

Visit Date: Spring 2018.

Service name: Theatre Admission Unit (TAU), Northwick Park Hospital

Summary

Healthwatch Brent made a visit to TAU at Northwick Park Hospital to engage with patients and carers to hear their views on the service they are receiving. TAU is spread across three levels, Level 2 – Reception and pre-assessment, Level 3 – Day care, Level 4 – Short stay. On the day of our visit we engaged with patients and carers on Level 3 Day care which has 18 trolleys and Level 4 short stay which has 14 trolleys. We were able to engage with three patients and seven carers. When A&E becomes full they will use beds on level 4 for some of their patients.

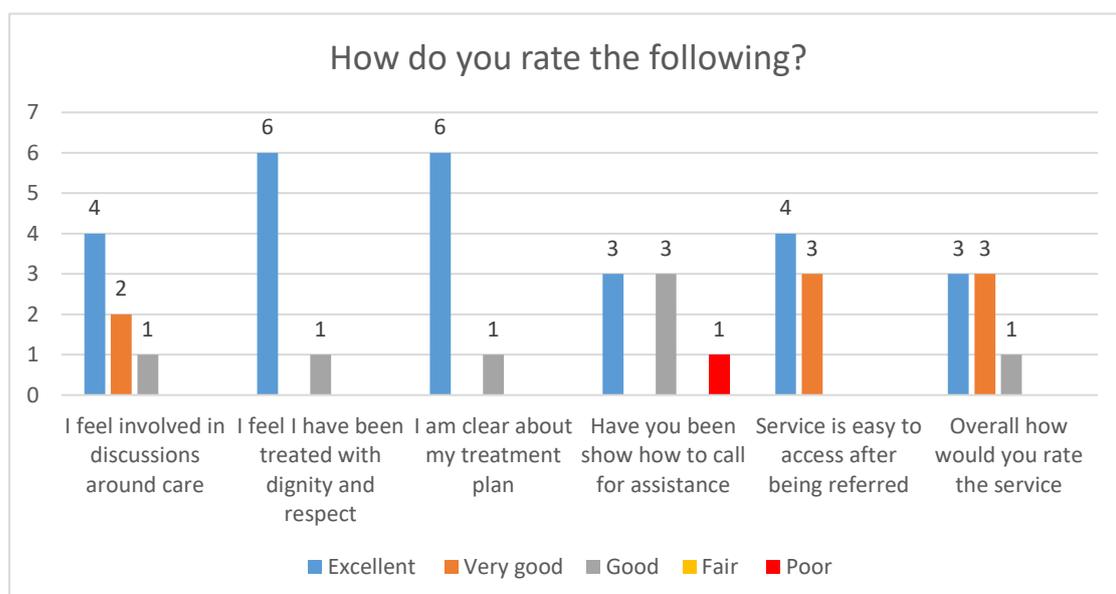
Discussions: Patients and carers feel involved with discussions around their care. Staff are quick to respond to any patient and carer questions.

Staff relationship: Patients and carers spoke highly of the staff and said they have good relationship describing staff as polite and caring. One patient said the staff has been good to them but while they were in the toilet and needed their Zimmer frame, a staff member brought the Zimmer to them but left the door to the toilet wide open so they could be seen by anyone nearby or walking past.

Call for assistance: All but one patient had been made aware how to call for assistance if needed and only one patient we spoke to had used the call button. Some said that there is always a staff member nearby and easy to get their attention if needed.

Referral: Majority of patients we spoke to were referred to TAU from a department at Northwick Park Hospital, only one was referred by a Wembley walk in centre. Three patients were referred from A&E, one patient was sent home from A&E and told to come back in the morning where they were added to the emergency list. All patients and carers were very happy with the referral process and said it was quick and easy to get their appointment.

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 and carers said:

“Was being seen by a nurse in the morning, I used the call button to speak to her again and was told she was busy and will get back to me. This was 20 minutes ago”

“Explained everything they possibly could in good detail”

“Friendliness from the staff has been excellent”

“Staff are wonderful, my partner has been very well treated”

“Surgeons asked me if I knew what was going on and made sure I understood everything”

“I received a phone call at 9pm last night to be here for 7.30am today”

“Staff got name and address details on my wrist band wrong”

“No tea or coffee, not even water is available for carers”

Overall experience:

On the day of our visit we mainly engaged with carers rather than patients as the patients were receiving their treatment. Carers were grateful to be kept updated and involved in discussions with the patients care. Everyone spoke highly of the staff and treatment they are receiving. There were waiting rooms for carers on both level 3 and 4, both waiting rooms had seats available and a TV although level 3 Day Care TV was switched off. Level 3 Day Care waiting room was a lot busier than level 4 Short Stay. Carers would really appreciate having water or hot drinks available while they are waiting.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that patients dignity is taking into consideration and close the bathroom door when giving assistance
- One patient received a phone at 9.30pm to be at TAU for 7.30am the following morning. Would it be possible to give patients a bit more notice for their appointment?
- Have water dispensers available in both waiting rooms
- Explore the possibilities of having a tea and coffee station available for carers as some of them are there for a good part of the day
- Keep TV's in both waiting rooms switched on

Service Response:

Thank you for this helpful feedback. It is useful to hear the carers' perspective. We were pleased to hear that staff were friendly and caring and that trouble was taken to ensure that information was clearly communicated and understood.

- Ensure that patients dignity is taking into consideration and close the bathroom door when giving assistance
We were surprised to read this as patient's privacy and dignity is highly valued. Your findings have been discussed with all staff at daily handovers as a reminder.

- One patient received a phone at 9.30pm to be at TAU for 7.30am the following morning. Would it be possible to give patients a bit more notice for their appointment?

We give as much notice as possible for standard admissions. There is also a standby system where appointments are offered as short notice, when they have become available due to cancellations.

- Have water dispensers available in both waiting rooms
- Explore the possibilities of having a tea and coffee station available for carers as some of them are there for a good part of the day

We have requested quotes for vending machines and water fountains

- Keep TVs in both waiting rooms switched on

We were also surprised to read that the TVs were not all on: they are usually left on all day. Staff have been reminded to check on this.