

TRUST BOARD

Date of Meeting: 05/04/2011		Enclosure: 4
		Agenda Item No: 6
Title of Report: Chief Executive's Report		
Aims: This report provides the Board with an update on key national and local announcements and policy developments that have emerged in the past month.		
Summary: The issues considered in this paper are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mixed sex accommodation ▪ Improving patient experience ▪ Ensuring patient confidentiality ▪ Telephone reminder service ▪ Meeting essential standards of safety and quality 		
Specific implications for consideration (Financial/Workforce/Risk/Legal/Race Equality etc):		
Financial	No specific implications	
Workforce	No specific implications	
Other	No specific implications	
Recommendations: That the Board notes the updates in this report.		
Document previously approved by: Not applicable. Report directly to the Trust Board.		
Prepared by: Jacky Stockdale Head of Corporate Affairs	Presented by: Carole Heatly Chief Executive	

**TRUST BOARD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT
APRIL 2011**

1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides the Board with an update on key national announcements, policy developments, and issues significant to this Board.

2. MIXED SEX ACCOMMODATION

The Trust has been commended for work to ensure patients do not have to share areas with others of the opposite sex.

The Cumberland Infirmary in Carlisle and West Cumberland Hospital in Whitehaven have been compliant with national requirements on delivering same-sex accommodation for a year.

In January 2009, the Department of Health announced a package of measures designed to “all but eliminate mixed-sex accommodation” in all hospitals by March 2010, including dedicated funding for improvements and adjustments to hospital accommodation, and providing information and guidance to hospital staff, patients and the public.

We are committed to providing every patient with same-sex sleeping areas, bathroom and toilet facilities. The need to safeguard patients' privacy and dignity – one of the guiding principles of the NHS Constitution – applies to all areas of hospital care.

The Trust is fully compliant. Any exceptions fitted within the Department of Health's exemption criteria. For example, in exceptional circumstances, such as where a patient needs critical care, providing fast, effective care for the patient may take priority over ensuring same-sex accommodation. On the rare occasions when this mixing does occur, it must be in the interests of all the patients affected.

NHS Cumbria, the county's Primary Care Trust, has completed peer reviews at both hospitals to assess the implementation and compliance of delivering same-sex accommodation.

As well as being commended by NHS Cumbria, the Trust also received excellent feedback following a peer review by the Department of Health at the Cumberland Infirmary. A similar review will take place at West Cumberland Hospital by the end of April.

Work to eliminate mixed-sex accommodation has been extensive. Bathrooms have been converted to shower rooms to provide separate washing facilities on all wards at both hospitals. Other work includes the creation of separate changing facilities on the Day Surgery Unit and Endoscopy Unit at the Cumberland Infirmary and new signage at the West Cumberland Hospital.

Leaflets about the work are available at both hospitals and more information can be found on the Trust website.

3. IMPROVING PATIENT EXPERIENCE

The Trust has introduced self-service check-in at West Cumberland Hospital to make it a lot easier and quicker for patients using our outpatient facilities.

The kiosks are being installed in the main Outpatients Department for a trial period from 4 April to improve check-in processes and the quality of patient information held by the Trust.

As well as enabling patients to check in for appointments without having to queue to speak to a receptionist, the kiosks will allow patients to update their contact details and personal data with greater privacy. The system also notifies outpatient staff of patient arrivals and directs patients to the appropriate waiting area.

Outpatients was chosen for the pilot as it is the first point of contact with the Trust for many patients. The Trust anticipates that data quality will improve as patients will be asked to confirm or amend their details on screen, making future communications by letter or telephone more reliable.

The check-in kiosks can be used by those with speech, visual and hearing impairments and also offer multi-language support. They are simple to use and during the initial go-live period volunteers will be on hand to answer any queries and offer assistance. A Clinic Co-ordinator will still be available for those who do not wish to use a kiosk.

Outpatient staff, clinicians and the Trust's patient panels have been involved in discussions on the implementation of the project to ensure that the views of patients and other stakeholders are taken into consideration.

4. ENSURING PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

A project to ensure patient data is kept safe and secure and is used appropriately is being undertaken by North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust.

National guidelines set out how NHS staff can use any data which could identify an individual patient, such as their name, address, date of birth, hospital number or NHS number.

For several months now the Trust has been carrying out work to ensure we meet these national requirements whilst making sure that we can continue to run our services efficiently and effectively.

From April 2011, our staff should only use personal data when delivering direct patient care or associated administration, such as registering patients, making bookings, or managing admissions and waiting lists.

Any data used for anything else, such as producing statistical or management reports, should not contain patient identities.

A privacy enhancing technique has been developed, named “pseudonymisation” by the Department of Health, whereby patient identifiers are obscured so that the patient is not directly identifiable. The process can be reversed if there is a legitimate reason to do so.

A survey has been made of the Trust’s information systems to ensure they comply with pseudonymisation requirements where feasible.

5. TELEPHONE REMINDER SERVICE

A telephone appointment confirmation service trialled by our Trust over the past few months has proved to be a resounding success.

The system of reminders by text and voice message began in November 2010 in three specialties to try to reduce the number of missed appointments, which cost the Trust over £2 million each year.

The scheme was piloted for outpatient appointments in Gynaecology, Oral Surgery and Rheumatology at Whitehaven’s West Cumberland Hospital and the Cumberland Infirmary in Carlisle plus some clinics at Workington and Penrith Hospitals, and was so successful, it will now be rolled out for all outpatient appointments across the Trust.

From November 2010 to February 2011, the number of patients who failed to attend an appointment was reduced by over 40% in those three specialties.

Seven days before their appointment, patients are contacted by automated text or voice message to remind them of the details of their appointment and to confirm they are able to attend.

Where the Trust holds a patient’s mobile phone number, they will be sent an SMS text message reminding them of the place, date and time of their appointment. Patients can reply either confirming they can attend, cancelling the appointment or requesting to rearrange it.

6. MEETING ESSENTIAL STANDARDS OF SAFETY AND QUALITY

The Care Quality Commission (CQC), the regulator of health and social care services, paid an unannounced inspection visit to the Cumberland Infirmary on 17 March 2011 and praised the Trust for the care and attention that we give to our older patients.

The purpose of the inspection was to look at the quality of care older people receive whilst in hospital, focussing on nutritional needs alongside privacy and dignity.

The CQC team has given initial feedback which was extremely positive.

The key highlights that they fed back included:

- Very caring and attentive staff
- Positive and welcoming approach from all the staff they spoke to
- Positive working atmosphere on the ward areas
- Good practice observed on nutritional practice including assistance given during meal times
- Good correspondence in the care plans and patient notes regarding patient choice and preferences, for example, menu choices
- Good practice in relation to risk assessment and consent
- Recognition of the key roles we have in place to assist with meeting patient nutritional needs, for example, the role of the ward house keeper

In February 2010, the CQC confirmed they it would be inspecting 100 hospitals across the country to look at the quality of care given to older people. On the 17 March, the CQC undertook an unannounced visit at the Cumberland Infirmary and focussed on two core areas – privacy and dignity and nutrition. The team interviewed staff and patients on the wards alongside observing the care delivered.

The team from the CQC included a nurse from another acute trust, a social care member of CQC staff, our regional CQC lead and a patient representative from Age UK. They inspected Elm Ward (stroke care) and Maple C/D and interviewed staff, patients and visitors and also focussed on the meal times and assistance with feeding, particularly on the stroke area.

The two standards were:

Respecting and involving people who use services

People understand the care and treatment choices available to them. They can express their views and are involved in making decisions about their care. They have their privacy, dignity and independence respected, and have their views and experiences taken into account in the way in which the service is delivered.

Meeting nutritional needs

People are encouraged and supported to have sufficient food and drink that is nutritional and balanced, and a choice of food and drink to meet their different needs

The CQC confirmed that they would not be making any formal recommendations for improvement on the standards of care they observed. The Trust will receive a report from the inspection visit in due course; however the outcomes from the inspections across the 100 hospitals will be a national report that is published at a later date.

Patient care is our number one priority and we are committed to meeting these important and essential standards for our patients.

I am extremely proud that the day-to-day patient care that our staff work tremendously hard to deliver, has been recognised by an unannounced visit by the key body that regulates the care and safety delivered to our patients.

RECOMMENDATION

The Trust Board is requested to note the report.

Carole Heatly
CHIEF EXECUTIVE