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POLICY INNOVATION DESIGN

## Case Studies in Design Policy & Programmes

This case study was developed as part of the SEE project. SEE is a network of eleven European partners sharing experience and stimulating debate on how to integrate design into innovation policies at regional, national and European levels.

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# Service Design for MS Services

## United Kingdom

This case study has a slightly different format to the others in the SEE Library, as it is drawn from the first SEE Policy Booklet: Integrating Design into Regional Innovation Policy (November 2009).



In addressing innovation in services, where the customer features prominently, services can benefit from a conscious design process. Service design is a holistic approach analysing how users interact with a service and applying creative techniques to identify the best solution for the benefit of both user and producer. A case study about the closure of a multiple sclerosis (MS) clinic in London, demonstrates how design assisted the National Health Service to implement a better care system, in which patients benefited from personalised and direct access to the medical treatment they required. In order to arrive at these results, the process included a meticulous investigation into the patients' conditions and the impact on their daily lives, as well as consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

In 2007, following the closure of the local MS clinic, which left 400 MS patients without medical care, the Ealing Primary Care Trust commissioned the service design consultancy LiveWork to devise a reinvigorated care system. By observing fifteen MS patients, evaluating the impact of their condition on their daily lives and consulting a wide range of stakeholders, the designers were able to rethink entrenched assumptions on service delivery. A series of solutions was proposed in order to build a flexible system with the capacity to provide each individual with access to an MS service tailored to their specific requirements. The resulting service brought the care into the community and provided people with direct access to the clinician or therapist that they needed within a dedicated MS team that integrated the National Health Service, local MS Society and Social Services. Consequently, the new service has improved the quality of life for patients and reduced the number of patients requiring hospital treatment.

The relevance of applying service design processes to public services is particularly significant as the European services sector plays an increasingly vital role in the economy and constitutes two-thirds of employment and GDP in the EU.[1] The Commission has stated that 'services innovation is one of the key drivers of economic prosperity and is crucially important for the renewal of the European economy'.[2] Although the field of service design is relatively new, best practice methodologies are emerging to help organisations evaluate existing services, create new added-value services and change their organisational culture to better deliver and support services. In order to close the gap in the provision of service design expertise in the private sector, intervention is needed to stimulate growth through knowledge transfer from academia as well as to create demand through service design in public services.

For more information on this case study visit: <http://www.livework.co.uk/our-work/NHS>