STAFF LEAD FIGHT AGAINST FLU THIS WINTER

The Trust has achieved its target of vaccinating 75% of hospital staff in the Cumberland Infirmary and West Cumberland Hospital by the end of December 2013.

With the highest uptake the Trust has ever seen, the staff across both hospitals have committed to protecting themselves, their patients and their families against flu this winter. The Trust has the highest staff uptake in the North East and Cumbria and is ranked as one of the top trusts in England according to recent figures published by Public Health England.

The Trust has been actively encouraging all staff to be vaccinated as they have a crucial role to play in helping to ensure that everyone understands the importance of the vaccination programme.

Dr Peter Weaving, GP Clinical Director at the Trust, said:

“The uptake from our staff has been excellent this year. Our Occupational Health nurses have been and still are working exceptionally hard to ensure they visit every ward and department with the vaccine and our staff have been very enthusiastic about our campaign.

“Our frontline staff working in our hospitals are much more likely to be exposed to the flu virus; therefore it’s our priority to ensure they are vaccinated, not only to protect themselves, but also to stop the virus spreading to our vulnerable patients.”

If you have any questions or comments you would like to share, please get in touch with us at gp.linkgroup@ncuh.nhs.uk
AVOIDING ADMISSION INTO HOSPITAL

The Ambulatory Care service in both of our hospitals is there to manage a proportion of emergency adult patients safely and efficiently on the same day avoiding admission to a hospital bed. High performing NHS trusts manage 65% of all GP referrals through ambulatory care.

This means that patients who would previously been admitted as inpatients can now be treated more quickly as day cases for things like blood transfusions and intravenous antibiotics.

The service is led by nurse practitioners who are highly trained nursing specialists who can assess and diagnose patients, carry out investigations, prescribe treatment and provide continuity of care.

Ambulatory care is supported by the acute care physician on a daily basis to improve assessment, admission avoidance and increase a rapid turnaround of patients. As a GP, you can refer patients to the Cumberland Infirmary’s ambulatory care service by contacting the PPA (professional point of access) through switchboard. The PPA will then decide if the patient should go to ambulatory care for assessment and treatment. For West Cumberland Hospital, you can refer directly to the ambulatory care unit or patients will be signposted from the A&E reception.

If you have any questions about our ambulatory care service, please get in touch at gp.linkgroup@ncuh.nhs.uk

PILOTING NEW PATIENT INFORMATION

Nursing staff on Maple C at the Cumberland Infirmary are piloting a new ‘red-folder’ for every patient to assess if they will provide benefits for both staff and patients.

The red folder is a multi-disciplinary one-folder system which draws together all patient notes during their spell in hospital. There are lots of different avenues for patient notes which are all physically separate making it difficult for staff to have full patient information easily accessible at all times. The new red folder trial will allow staff to track the patient from admission and look back at previous ward moves, giving them a snapshot of patient care prior to arriving with them.

Louise Fitzpatrick, Ward Manager on Maple C is heading the trial. She said: “I think the trial will allow for better communication between staff because everything is in one folder. For that reason it will also save time for staff with new patients and hopefully prove to be a beneficial.”

The red-folder will be trialled for three months, including a two week review, before it is rolled out across all wards.
NEW THYROID CLINIC FOR WEST CUMBERLAND HOSPITAL

For the first time in the hospital’s history, a new thyroid and parathyroid outpatient clinic has started at West Cumberland Hospital in Whitehaven.

Mr Ludger Barthelmes, consultant breast and endocrine surgeon for the Trust introduced the clinic for patients requiring assessment of thyroid nodules, goitre (thyroid enlargement) and hyperparathyroidism (overactive parathyroid glands). The clinic runs every Friday morning and follow-up appointments and further investigations (imaging) are being arranged in West Cumberland Hospital.

Mr Barthelmes has worked for the Trust for over three years after graduating in Dusseldorf, Germany in 1994 and moving to the UK in 1997 where he completed his higher surgical training in Cardiff.

Mr Barthelmes said: “I am very pleased to have started my clinic in West Cumberland Hospital. It will be great to work there every week, especially as I will see the new hospital progressing more and more until it is completed in December. I am pleased to be able to offer this service locally to the people of West Cumbria.”

If you have any queries about services at West Cumberland Hospital, please email us at gp.linkgroup@ncuh.nhs.uk

POSTIVE PATIENT FEEDBACK FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

The annual patient feedback survey has been completed for the acute wards Occupational Therapy service at the Cumberland Infirmary.

Approximately 60 questionnaires were sent out to patients who had had a recent in-patient stay on one of the acute wards and had intervention from an Occupational Therapist. The overall results were very positive and confirmed good practice and satisfied patients:

- 97% of patients felt that the occupational therapy staff were polite and approachable during their hospital stay
- 97% of patients felt that they were clearly informed why and how they would be taken to the occupational therapy department for further assessments
- 100% of patients were happy with how their home assessment was carried out if this was required

An action plan has now been formulated to make further service improvements from the results of the survey.
CONTINUING ON OUR JOURNEY OF IMPROVEMENT

In July 2013, the Keogh Review made recommendations in eight areas to help improve the quality and safety of care for patients in North Cumbria. These were as follows:

- Carry out a full review of the Trust’s corporate risk, business assurance framework and quality governance plans
- Review leadership capability and develop a formal organisational development plan for all staff
- Ensure robust arrangements for serious incident investigations
- Review staffing levels to ensure safe care is delivered
- Ensure mandatory training is supported
- Promotion of a more supportive and open culture
- Review of estates capability and capacity
- Review infection control policies and practices with full organisational ownership

What has been achieved?

**Carry out a full review of the Trust’s corporate risk, business assurance framework and quality governance plans**

The Trust has a new corporate risk register and business assurance framework and an independent external review of quality governance was completed in May 2013. The Trust has led a board and senior management development session, looking at escalation and management of risk to identify how the Trust evaluates and assures the quality and safety of its services.

**Review leadership capability and develop a formal organisational development plan for all staff**

The Trust is now in the final stages of implementing a new and enhanced middle management tier and the new structure has created clinically-led business units. The senior leaders of the business units are senior clinicians who are overseeing the development of core services with accountability for safety and quality.

**Ensure robust arrangements for serious incident investigations**

There has been a significant increase in the number of serious untoward incidents being reported from 43 in 2012/13 to 77 by the end of December 2013. There is a new weekly safety panel; a programme for updating clinical guidelines; the roll out of an improved patient handover (SBAR) is underway; a surgical checklist in theatres and outpatients has been reviewed along with falls management; new clinical bundles introduced (VTE; Sepsis, Infection Prevention) and a safety newsletter following Clinical Policy Group to embed learning from SUIs.
CONTINUING ON OUR JOURNEY OF IMPROVEMENT CONT...

Review staffing levels to ensure safe care is delivered
New matrons have been appointed and ward managers are in place supported by two senior nurses for each ward. This is ensuring effective nursing leadership and guidance to the nursing team at ward level. All new matrons, ward managers and senior nurses have taken part in a new leadership programme.

In addition, the Trust has been actively recruiting nurses in the past 12 months and over 70 qualified nurses have joined the teams. A further 70 healthcare assistants have joined as part of a structured learning programme.

Permanent consultants are being recruited under the Trust’s ambition to reduce the number of locums by 50%. Since September 2012, 20 permanent consultants have joined to help shape future development of specialist services. Five new consultants are joining in January and February 2014 in dermatology, paediatrics, obs & gynaecology and colorectal.

Ensure mandatory training is supported
Significant investment has been made to increase training capacity in areas such as resuscitation, medical devices, fire training, safeguarding, moving and handling. This is being reviewed on a weekly basis by the Clinical Business Units.

Promotion of a more supportive and open culture
Significant work has been undertaken to reduce the backlog of complaints and improve the process and the Trust’s new weekly safety panel reviews all serious complaints to ensure lessons are embedded.

A Board to Ward project is underway to demonstrate the important link between the ward and the Trust Board and shows how local and ward-based objectives for improvements link to the overarching safety priorities of the organisation. Four wards, two at each hospital, have piloted Board to Ward and there will be a 30% rollout between now and March 2014.

Review of estates capability and capacity
A comprehensive review has taken place in estates and facilities since Keogh and all theatres are now fully compliant with national guidelines and a process in place to review regularly.

A formal process to deep clean all wards and theatres is in place and a review of the Cumberland Infirmary (PFI) has revealed that standards need to be higher. An independent review is now taking place.

Issues with the PFI company have been raised publically and discussions are ongoing regarding the level of service they have provided.

Review infection control policies and practices with full organisational ownership
Action has been taken to reduce the levels of hospital-acquired infection rates and further work is being done to improve day-to-day cleaning. New antimicrobial guidelines have been introduced, a new website launched for clinical staff and a Dr Cleanhands publicity campaign introduced.

If you have any questions about our Keogh improvement plan, please email gp.linkgroup@ncuh.nhs.uk
A Hepatology Nurse Specialist from the Cumberland Infirmary has started to hold clinics for hepatitis patients at the Unity Drug & Alcohol Recovery Service as of January 2014.

Cherry Hughes has teamed up with Unity to hold the clinic at the centre on Botchergate every Thursday with the aim of being more accessible to people who go there who would like to start treatment for hepatitis or would like a discussion about it. Treatment can be administered at the clinic with no need to attend the hospital.

Cherry Explains: “Hepatitis C is largely associated with drug use and therefore there is a stigma around it. Many patients do not attend appointments at the hospital because they are worried about how they may be judged. However, there are other causes and I would encourage anyone who has concerns to seek advice.

“I have been looking at ways to improve attendance at appointments, so taking the clinic into the community is the ideal solution. This is an environment where people feel comfortable and well supported and the hope is that other service users will come forward for testing and treatment.”

The Unity Drug & Alcohol Recovery Service can be found in Carlisle, Penrith, Workington, Whitehaven, Barrow and Kendal and is run by the Greater Manchester NHS Trust.

Cate Meagher, Manager of Unity in Carlisle, said: “This is a fabulous opportunity and we are very excited to work with Cherry and bring the two services together.

“Drug users are usually very difficult to engage with outside of a centre they are comfortable going to, so we are very optimistic that the clinic will increase uptake and improve outcomes for drug users in Carlisle.”

Cherry said: “Our overall aim is to reduce the pool of infection by seeing and treating more people. We do not judge lifestyle or choices, however by working with Unity, the aim is to give opportunities to make positive changes and improve health and life chances.”