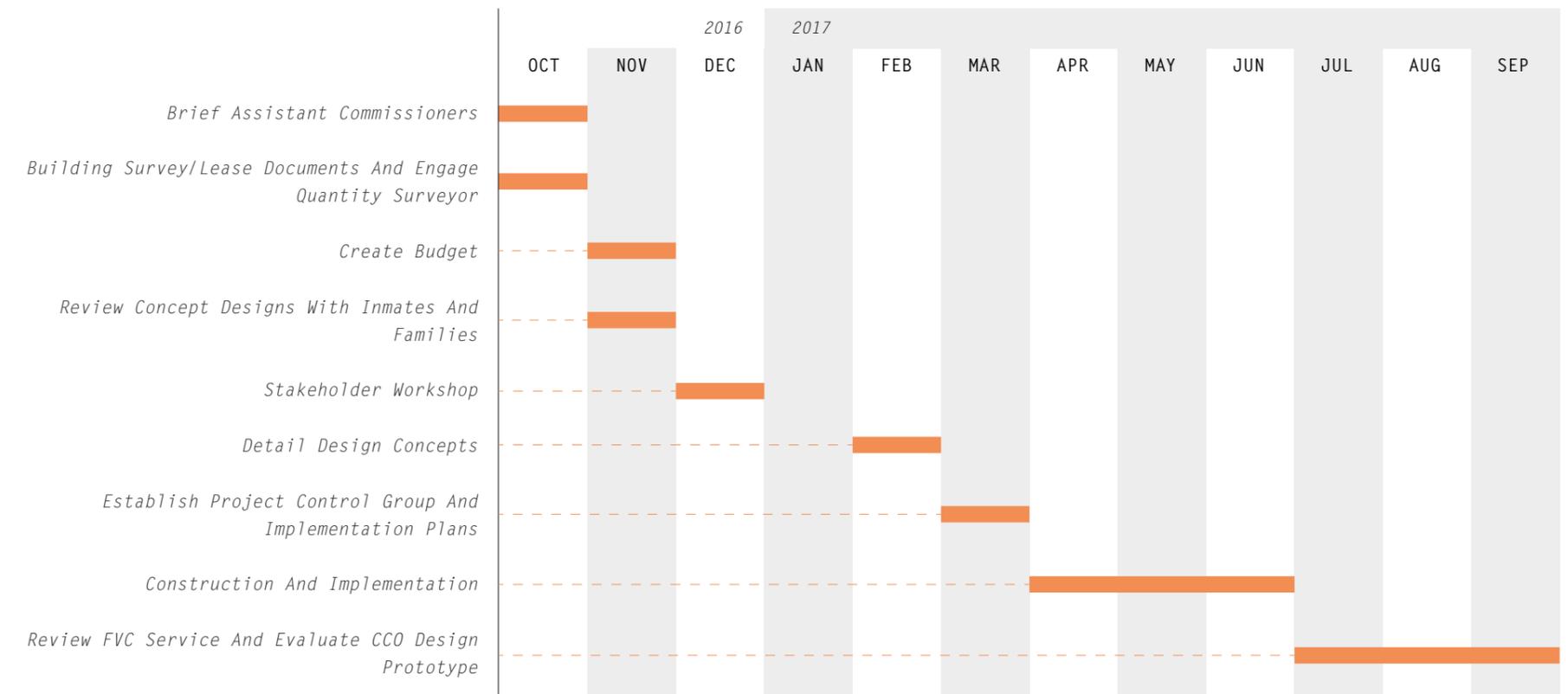
Construction and implementation

Implement refurbishment and establish FVC program in collaboration with service providers [April-June 17]

Review FVC service and evaluate CCO design prototype

After 3 months conduct a review of the FVC service and an initial post-occupancy assessment of the CCO design interventions.

TIMELINE



REFERENCES

REFERENCES

REFERENCE LIST

Beazar, C. (2008). Video visitation. Retrieved 1 July, 2016, from http://realcostofprisons.org/writing/beazer_video.html

Carr, N., Bauwens, A., Bosker, J., Donker, A., Robinson, G., Sučić, I., & Worrall, A. (2015). Picturing probation: Exploring the utility of visual methods in comparative research. *European Journal of Probation*, 7(3), 179-200.

Crabbe, M. (2002). Virtual visitation program uses video conferencing to strengthen prisoner contacts with families and children. *Offender Programs Report*, 6(3), 35-36.

Harrison, T. (2015). 'The architecture of a probation office: A reflection of policy and an impact on practice': A practitioner response. *Probation Journal*, 62(1), 65-70.

Kashyap, K., Lulham, R., Bradley, K., Munro, T., & Tomkin, D. (2016). Draft Environmental Guidelines for Audio Visual Suites in Custodial Justice Contexts

Moran, D. (2013). Carceral geography and the spatialities of prison visiting: visitation, recidivism, and hyperincarceration. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 31(1), 174-190.

New York City Department of Probation. (2011). From Waiting Rooms to Resource Hubs: An integrated Design Project presented by the Waiting Room Improvement Team. New York City: NYC Department of Probation.

Perry, V. (2012). Maintaining the link: A Survey of visitors to New South Wales Correctional Centres. Retrieved from Sydney: <http://www.correctiveservices.justice.nsw.gov.au/Documents/research-and-statistics/research-publication-maintaining-thelink-a-survey-of-visitors-NSWCC.pdf>

Phillips, J. (2010). The physical space of a probation office: control, risk and punishment. *Diverse engagement: drawing in the margins*, 145.

Phillips, J. (2014). The architecture of a probation office A reflection of policy and an impact on practice. *Probation Journal*, 0264550514523814.

Phillips, S. (2012). Video Visits for Children Whose Parents Are Incarcerated: In Whose Best Interest? Washington DC: The Sentencing Project.

Poehlmann, J., Dallaire, D., Loper, A. B., & Shear, L. D. (2010). Children's contact with their incarcerated parents: research findings and recommendations. *American Psychologist*, 65(6), 575.

Poehlmann-Tynan, J., Runion, H., Burnson, C., Maleck, S., Weymouth, L., Pettit, K., & Huser, M. (2015). Young children's behavioral and emotional reactions to plexiglas and video visits with jailed parents *Children's Contact with Incarcerated Parents* (pp. 39-58): Springer.

Rowden, E., Wallace, A., Tait, D., Hanson, M., & Jones, D. (2013). Gateways to justice: design and operational guidelines for remote participation in court proceedings. Retrieved from Sydney: <http://www.uws.edu.au/justice/justice/publications>

Tucker, W., Olfson, M., Simring, S., Goodman, W., & Bienenfeld, S. (2006). A pilot survey of inmate preferences for on-site, visiting consultant, and telemedicine psychiatric services. *CNS spectrums*, 11(10), 783-787.

APPENDICES

OVERVIEW

Site research was conducted at three preliminary CCO locations around NSW - Sydney City, Lake Macquarie & Newcastle and Kempsey. Each of the offices presented unique opportunities and challenges, while several common avenues for development were also identified.

SYDNEY CITY

- Relatively old fit-out at 5-7 years old
- Waiting area and reception are sterile and unwelcoming - the walk up to the counter is long and one would have to walk past the gaze of others waiting in the room
- The reception desk window was heavily scratched; one aluminium bar framing the window is placed directly at eye level, forcing the receptionist to hunch during conversation
- No natural light in this space; only form of stimulation is a single TV playing TVS kids shows continually
- On entering the group room it is obvious that this space is intended for multiple uses with furniture and other paraphernalia strewn everywhere; lack of storage space
- A client had to ask the receptionist for a glass of water, then get buzzed through to the kitchen; this is not only an annoyance but also creates a power dynamic



LAKE MACQUARIE & NEWCASTLE

- Relatively new fit out at 1-3 years old
- Facility presents itself as austere, with a bleak facade, no signage to indicate location of facility as well as a complicated internal layout confusing wayfinding
- Waiting room very small for the number of CCO clients; a family of four could make the space seem crowded
- Busy periods in this waiting space mean that there are often people standing about with minimal private space.
- Chairs in the reception space face each other in close proximity further minimising personal space
- Hearing through the glass in the reception area is quite difficult, with a complete blocking of sound by the window pane except for the nine holes in it
- Acoustic privacy in the interview rooms was raised as a concern; conversations could be heard in the waiting room and as a remedy a sound system was set up to constantly play loud music in an adjacent room
- High number of clients with sexual offences potentially sharing the waiting room with families; reception staff has limited visual access to waiting room.
- Main group room is not adjacent or easily accessible to the staff office area; concern about having families in a space which is far from assistance if required



KEMPSEY

- Relatively new fit out at 1-3 years old
- Most welcoming entrance of the three sites; easily located entrance even within the shopping arcade
- Sebel furniture in waiting room is a little older and has some charm about it creating a warmer environment.
- A spaceship kids table was also present however no toys were seen; staff mentioned that toys and books used to be left out for play but occasions where syringes were found in the toys and books halted that provision
- Security screen set-up was much preferred over the other two sites - window pane had larger gaps in it that allowed for easier communication
- Waiting room very small for the number of CCO clients; a family of four could make the space seem crowded
- Main group room is not adjacent or easily accessible to the staff office area; concern about having families in a space which is far from assistance if required



FAMILY CONNECTION SPACE

DESIGNING A THERAPEUTIC ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Family Connection Space (FCS) can be considered a therapeutic environment; one which is conducive to good connection; one which fosters personal balance and harmony, strengthens and promotes wellness, values the dignity of each human being, all whilst satisfying the needs of the parole office and clients. Design principles have been used in various settings with the aim of achieving similar goals and could provide valuable insight into how client behaviour and also their experience of the space can be positively affected. This report will explore the values that underpin a therapeutic space, relevant design principles as well as precedents.

KIRAN KASHYAP

CORE VALUES

Within the parole office, the FCS must embrace the visiting families in a psychologically and socially supportive environment. The characteristics of the physical environment in which the family makes their video visit affects the experience and the behaviour of the family and the inmate. As a result, such considerations must be taken as to maximise the satisfaction of the clients as well as to ensure the safety of all involved. Every space has some affect on the psyche of those within it; the effects can either be positive or negative, no environment is neutral.

A visiting family in the parole office will probably be fearful of the future, uncertain about their relationship with the inmate as well as being worried about their safety and their isolation from normal social relationships. The often sterile environment of a parole office can contribute negatively to the stressful situation, dampening a person's emotional and spiritual resources and impeding further positive outcomes. In the design of the FCS certain values are desirable with which to build a framework that will help achieve these positive outcomes. Ultimately the FCS is a therapeutic space that is being established to foster satisfaction and development for both inmate and family alike, all while maintaining a safe, comfortable environment.

The following core values are those which could best allow a fruitful design dialogue:

- :: Familiarity
- :: Connection
- :: Growth

FAMILIARITY

Familiarity is created by the use of conventions and may come from the fact that it follows standards or that the design follows a metaphor from people's real world experience. People are biased toward liking or trusting things that they find familiar. The familiarity principle, or mere-exposure effect, describes the tendency for people to show a preference for things merely because they seem familiar. With repeated exposures, fondness can develop for things that are initially disliked or totally unknown. By using design elements to elicit a sense of familiarity, families and others visiting the parole office will be imbued with a sense of comfort, thus reducing stress levels somewhat.

CONNECTION

The prison experience can often have the effect of weakening or even discouraging family or other positive social support for people and reconnecting with family on release can be a challenging experience. Families are often hurt by the offending behaviour and its impacts upon them, rebuilding trust and reconnecting is often a concern for those on release from prison. Many families can become estranged due to trauma inflicted by the offending behaviour. For other families, traditional family

roles often have altered while the family member is in prison, on release this can lead to frustration and a feeling of no longer knowing where they fit in.

The very purpose of the FCS is to encourage a dialogue between families and their inmate relations. Much research has shown the health benefits of social connection, which comes in many forms including communication and emotional support. There is much benefit to having dialogue between inmates and families including helping them deal with stressors and develop a higher self-esteem and control over their lives. Relating one's story with another is a powerful tool, and with respect to this the FCS must utilise design elements that encourage connection with others as opposed to the isolation and ostracisation that many parole office visitors may currently experience.

GROWTH

Personal development is hard work and takes time, consistency, and patience. The therapeutic environment of the FCS can help to nurture growth in both the lives of the inmates as well as those of their family members. By encouraging certain behaviours and relations the space can help to develop positive growth and learning amongst families. The development of various skills is a vital part of reducing the chances of re-offence by inmates and would allow for better integration into society and would also promote a healthy, happy lifestyle. The FCS space should support growth in various qualities including personal, educational, psychological and parental amongst many others.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

In creating a therapeutic environment, the designers are responsible for finding solutions that will affect the parole office visitors in positive ways. There are examples and opportunities for particular design criteria to be considered in the various areas of the facility, including the reception, hallway and the group room itself.

Research on therapeutic spaces has identified four key factors which if applied in the design of a space can measurably improve outcomes within the core values framework discussed above:

- :: Reduce environmental stressors
- :: Provide positive distractions
- :: Enable social support
- :: Give a sense of control

REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL STRESSORS

Wayfinding within the facility should provide clear visual cues to orient visitors and guide them to their destination and return. Building elements, daylight, colour, texture, pattern should all give cues along with artwork and signage. Colour while being a wayfinding tool can also affect mood. Artwork and aesthetics can enhance the soothing and calming qualities of the space. When furnishing consider form and shape and their implications. Use textures that feel and look good; that comfort or calm or stimulate tactile urges and connection to the physical self.

Odours that are objectionable or synthetic can create stress. Maintain good indoor air quality, using outside air if possible. Introduce scents or aromas for their arousing or relaxing effects or to counter unwanted or intrusive smells in the environment. Along with this sensory consideration, it is also important to reduce or eliminate other sources of noise such as cars outside and loud staff conversations.

Adequate space should be provided in the reception area to avoid crowding. There should be sufficient space to avoid any sense of intrusion on personal space in all areas. If possible a clearly defined boundary should be made between 'public areas' such as the reception counter and 'semi-private areas' such as the waiting space. This may be achieved through the strategic placing of furniture and plants.

Appropriate lighting systems must be considered, as lighting can alter mood as well as stress levels. Humans are phototropic; that is, people are naturally influenced by and drawn towards light. Spaces should be made light and airy allowing the use of natural light where possible. The entrances should be well lit as well as areas to which attention must be drawn to. Lamps should be used to soften the impact of harsh overhead

lighting while providing sufficient lighting quality to observe facial expressions, gestures and other expressions of emotion.

PROVIDE POSITIVE DISTRACTIONS

Views of nature wherever possible can provide reprieve. This is especially important in stressful areas such as the reception. Access to the nature in the form of a healing garden can be ideal but if views or access to nature is not possible, then pot plants can be used as a substitute along with artworks depicting nature. Backlit photographs of nature including depictions of animals can also provide distraction.

Positive wellbeing and distraction can also be provided by music. Piano and classical music could further reduce stress and create a healing environment in the reception and hallway areas.

ENABLE SOCIAL SUPPORT

It is important to engage families to be an active part of the design process, tuning in to the specific needs of the population and community to be served. Create a space that encourages positive family interaction with the aid of healthy parenting. Group rooms could also be used for parenting classes as well as skill-shares for single parents and formerly incarcerated people to share their knowledge and discuss their experiences with others in a similar situation. Children should be actively catered for in the space by making it comfortable for them in order to facilitate conversations between incarcerated fathers and their children.

The FCS space should be considered to facilitate social behaviours and the development of social groups by using appropriate furniture such as movable seating and round tables. The spacial arrangement of the group room should encourage communication and so no permanent barrier such as a coffee table should be placed in the middle of the room whether during video visits or other uses of the room.

Culturally appropriate environments must be designed with each space appropriate to the demographics and cultures prevalent in the location of the facility.

GIVE A SENSE OF CONTROL

Without compromising safety and security, families can be given as much control over the immediate environment as possible. This includes control over such things as lighting, TV, movable furniture, cushions that can be held in a lap and access to beverages. Personal light dimming options can benefit the mood of visitors. Being able to change the volume and programming of the TV in the reception area would also put visitors and ease.

A sense of belonging can be created by being inclusive to the visitors in the aesthetic or the layout of the space. For example it would be safe and appropriate to provide a storage area for their belongings during visits. This would elicit more trust with visitors and families being less worried about safeguarding items left in the reception area while they are in the group room. Another way to increase the sense of visitors being welcome in the space is to have artworks or photographs that are in some sense personalised. Such artworks could be localised and relevant to the

area, and photographs could be of inmates in a positive light, in order to stimulate determination and optimism.

In group rooms, the families should be awarded as much privacy as possible. There should be honesty about the level of surveillance in order to increase comfort and reduce suspicion about the space. Intercoms between reception and the group room could provide an accessible form of communication in case of distress or assistance needed.

PRECEDENTS

COTTESLOE COUNSELLING

The photo below shows the waiting room of a counselling centre in Perth. It is evident that there is much value placed in this setting on the positive distraction of nature along with the feature of artwork. A table lamp and throw cushions allow for a sense of control over the immediate environment. The furniture, paint and decoration all exude a warmth without diminishing the professionalism of the space.



COMMUNITY HOSPITAL OF MONTEREY PENINSULA

Pictured is a kids activity room from the above named hospital in California. Notable aesthetic features include warm wooden finishes on furniture, bright eye-catching colours on seating of interest as well as a cartoon mural set outdoors. There are also tiltable blinds on the windows that can be set for discreet viewing whilst still maintaining privacy in the room.



MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL

Mount Sinai Hospital is located in downtown Toronto, with the below image depicting the reception area for emergency services. As with the other precedents there are warm wood tones used to create comfort, and the areas are well lit. Wayfinding is made easier by dividing different areas using both colour and material allowing a visitor to intuitively know where they are. The actual reception area is very approachable, and although this may not be entirely possible in a parole office, a compromise could be reached in providing a non-threatening service.



BELTSVILLE ADVENTIST COMMUNITY CENTER

In Maryland USA, Glenn Holland a pastor has converted a room in his church to allow families to have video visitation with inmates. The room has been set up like a living room with the feature of a fireplace bringing a sense of familiarity. Although this room does not have any qualities that might induce stress, it is also lackluster in providing positive distractions. The seating arrangement seems movable and would encourage discussion amongst members of the family. It is also worth noting however that this facility does not have the necessity for high safety and security in its operation due to its context.



MOULTRIE COUNTY DETENTION CENTER

The picture below is of the lobby and waiting room of Moultrie County Detention Center in Georgia USA. The lighting in this room is excellent, provided by overhead fluorescent lightbulbs that mimic daylight. It is clear where the reception counter is, with the large window allowing the facility to seem welcoming, while the timber in the room adds to the sense of warmth. Seats are cleverly faced away from each other so that visitors can have privacy, although the walls they would be looking at provide no points of interest. The wayfinding from this point in the facility could be confusing with all directions of the room appearing aesthetically the same.



ETHICS OF VIDEO VISITATION

It is of utmost importance to note that the video visitations that the FCS is to facilitate are there to further strengthen relationships and family ties in an additional capacity to personal visits. The ability to make video visitations should not remove the ability for a family to see their inmate relation in person. As it is known that family and relationships are a key to healthy integration of offenders back into society, this act should be encouraged rather than viewed as a privilege. It seems somewhat hypocritical to on one hand encourage connection with families for the healthy reincorporation of inmates back into society yet at the same time use the very act of visits as leverage over the actions of inmates. Surely there are more effective methods of enforcing the rules of a prison that do not jeopardise the very intent of the facility. Accordingly, video visitation should only be implemented as a means to strengthen family and community ties and promote successful re-entry, and if there are any associated fees they must be affordable and transparent.

REFERENCES

- 314_turang_chomp_9261_a_copy. Retrieved March 24, 2015, from http://www.paulturang.com/data/photos/314_turang_chomp_9261_a_copy.jpg
- Anfenson-Comeau, J. (2013). *New community center offering inmate video visitation*. Retrieved March 24, 2015, from <http://www.gazette.net/article/20130722/NEWS/130729932/1025/new-community-center-offering-inmate-video-visitation&template=gazette>
- Fulcher, P.A. (2014). *The Double-Edged Sword of Video Visitation: Claiming to Keep Families Together while Furthering the Aims of the Prison Industrial Complex*. Retrieved March 19, 2015, from [The Double-Edged Sword of Video Visitation: Claiming to Keep Families Together while Furthering the Aims of the Prison Industrial Complex](http://www.double-edged-sword.com)
- Lalor, D. (2013). *Creating a Therapeutic Environment*. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from http://www.cottesloecounselling.com.au/creating_therapeutic_environment.html
- Landau, J. (2013). *\$15 Million Gift to Reshape Emergency Care at Mt. Sinai Hospital*. Retrieved March 24, 2015, from <http://urbantoronto.ca/news/2013/12/15-million-gift-reshape-emergency-care-mt-sinai-hospital>
- Minnesota Department of Corrections. (2013). *Staying Connected and Staying Strong*. Retrieved March 12, 2015, from <http://www.doc.state.mn.us/pages/files/large-files/Staying%20Connected%20Handbook%20for%20Families%20and%20Friends.pdf>
- Moultrie County Detention Center. *Moultrie Sheriff*. Retrieved March 24, 2015, from <http://www.moultriesheriff.com/intro.html>
- New Hampshire Department of Corrections. *The Family Connections Center*. Retrieved March 19, 2015, from <http://www.nh.gov/nhdcc/fcc/programs.html>
- No Bars. *About Criminal Justice Clients*. Retrieved March 12, 2015, from <http://www.nobars.org.au/about-criminal-justice-clients.html>
- Smith, R. & Watkins, N. (2010). *Therapeutic Environments*. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from <http://www.wbdg.org/resources/therapeutic.php>
- Zurb University. *Familiarity*. Retrieved March 12, 2015, from <http://zurb.com/triggers/familiarity/preview-from-simple>

creating productive spaces for
**COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
& FAMILY VIDEO CONTACT**

