

David is Subject Area Leader for Interior, Product and Transport Design. He presently is completing a PhD by project, located within the Vehicle Design Department at the Royal College of Art. A member of Smart Pods project: a two-year Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) funded research project to facilitate delivery of urgent healthcare in the community. Smart Pods includes designers from the Royal College of Art and academics from Loughborough University and the Universities of West of England, Bath and Plymouth. Recent publications include: 'Healthcare on the Move: Treating Patients in the Community: The Smart Pods Project' (2009) and 'Design Engaging with Healthcare Transformation: A project, A Pod and a PhD'. Published by the Royal College of Art and RCA conference proceedings.

David Swann

David's current research has also contributed to exhibitions: 'Work in Progress', Royal College of Art (2009), 'NHS Innovation Exhibition', Excel Centre, London (2009), 'Healthcare on the Move Exhibition', Royal College of Art, London (2009), 'EPSRC's Pioneers 09 Exhibition', Olympia, London (2009), 'London Design Festival: Helen Hamlyn Centre's Living Proof Exhibition', Royal College of Art, London (2008). Past exhibitions include LG Electronics Design Exhibition, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, South Korea, November 1997. In 2009 David also provided concept design work for futuristic gadgets and interior products for the film 'Babylon AD', which is a science-fiction thriller starring Vin Diesel, Michelle Yeoh and Gerard Depardieu.

social action/ local care

Healthcare on the move

Treating Patients in the Community: The Smart Pods Project



David's research responds to the changing nature of healthcare services. These transitions are perpetuated by demographic shifts, changing lifestyle, diseases, rising public expectations and escalating costs of healthcare. The devolution of healthcare treatments to settings other than hospitals is the bedrock of Lord Darzi's future vision for the National Health Service. To bridge the current divide between acute and primary healthcare settings, new intermediate structures are emerging. The formation of new neighbourhood health and social care teams are enabling patients living with a long-term condition to receive their monthly, weekly or daily treatments in the comfort and convenience of their own home. While organisational structures have been specifically developed to meet the operational challenges of this new setting, the equipment used to deliver patient care has not. Healthcare professionals are required to improvise and source 'products' from non-healthcare industries as no dedicated 'products' currently exist to support these clinicians in this role. 'NHS at Home' is a balance of applied research and experimental development. David recognises that PhD research pioneers design research in this neglected field and he aims to research, design and evaluate a new design intervention to enable the consistent delivery of planned healthcare treatments in the home for the benefit of patients and clinicians. His research activity is supported by NHS East Riding of Yorkshire.

The experience of undertaking a PhD at the RCA has informed and re-conceptualised David's thinking; in particular enabling a critical edge to the changing nature of design practice. The traditional role of the designer as a determinist of solutions is in transition toward an evidenced-based and social activity. This is in response to rapid societal and economic changes, which pose questions for us all. David is interested in how design education can embrace a diverse approach to reflect the changing nature of employment and future practices. Pedagogically and in practice David's students are now ready to experience team-based projects, interdisciplinary projects, co-design projects and rapid-fire projects to generate positive impact to societal needs.

