

Putting the principles into practice:

Principle 4 – Embed multidisciplinary team reviews

Challenge

At Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, we knew we needed to make some changes. We had too many long stay patients (198 last year) and we were using off-site beds which was not helpful for patients or staff.

Insight

We felt we needed to create a much more multidisciplinary approach to reducing longer stays, involving staff within the hospital but also those outside of the Trust who have ongoing responsibility for patients' care. We needed to instil in our teams that everyone has a part to play and that it's vital to share the responsibility. And we needed to provide a structure where staff felt enabled and empowered to do this.

Solution

Our key innovation has been to embed weekly multidisciplinary team visits (#longstaywednesday) to wards at pre-agreed times to discuss every patient with an increased length of stay and unblock constraints.

Critically, this involves staff from within and outside the hospital (including the council, social services and the third sector).

During the meeting there are four key questions we ask:

- Why not home and why not today?
- Does this person need to be in an acute hospital bed?
- What is the person waiting for and what specific actions need to happen next?
- What needs to happen to make this a green day (a day where everything planned for this patient gets done)?

We agree and share actions straight away and review them within a short time frame to close the feedback loop. Consistency is an important element and the format is kept the same each week, so people know what to expect and plan for. When the hospital is very busy, for example around bank holidays, we also introduce an additional meeting on Fridays.

Getting support from everyone was vital. Staff are motivated because everyone is now accountable for reducing longer term stays. It has given our work a new agility – people can discuss any patient on any ward. This has reduced duplication by streamlining the way we work together.

It has been hugely motivating for staff to see the very positive impact on patients. In fact, the wards have a bit of friendly competition between themselves to see how effective and efficient they can be in helping longer stay patients.

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Results

The number of long stay patients has reduced from 198 to 105 compared to the same period last year and we now use no off-site beds.

There has been no direct cost to the Trust – this has all happened as a result of internal changes we've made.

'We've seen fantastic stories of patients with very complex needs being helped in a way that is really good for their care and recovery. It's so motivating for staff to see and it helps gain our patients' trust because they know we're doing what's best for them.'

Fiona Lennon, Deputy Chief
Operating Officer

Over to you

We would highly recommend the approach we have taken – it's motivating for staff and it helps gain our patients' trust because they know we're doing what's best for them. We've been delighted to share our results with other Trusts and look forward to seeing even more success – it's brilliant to see the impact on patients, their families and staff.



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