

## PRESS RELEASE

### 7th Symposium Health Care of the Future: “Healing Architecture 4.0”

**14 speakers from six European countries came together in Berlin on 2 March to present to participants in the 7<sup>th</sup> Symposium Health Care of the Future some innovative health-care concepts and to discuss the ideas that point the way forward in this field.**

On 2 March 2018 the Berlin Academy of Arts was host to the seventh gathering of the Symposium Health Care of the Future, organised by Professor Christine Nickl-Weller (TU Berlin and Nickl & Partner Architekten AG). The specific theme of this year’s event, “Healing Architecture 4.0”, which was to be examined and discussed in terms of four more closely-defined sub-themes by architects, urban planners, physicians, psychologists and experts in the fields of management and politics, promised to yield some especially interesting ideas. How can our health care system, along with all the infrastructural facilities it requires, keep pace with the dizzyingly rapid transformations that are ensuing from the ongoing computerisation of every area of our lives? This was the central question that Christine Nickl-Weller proposed, in her opening address, for the Symposium’s collective consideration.

The event was opened with some words from Professor Jörg H. Gleiter, Managing Director of the Institute for Architecture at TU Berlin, and from Under-Secretary Ortwin Schulte, head of the Health Policy Division of the Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the European Union in Brussels. Under the joint chairpersonship of radio and TV journalist Sybille Seitz and Fermín Tribaldos, organizer of the series of talks “Architects, not Architecture”, the speakers addressed the larger theme of the Symposium in terms of the four sessions: *Big data or big disaster?*, *Future Designing Concepts*, *Future Space Production* and *Health for All?*.

Central to the inspiring address given by Professor Erwin Böttinger, Director of the Digital Health Centre at the Hasso Plattner Institute of Potsdam University, was a passionate call to accept and embrace the computerisation of patients’ medical records. He predicted that this process of medical-record digitalisation would “shake the health care system to its foundations” and warned against the danger of people involved in the health sector failing to be aware of and keep pace with the digital revolution currently going on in Germany.

Professor Hans Nickl, of Nickl & Partner Architekten AG, likewise saw profound changes approaching for the health care system and consequently also for that part of the design and construction sector dealing with the building of hospitals. He presented to the Symposium his vision of hospital construction as a project involving highly specialised functional modules having to be integrated into an encompassing hospital environment that does justice to the specific needs and requirements of both patients and hospital employees.

Thomas Mansky, Professor for Structural Development and Quality Management in Health Care at TU Berlin identified, in his address to the Symposium, above all problems of coordination in the provision of health services between the different German federal states. He urged Germans to cast a glance beyond their borders – specifically toward Denmark – for an example of how properly to carry through the structural transformations necessary in an age of digitalisation. The politician and author Malte Spitz (whose writings include *Data – The Oil of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Sustainability in the Digital Age*) adopted, in his contribution, the perspective rather of the health care consumer, focussing on the right to the protection of personal health data.

The second session addressed by the Symposium, “Future Designing Concepts”, involved the presentation of specific building projects on a wide range of different scales. Professor Alex de Rijke of the London-based architecture and design studio dRMM, which was recently awarded the Stirling Prize, spoke to the Symposium about one of the new buildings recently completed by his firm: Maggie’s Cancer Caring Centre in Oldham (UK), a building which, thanks to its use of natural materials and its lovingly devised and executed architectural details, provides a very impressive example of consciously and specifically patient-friendly health care construction.

The aims and hopes with which the Medical Director of an internationally famous teaching hospital goes about planning his hospital’s campus – this was the topic on which Professor Burkhard Göke, himself Medical Director of the University Medical Centre in Hamburg-Eppendorf, addressed the Symposium, emphasising in his talk the way in which, in a teaching hospital of such a size, there exists a very close connection between infrastructural renewal and economic and commercial success.

Momoyo Kajijima, co-founder of the Japanese architecture firm Atelier Bow-Wow and now Professor of Behavioural Design at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, contributed in her talk some thought-provoking ideas regarding participative approaches to the planning of health care facilities.

How are new technologies and innovations transforming built-up space within the health care sector? This third Symposium theme of “future space production” was addressed, from their respective viewpoints, by the architect Lars Steffensen (Henning Larsen Architects), by James Barlow, Professor for Technology and Innovation Management at Imperial College London, and by the psychologist and cognitive-science researcher Christoph Hölscher of Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich.

Barlow saw potential for the implementation of innovative concepts above all in the primary health care sector, in family-physician care, and in preventive medicine in residential environments.

Christoph Hölscher, in his talk, addressed the question: how does spatial perception work and how can our knowledge of this help us to more easily find our way around complex buildings? His remarks gave a foretaste of how, in future, architects and cognitive scientists might work together on the production of designed spaces.

Lars Steffensen then went on to present some examples of health care constructions that have either already been successfully realised or are in the course of being so, including the Herlev Hospital in Copenhagen (Henning Larsen Architects).

To conclude the Symposium, the framework of the issues under discussion was expanded still farther, from individual buildings to questions of urban planning and international health care provision. Professor Beate Wimmer-Puchinger, who has been appointed by the City of Vienna to handle scientific matters within the framework of the Vienna Health Care Goals for 2025, provided an introduction to this larger complex of problems. Her talk reminded participants of the need, even amidst the current euphoria about the digitalisation of health care, to consider the practical issue of the actual practical usability of “health apps” and similar innovations. In matters of health literacy, she warned, there was still a long way to go.

Marpe Tanaka, the head of the Innovation Centre of the Swedish branch of Médecins Sans Frontières, explained in his talk that, although digital media was certainly making, in certain specific locations, the work of international organisations like his much easier, there still persisted, in certain remote regions, many more fundamental problems, such as the availability of medicines or hygienic premises for the provision of medical treatment. Tanaka too, then, emphasised that the value of the development of digital gadgets had always to be measured by how practically utilisable they really were “on the ground”.

The talk by Siemens Healthineers Marcus Zimmermann-Rittreiser brought home to Symposium participants just how advanced the health sector already is in our current Digital Age. Zimmermann-Rittreiser provided an overview over the whole broad range of different areas, from consumer experience through to precision medicine, that can potentially be influenced by digitalised health care provision and data-based Population Health Management.

The final talk by Kristian Skovbakke Villadsen, partner at the internationally-renowned Gehl urban planning studio, concluded the Symposium on an optimistic note. The examples he cited of already successfully completed urban-planning projects intended to improve the value of public space within environments promoting health and mobility allow us to hope for fruitful collaboration, in future, between urban planners, public health experts and municipal and governmental decision-makers.

Christine Nickl-Weller also announced that the eighth Symposium Health Care of the Future will be held in March 2020, and henceforth be hosted by the European Network Architecture for Health (ENAH). This newly-founded non-profit organisation has set itself as its mission the promotion of science and knowledge and the encouragement of exchanges at the interface of architecture, urban planning and the health care system.

**Contact:**

Stefanie Matthys, Architect (Dipl.-Ing.)  
European Network Architecture for Health (ENAH) gGmbH  
mail@enah.eu  
www.enah.eu