



**ENTER AND VIEW GROUP VISIT TO  
HOLDFORTH UNIT, UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, HARTLEPOOL**

**Date: 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2017**

Four Healthwatch members visited the Holdforth Nurse Led, Out of Hospital, 36 bedded Community Rehabilitation Unit, from 2.00.pm until 4.15.p.m.

Members were warmly welcomed by Karen Walker, Senior Clinical Matron in Charge. Matron showed the Group around the Unit, of which she is justifiably proud. We saw a small but adequate gym and a very pleasant and well equipped Day Room. Members were very impressed with the décor, in a number of the rooms. Rooms were coloured in blues and reds which enabled dementia patients to recognise their rooms, together with toilet and bathroom facilities. The Matron advised the Members that the Unit was fully staffed by three Team Leaders, who were each responsible for twelve patients, together with two Health Care Assistant and specialist nurses. A nurse with special training in dementia four therapy staff, a Ward hostess, A Clerk and a domestic worker. The Unit has a Volunteer who speaks with patients who are not being visited. The Volunteer goes to the Unit two days each week.

Matron told us that the Consultant, Dr. Chris Ward does a ward round on Tuesday's which is followed by a MDT meeting to discuss all of the patients. She told us that Dr. Ward visits very much more than just once a week – which is over and above his contracted hours.

There is a “drop in” session held every Thursday from 2.00pm to 4.00. pm. for patient's, together with family members, carers and Staff to discuss the patients needs and their progress and way forward to discharge. The patient's condition and any concerns can be aired.

There were no vacancies within the Unit today. Patients could be admitted from the age of 18 years. The youngest patient in the unit was 23 years old. There were fourteen patients with dementia. One patient was on End Of Life care.

Patients were transferred to the Rehab Unit from North Tees, James Cook and on occasionally other Hospitals.

We observed the wards, toilets and bathroom/shower room were very clean throughout the Unit. Matron pointed out why some equipment was in the corridor and explained the reason it was there i.e. the hoist could be needed rapidly if a patient fell and needed assistance.

The Group engaged and spoke with twenty five patients, and with a number of visiting family members. Following our discussions and listening to patients and their family visitors, our findings were:-

### **SAFE**

Without exception every patient with whom we spoke told us they felt safe within the Unit. They also expressed no concerns in respect of their personal belongings. Comments from patients and family visitors included:

- “I have felt very safe since I have been here. I have no concerns at all regarding my personal belongings.”
- “I have been an inpatient for twelve weeks, I love the Ward and the Staff are wonderful. I feel safe and cared for, much better than North Tees. Patient said her only problem was she missed her cat. Matron advised patient she could see her cat - patients relative to bring the cat in for patient to see it.”
- “Neither me nor my family have anything to complain about. Of course, I want to go home, but everything I have is safe, and so am I.”
- “Yes, I do feel safe in here. The staff treat me with kindness all of the time. The family visitor also expressed her gratitude for the care her mother was receiving.
- “I get my medication at the right time and the nurse gives it to me with a cup of water.”
- “Staff are exceptional. I was in Intensive Care Unit but this Ward has turned my life around. I have nothing but praise for these Staff. I love the food too.”
- Patient had left to go for X-ray. Patient’s wife said her husband told her the food he gets in here is better than he gets at home!”
- “Yes, I know how to complain if I was unhappy with anything. I would go to the top and find a nurse or tell the Doctor.”

## **CARING**

Patients and family visitors expressed their view that all staff on the Unit treated them with kindness, caring and respect.

Comments to the visiting Group included:-

- “I have never seen such kindness. The staff are wonderful.”
- “No matter how many times you ask for help - they come to you and are never grumpy.”
- “The staff are run off their feet but always come to help with a smile on their face. It means so much when you don’t feel well.”
- “They are Angels here. So much better than in the other big Hospital. I am ready to go home now and it has been through these staff here I can go.”
- “Just wonderful, lovely people. I have received the best of treatment.”
- “Dr.W. is a lovely caring man. He is so kind, no one needs to worry if he helps you because he listens to you and explains any questions you have.”
- Overall, I am very, very happy with the care I have had in here.”

## **RESPONSIVE**

Patients with whom we spoke, felt their care was focused on their needs.  
Patients with whom we spoke told us:-

- I will soon be going home. In my care plan I have to have help when I go home. It is being arranged by the staff here.”
- I am much better now and feel I can manage back home. My family are going to give me a bit of help, it’s in the care plan.
- “I had a social worker come to talk to me. I am much better than I was but she is going to arrange some help for me. I will get it as soon as I go home. No more falls I hope.”
- “The call button is just there (patient pointing to it)) Staff come almost straight away. Never been a problem.

## **EFFECTIVE**

Patients with whom we spoke felt their health needs were being met.  
Comments by patients and family carers included:-

- “We have been asked what help we will need when mam goes home. A Care Plan has been made and she is going to get help four times a day for the next few weeks. I will be able to do more for her after that because I am leaving work.”

- “I am getting used to a walking frame. I can get around with it quite well now. I am now able to go home shortly, after the Doctor says so.”
- “I have been put on different medicines and I am now much better. I am looking forward to going home, but they have been marvellous in here.”
- “The food is good, well cooked and plentiful and you get what you ask for. The problem is it is on a weekly rota so every Monday and every other day in the week, you get the same thing. It would be better to have some changes.” “That is the only problem in here.”
- “Water jugs are filled up all the time, they don’t ever get down to empty. Juice and hot drinks are available, even through the night. you could not help but get well with the help you get in here”.
- “Some of the Government people should come to see this Hospital.”

### **WELL LED**

- The leadership and care in this Unit can only be described as outstanding. The Matron sets an impeccably high standard for herself and expects all her staff to work to an equally high standard. She was seen as a leader of her nurses, leading by example, rather than just a Unit Manager. Hardworking and caring Staff was evidenced in the whole Unit.
- The Matrons and all Staff should be commended by the Trust and copied as “good practice” This should be shared where problems arise in other areas of “care.”

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Kitchen staff to change the present menus to alternate on perhaps a three/four weekly basis. “Patient remarked “you know every day what is going to be on the menu - it is good but too repetitive.”

Visiting Team: Ruby Marshall  
 Carol Sherwood  
 Lyn Allison  
 Jane Tilly