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Designing healthy interiors with lessons learned from a pandemic.

In October 2023, Toronto Metropolitan University brought together a diverse range of interior designers, scientists, engineers, epidemiologists, visualization designers, and public health experts whose work investigates infectious disease transmission in indoor environments. Sessions were designed to inform anyone with an interest in shaping healthy interiors to understand how infectious respiratory particles are transmitted from the body, how far particles travel, pathways into respiratory systems, infectious surfaces known as fomites, how to protect the individual and community, and steps that can be taken to mitigate transmission. The ongoing aim is to develop a manual for interior designers that outlines strategies for reducing indoor transmission of infectious diseases. All the conference presentations are available to download:

Session 1 • Shelly L. Miller, • David N. Fisman

Everyday indoor activities came to a halt at the start of the pandemic, such as attending school, work, and communal events. Through a case study of a super spreader event, and

through epidemiology, we show how viral transmission can quickly spread across communities, and the steps that can be taken, from the individual to the community, to mitigate transmission. *Watch Here*.

Session 2 • Kimberly Prather • Gabriel Gianordoli

The recommended six-foot distance around individuals marked by bubbles, signage, and floor markings during Covid-19 did not convey how far infectious droplets could really travel through coughing, sneezing, talking and breathing. This session focused on the difference in particle sizes when viral droplets become aerosolized, and how visualization can inform interior designers to integrate these units of measurements in developing solutions for healthy interiors. *Watch here.*

Session 3 • Yuguo Li, • Sally F. Bloomfield

The pandemic showed need for greater emphasis on viral transmission through air, and via hand and touch surfaces. The session used microbiological and case studies to evaluate transmission during yearly cold, flu and norovirus seasons. It also examined the way design, construction and operation in occupied settings can mitigate risks of transmission, and facilitate human hygiene behaviours, including adopting Targeted Hygiene in our homes and public spaces to reduce infection transmission. *Watch here.*

Session 4 • Andrea R. Ferro, • Janine Glaeser

Indoor environments are designed to support work, life, education, and were disrupted by shut downs in the pandemic. Upon re-opening, guidelines were developed to implement safety protocols, yet yearly cold and flu seasons require similar attention. This session looks at scenarios whereby infectious particles can be transmitted in indoor environments through air and surfaces, and how interior designers can develop a guide specific to interiors for mitigating viral transmission. *Watch here.*

Session 5 • Burçin Becerik-Gerber, • Jeffrey Siegel

This session looks at interior design in relation to indoor environmental quality (IEQ) to understand user centered design and healthy spaces that support well-being and productivity in workspaces. A subset of IEQ, indoor air quality (IAQ), although invisible to the eye has potentially dramatic impacts, both good and bad, about air in the spaces we occupy. *Watch here.*

Session 6 • Amanda Wilson, • Yuliya Parshina-Kottas

Global spread of COVID-19 was reported across news media, informing the public how quickly

the virus was spreading. Visual journalism bridged science and story-telling to inform steps individuals could take to protect from infection. This session examines understanding of individual risks, human behavior, air and fomite exposure and viral tracking to inform steps that can be taken to mitigate transmission. It also examines use of quantitative microbial risk assessment as a means to quantify disease risks associated with pathogen transmission. *Watch here.*

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