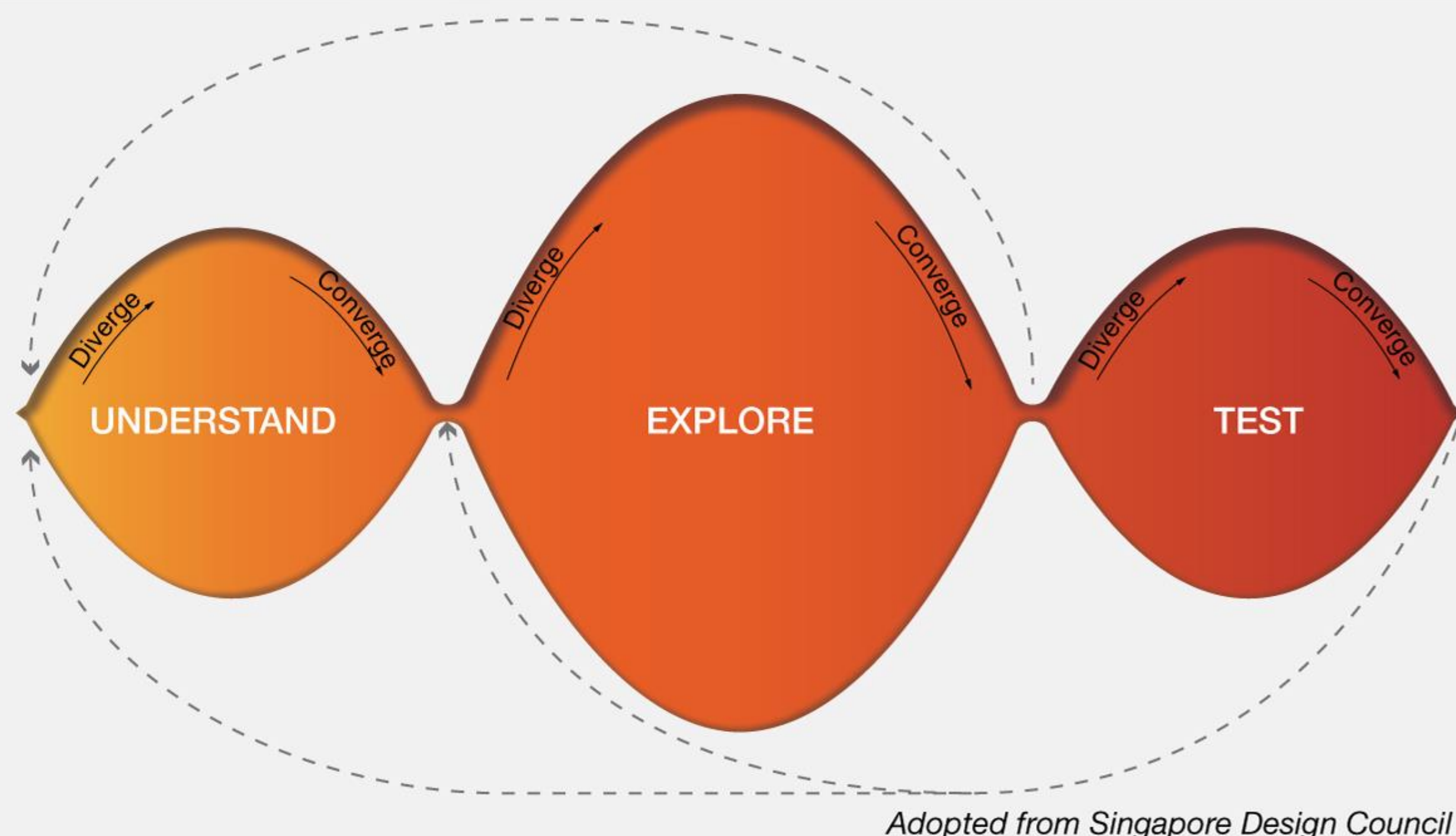


Design Thinking: An Empathetic Approach to Healthcare Improvement & Innovation



“Design thinking (DT) is an activity-based iterative process that draws to integrate the needs of people, the possibilities of technology, and the requirements for business success.”

-TIM BROWN, EXECUTIVE CHAIR OF IDEO

A key DT principle that provides the foundation for designs to meet users’ expectations is **Empathy**.

Empathy is the ability to identify and relate to the emotions of the people you are designing for. Empathy for the people you are designing for and feedback from these users is fundamental to good design.

Insights

With improved health conditions, patients were transferred to new beds. However, allied health staff (who provided rehabilitation), and patient’s parents were not informed of the transfer. This resulted in a less than ideal experience for all parties:

- (1) Allied health staff and anxious parents having to contact the ward staff to enquire on the transferred location.
- (2) Ward staff had to put their work on hold to assist with the request, and in bringing the parties to the new bed.

Approach

The project team relooked at the visitation process. Empathy interviews with parents and staff involved were conducted. It provided the project team with opportunities to walk in the shoes of the users. Improvement opportunities with positive impact to service, space and communication to enhance the overall experience were identified.

Outcomes

A systemic redesign of the visitation experience was made. It include changes to ward space and layout, signage, process and communication. The improvement has resulted in less work disruption for ward staff as patients were no longer transferred to new beds. It also resulted in less confusion and anxiety for parents and allied health staff for having to enquire on the transfer.

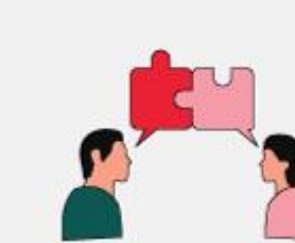
The review of visitation process has also provided opportunity for the project team to uncover poor way-finding as a latent issue. Therefore, ward signage was introduced, and layout for better way-finding was also implemented.

Overall, the improvement has resulted in less work disruption for staff, and better visitation experience for visitors.



TIPS

Know and empathise with people who will be impacted by your design as a person, rather than a data point.



- Start a conversation and be curious about their lives. Encourage stories and listen to their hopes, challenges, and fears.



- Observe users interaction with people and objects in the environment. Who do they rely on and whose actions impact them?



- Immerse and put yourself in the shoes of users to experience their journey and tasks first-hand.

DT is a problem-solving methodology that encourages you to have an open mind to integrate the needs of users, the possibility of technologies as well as requirements to meet institutional goals when you design new innovative solutions or redesign for success.

Are you struggling to come up with new ideas for new products or services? Or need a user-friendly design for your solution to meet both your and users’ needs? Let us help you!

Visit http://infopedia/SingHealth/Departments/IPSQ/Pages/AM-EPIC-DT_1Day.aspx for more information about IPSQ AM-EPIC Design Thinking course and workshop dates.



Scan the QR Code to download the complete interactive Design Thinking Toolkit.

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