Trust responds positively to review

A review of Wye Valley NHS Trust by NHS England has flagged up many strengths and examples of good practice at the Trust as well as highlighting areas where improvements need to be made.

In early October last year, a team from NHS England carried out a Rapid Responsive Review. Its results have been published today (Weds, Nov 8).

Examples of good practice in the report include:

- Committed staff providing high quality patient care despite staffing difficulties
- The introduction of the Safer Nursing Care tool, the National Early Warning Score (NEWS) and the DATIX incident reporting system
- The Trust has a robust process for undertaking quality impact assessments of cost improvement programmes involving the Director of Nursing and Medical Director
- The Trust was working with the Dr Foster organisation to better understand the issues underlying the higher than normal anticipated mortality rates
- The environment, food and patient dignity at Leominster Community Hospital was singled out for praise

"While we are pleased the report has rightly highlighted areas of good practice by our hard working and dedicated staff members, we take on board the comments of the team which highlighted areas of concern where we have already made improvements," said Derek Smith, the Trust's Chief Executive.

"We acknowledge their concerns and have already begun implementing a detailed and robust action plan which addresses these key issues.

"The vast majority of the issues have already been tackled and the few remaining will be addressed in coming weeks and months.

"Only last month we introduced virtual wards, meaning patients can now receive treatment in their own homes, we are redesigning the way we discharge patients and on December 23 our new clinical assessment unit, which offers swift diagnosis and treatment for some patients turning up at A&E, opened its doors for business."

Since the review in October

- All the “immediate” actions have been completed
- All “urgent” actions (except the development of the Stroke Network) will be completed by the end of January

The Trust has:

- Introduced Virtual Wards
- Extended physician of the day
- Created a Clinical Assessment Unit
- Revised acute admissions unit
- Enabled direct admission of GP patients to AMU

Herefordshire's health service provider
Eliminated/severely restricted the use of escalation areas
Redesigned its discharge processes
Streamlined and improved the process for analysing what patients say and how this is played back to wards/departments
Adopted improved processes to develop the approach to patient experience and development of strategies
Addressed issue of medical cover in community hospitals
Streamlined the governance pathway

“We want to make improvements which are sustainable, lead to an improved flow of patients through our care which will ultimately give our patients a better experience. They are at the heart of the changes which we are making.

“We have a detailed action plan which maps out the route and the journey has begun,” added Derek.

Changes have also been made to the day surgery unit at the County Hospital following comments from the Care Quality Commission which carried out an inspection at the same time.

The day surgery unit is a small area of the County Hospital located near the A&E department which has been used as an escalation area when additional space is needed when sick patients need to be admitted to hospital.

Since the inspection, actions taken by the Trust have included:

- Limiting the number of beds in the unit
- Limiting the use of the unit
- Imposing tighter controls to improve the health, welfare and safety of patients
- Ensuring decisions to transfer patients are taken at the most appropriate level
- The adoption of processes to ensure the trust learns through its mistakes
- Making sure that staff are fully supported

Other areas of concern raised by the CQC include, staff training and support, patient information and advice, involving people in discussions about their care and treatment, and how the Trust assesses and monitors the quality of the services it provides.

“The measures we’ve already taken are addressing the issues the inspectors raised. We apologise to any patients who felt the care they received from us fell below the standard they expected and assure our patients and their carers that we are doing all we can to ensure that high standards of care are consistently available,” added Derek.

Ends

Note to editors

The Rapid Responsive Review report can be viewed by following this link:

Rapid Responsive Review
Care Quality Commission inspection

A Rapid Response Review is a team of experienced clinicians, patients, managers and regulators (CQC) who visited the Trust to observe the hospital in action. This involved walking the wards and interviewing patients, trainees, staff and the senior executive team. The review team then met to discuss and share their opinions before producing the report. If a review team identify any serious concerns about the quality of care and treatment being...
provided to patients that they believe requires rapid action or intervention, the Trust’s Chief Executive and the relevant regulator(s) are notified immediately.

Wye Valley NHS Trust:

- Wye Valley NHS Trust is the provider of health services across Herefordshire and beyond. The Trust exists to improve the wellbeing, independence and health of the people we serve. We are the leading provider of health care in Herefordshire.
- By working closely with our partners, we can make good our promise to deliver a quality of care we would want for ourselves, our families and our friends.
- With an estimated annual turnover of around £160 million, we employ around 2,700 plus staff. We aim to build new relationships between our staff, patients, service users and their carers with the wider community.
- A 2012 CQC inspection of Wye Valley NHS Trust found that the Trust was fully compliant on all standards.
- The CQC’s review of maternity services in hospitals in February last year found that Wye Valley Trust’s maternity services were either as good as, or better, than those provided by other hospitals.