

Visit Date: 29th September 2017.

Service name: Jonson Ward, Northwick Park Hospital

Summary

Healthwatch Brent made a visit to Jonson Ward which is an Intestinal failure unit at Northwick Park Hospital to engage with patients and to hear their views on the service that they are receiving. On the day we were able to engage with five patients and two carers, five different patients were in isolation. The team leader made us aware that Johnson Ward has a capacity of 20 patients which can be increased to 23 but they would need more funding for extra staff. Patients are able to leave the ward freely up to 12am to go for a walk or a cigarette but need to stay on the hospital site. If patients want to leave the hospital premises, they would need to get permission from a doctor.

Discussions: Patients and carers feel involved in discussions around their care and said the staff are quick to respond if they have any questions.

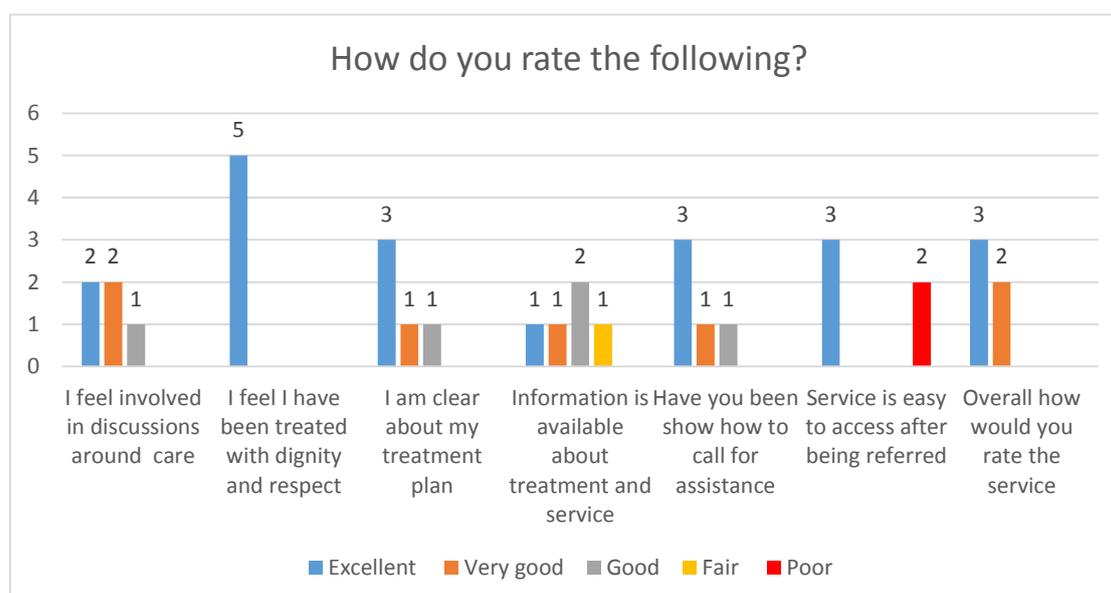
Staff relationships: All patients spoke highly of the staff saying they are always treated with dignity and respect and that staff speak to them in a kind and polite way.

Treatment plan: Staff have regular meetings with patients to discuss their treatment. Treatment plan is explained well to make patients understand.

Referrals: Patients had mixed experiences with their referral process. Three patients had an easy referral process after being referred by a different hospital to Northwick Park. Two patients received appointments within three weeks and one patient got their appointment on the same day. Two patients had bad experiences with their referral process; one patient was in A&E for 20 hours and spent 15 hours on a trolley waiting to be taken to Jonson Ward. Patient felt this was way too long. One patient was referred from a different hospital and was transported to Jonson Ward at night. No staff were available to give the patient their medication. The patient had to wait until the morning for their medication.

Call for assistance: All patients were aware that they had a button which they had used before. Staff are quick to respond to usually respond to the patients within minutes.

We asked the patients and carers to rate the service from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). The results are in a graph below:



What patients said:

"I have never experienced care like I have here, they are compassionate and want to help"

"They saved my life. Staff and treatment have been excellent"

"Everything is great; if you need someone, they are always there to help"

"All staff look happy and cheerful, not seen no staff who are rood"

"Can't fault the staff. They are helpful and if they can't help then they will find someone who can"

Recommendations:

- To ensure patients are always provided with their medications regardless of the time they arrive at Jonson Ward.
- To transfer patients quicker from A&E to Jonson Ward so they are not left waiting on a trolley for 15 hours without an update to let them know when they will be taken to Jonson Ward.

Overall experience

One patient had difficulty accessing medicine and others raised concerns about difficulties with their referral to Jonson Ward. There is flexibility for patients who are capable to leave the ward to come and go as they please and there is a communal room for patients to watch TV along with books and magazines to read. Despite some of the difficulties they experienced, patients still spoke highly of the staff at Jonson Ward, and staff were praised for their attitude to work and willingness to help patients.

Service response

As a specialist ward looking after complex patients many of whom are very unwell, there is constant pressure on the Jonson ward beds. The team is working hard to ensure good discharge practices to free up beds for patients being transferred from ED so that long waits can be avoided.

Referrals from other hospitals are proactively discussed and managed. These patients are transferred directly to Jonson bypassing ED. It is good practice for repatriated patients to be sent and received within daytime hours.

The patient who did not receive their medication overnight was an isolated incident, but was escalated and discussed. If patients arrive out of hours, the oncall doctor will be bleeped to make sure their clerking and medications are prioritised.