

STOKE MANDEVILLE HOSPITAL
NATIONAL SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE

PATIENTS' FORUM

**Notes of meeting held on Thursday 12th April 2007
in the NSIC Patient Education Room from 4.00pm to 5.15pm**

Present: David Griffiths (General Manager) [DGi] - Chair
Debbie Green (Head Nurse/Matron) [DGe]
Anji Aykroyd (Ward Manager St David's) [AA]
Dot Tussler (Head Physiotherapist) [DT]
Michelle Clarke (Acting Head Occupational Therapy) [MC]
Anne Eden (Chief Executive Officer – Bucks Hospitals NHS Trust) [AE]
9 In-patients
3 Outpatients
2 Relatives

ACTION

1.0 Apologies Jackie Bailey, Tom Meagher

2.0 Minutes of the Meeting of 8th February 2007

Notes were accepted as a true record.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Infection Control Issues

DGe reported that following the comments made at the last Patient Forum, the issues raised had been discussed with Ward Managers, Housekeepers and Domestic staff. DGe asked patients to report any issues to the Ward Managers and Housekeepers in the first instance.

3.2 Smoke Free NHS

DGe reported that following its review the Trust had made the decision to ban smoking on site with no exceptions for NSIC patients. It was also confirmed that continuous breaches of Trust Policy would result in it being considered 'unacceptable behaviour' and invoke yellow/red card action that could result in patients being discharged from the Centre. Patients advised that staff were also smoking and buying cigarettes for patients. DGi explained that should staff be found in breach of Trust Policy they would be subject to disciplinary action.

3.3 Fire Exit – 'Jimmy's'

DGi advised that the fire exit adjacent to the NHS Servery in 'Jimmy's' would be in use once the Cystoscopy Suite had opened. Sodexo would be advised to keep the exit clear.

3.4 **Hydrotherapy and Physiotherapy**

Taken under Item 4

3.5 **Patient Visitors – meal vouchers**

DGi confirmed that at present meal vouchers for visitors were only for use at the NHS Servery in 'Jimmy's' and main hospital restaurant.

3.6 **Water Chillers**

Had been replaced on all wards and in the foyer, but were not all yet in use. DGi to continue to chase Sodexho

DGi

3.7 **Wall Mounted Fans**

DGi had been advised by Sodexho that this was now in hand and that fans would be provided for each patient bed space.

3.8 **Patient Belongings**

DGe had raised the matter with Ward Managers and it was felt that patients should take some responsibility for storage of their belongings.

4.0 **Therapies – Q & A session**

Q - Therapies are managed outside the NSIC, how is funding and therefore provision managed if not in their control?

A - DGi gave an overview of how the system worked and agreed that there had been problems in recent years as NSIC expanded and Therapies had made recurrent cost savings. In order to give some stability the NSIC took management responsibility for the Outpatient therapists releasing funds back into Therapies in 2006/7.

Q - How much of the income raised by the NSIC is released back to the NSIC to spend?

A - DGi explained that the Income and direct expenditure were reported in the NSIC Annual reports for the last 3 years. The indirect costs covered the clinical services received by the NSIC from the rest of the organisation including ICU, Theatres, Therapies, Radiology and Pathology to name a few, plus overheads for corporate services such as Personnel and Finance. If the NSIC overperforms against contract as it has done for the last three years the Trust releases 50% back to the Centre for non-recurrent expenditure. The Centre prioritises need and in 2006/7 focussed on Bathroom and Toilet refurbishment and provision of Patient Bedside Services on St Andrew.

Q - Concern was expressed where a patient in the community may be unable to access a seating clinic assessment that would help to prevent such problems recurring, what could be done to address this?

A - DGi explained that development of a Service Level Agreement between NSIC and Therapies would help identify the service required. MC advised that Therapies now have scheduled times for 'readmission' patients to be assessed.

Q - Patients asked why the whole of Spinal Therapy funding sat outside the NSIC and whether that would change?

A - AE advised that there was ongoing consultation to identify where therapies best sits which patients found refreshing. AE further confirmed the Trust commitment to the NSIC referring to it as the Jewel in the Crown, but that it needed polishing.

Q - Issues around staff shortages were raised and a specific question about the Archery Room and what would happen when the Sports Therapist Louise left was raised.

A - It was recognised that when there was staff sickness, especially in Occupational Therapy where there were fewer staff, this resulted in a less than adequate service. DT gave an overview of how therapists were assigned to patients and provided an insight as to how this would work in the future as the Centre moved to a Case Management model of rehabilitation. DT also confirmed that the Sports Therapy post would be replaced.

Q - DGi highlighted the need to look at a greater spread of Therapy support across the week and into weekends which could allow patients access to areas such as Hydrotherapy, Archery Room and Gym.

A - DT and MC agreed that they needed to consider this in light of the overwhelming support for 'out of hours' access. MC was already working with the charity 'Aspire' to arrange evening activities for patients. Similar discussions were also taking place with the charity 'Back-up'.

Q - Patients asked whether the reprovision of the Archery Room (Sports Hall) had been agreed within the second phase of redevelopment of the Stoke Mandeville site.

A - In the absence of known confirmation AE agreed to take it to the next PFI meeting and feed back.

Q - Patients asked whether Therapy cuts had affected the provision of wheelchairs?

A - DT advised that an extra £5K had been made available in 2006/7 for new wheelchair cushions. MC advised that a capital bid for 12 new power-chairs had recently been agreed. It was acknowledged that NSIC charities were no longer being used to provide wheel chairs and hadn't been for 3-4 years.

Q - Patients asked that if money is raised for the NSIC to whom should it be addressed?

A - DGi stated that money raised for the NSIC should be sent to him and cheques made payable to the Spinal Amenities Fund. Forms advising on charitable donations were available from the Administration Office adjacent to Spinal Reception.

Q - Patients asked whether the provision of Hydrotherapy had now been fully resolved, and how much hydrotherapy are patients allocated?

A - DT explained the available slots and the level of care needs were the restriction. DGi suggested that with Hydrotherapy the demand rather than capacity should be reviewed, especially as the Centre were now receiving a greater number of tetraplegic patients compared to previous years. Patients suggested that it might be better to look at for example 1 hour every 2 weeks rather than 30 minutes every week as actual time in the pool would be greater. DT agreed to review this with patients.

DGi thanked DT and MC for their attendance and patients for their questions

AE

DT

5.0 Service Users Committee Report

Unfortunately as the Chair for the Committee Jackie Bailey had been unavailable the meeting had been postponed.

6.0 Comments and Suggestions

DGi reported on the comments and suggestions received in the Centre:

- The fact that the No Smoking Policy was not currently enforced
- Poor signage to the New Main Reception with patients and relatives having to be redirected from the NSIC. DGi to speak with John Summers
- General comment regarding how wonderful the new part of the Hospital was.

All

DGi

DGi also advised patients that he and DGe were always happy to listen to constructive comments and ideas both formally and informally.

7.0 Any Other Business

7.1 Signage – Designated Disabled Car Parking Spinal

Patients raised the need to allocate the spaces in front of the NSIC for spinal patients. DGi to raise with John Summers

DGi

7.2 Lift Floor – Dirty Floor

Comment noted and DGE to follow up.

DGe

7.3 Infection Control Updates

DGe informed patients that Bathroom and Toilet refurbishment had started on St David and St George Ward. Removal of carpet from the walls in clinical areas was also scheduled along with the creation of isolation bay partitions on all wards.

7.4 Catering

Patients questioned the quality of food especially regarding the nutritional needs of long term spinal patients. AE suggested that NSIC looked into what was being offered on the Wycombe site now as 'Medirest' were now providing steamed vegetables. Patient complaints about food had since dropped significantly. It was agreed to invite Sodexo, John Summers and the NSIC Dietician to attend the next meeting but also to investigate the provision of 'steamed' vegetables with Sodexo.

DGe

Patients thanked Anne Eden for attending the Patient Forum and were delighted to note her interest.

8.0 Date and time of next meeting 4pm- 5.15pm 14 June 2007 in Patient Education