Game Design Document

Med Check

1. Game Overview

Title: Med Check (formerly Project Lockdown)

Engine: Unreal Engine 5

Project Type: Game Jam Entry

Team: Solo Developer

Genre: First-person Psychological Horror

Jam: Safe In Our World Mental Health Game Dev Champions 2024

Jam Duration: 1 June – 31 October 2024

2. Core Concept

Med Check is a surreal horror experience exploring the inner world of someone struggling with mental health. Set in a procedurally generated liminal space, the player must find and take their medication while avoiding symbolic manifestations of mental illness.

3. Narrative & Theme

The player wakes in an unknown space, alone and disoriented. Their only goal is to find and take their medication. The setting—a maze of yellow walls and humming fluorescent lights—is ambiguous: a physical prison or a manifestation of the mind.

4. Gameplay Mechanics

• Exploration: Navigate a procedurally generated maze designed to create mild disorientation.

• Objective: Collect 8 randomly placed medication bottles. Bottles are placed on tables to improve visibility.

• Interaction: Left-click to collect items via Enhanced Input and blueprint interfaces.

• Enemies: Four unique enemy types roam the level and end the game on contact.

• Win Condition: Collect all 8 bottles without being caught.

• Loss Condition: Contact with any enemy ends the game.

5. Enemy Design

Each enemy reflects a different aspect of mental illness:

• Controlled – A giant marionette dragged by invisible strings. Audible by scraping sounds.

• Fragile – A near-invisible glass creature, heralded by whispers.

• Darkness – A smoke-shrouded shadow that masks its approach and obscures vision.

• Manic – Fast and erratic, shrieking at intervals.

6. AI & Behaviour

• Each enemy uses a unique AI child blueprint derived from a master enemy class.

• Unreal's Behaviour Tree system is used for patrol, detection, and pursuit logic.

• AI perceives via sight and sound; players can break line-of-sight to escape.

• Lights flicker and sounds warn players of nearby enemies.

7. Level Design

• The environment is built using Unreal's Procedural Content Generation (PCG) plugin.

• Rooms and hallways are spawned based on rulesets defined in a PCG Graph.

• Spawn points for objectives and enemies are part of the PCG-generated geometry.

8. Objective System

• 8 objective bottles spawn randomly across designated tables.

• Once collected, bottles increment an on-screen tracker.

• A custom Blueprint Interface handles item interaction.

• Bottles despawn and prevent duplicate collection via a Do Once node.

9. User Interface

• Minimal UI: objective count and interaction prompt only.

• No health bar; damage is implicit through fail state.

• UI is unobtrusive and only displays necessary information.

10. Audio & Visual Direction

• No background music to emphasise isolation.

• Ambient sounds: electrical hums, whispers, footsteps, shrieks.

• Visuals are realistic with muted tones, sourced from Quixel Bridge and Epic Marketplace.

11. Technical Implementation

- Blueprint scripting primarily, with some C++ extensions.
- Procedural generation via UE5 PCG Graph.
- Enhanced Input System for player interaction.
- GitHub for version control.
- Trello used for project planning.

12. Repository

GitHub: https://github.com/lukanwhitehouse/MedCheck