Trust transforms ward culture after adopting Care campaign

By Tamsin Snow

An NHS trust has revised its inpatient questionnaire and asked senior nurses to prioritise communication, toileting, pain management and help with eating and drinking during ward rounds after adopting Nursing Standard’s Care campaign.

Nursing Standard and the Patients Association launched the campaign six months ago to highlight every patient’s right to fundamental care. Last week the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust announced that it will address the campaign’s objectives at its three hospitals.

Matrons and ward sisters will be asked to prioritise the four aspects of the campaign during ward rounds and while working clinically, according to the trust’s associate director of nursing and consultant nurse for older people Frazer Underwood.

Speaking to Nursing Standard during the trust’s launch event, Mr Underwood said: ‘We will be working with senior nurses to ensure they take up the core principles of the campaign in their everyday work.

‘They will be more actively asking patients and staff about the four areas highlighted by the campaign, which should, in turn, mean ward staff do too. It is about changing culture and behaviour of staff in the trust.’

Last week a revised inpatient questionnaire was produced, with eight additional questions covering the four aspects of the campaign. On communication, patients will be asked if staff communicated with compassion and listened to them, while on toileting they will be asked how often they received timely help.

Patient feedback

Each month around 650 patients complete the 43-question survey, with results fed back to the board and wards, where results are discussed by staff.

A shorter online survey covering the four aspects of the Care campaign went live last week and the trust is recruiting volunteers to help patients complete the questionnaires.

Patients Association chief executive Katherine Murphy welcomed the move and said patients will benefit. The trust was criticised in an association report last year following claims of poor communication by a woman whose mother died while in its care.

Register support for the campaign at http://tinyurl.com/NS-care-campaign

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Clockwise from top: Royal Cornwall Hospital patient Roy Brant talks to Patients Association chief executive Katherine Murphy and associate nurse director Frazer Underwood; trust chief executive Lezli Boswell; staff nurse Sam Morgan; and clinical lead for gynaecology Lorraine Sole at the campaign launch.