

SAFETY QUALITY VISITS
NON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FEEDBACK

Department/Area: Haematology, Ward 10 North BCH	Date 19th October 2021
<p>Nuala McKeagney In attendance: Ward Sister - Joanne Stewart. Lead Nurse – Debbie McKelvey Haematology Consultant – Dr Sarah Lawless. Service Manager – Davinia Lee</p> <p>This is a very busy 23 bedded ward with 150 skilled staff comprising a range of disciplines - nursing, medical, pharmacists, AHPs. Most of the patients are very high acuity and stay on the ward on average 15 to 16 weeks. Staff know their patients well and are very engaged and committed to their treatment plans. The staff seem very motivated and are rightly proud of their continuous excellent Patient Experience feedback. During discussions it became apparent that they work well as a team and are committed to delivering high quality care at all times.</p>	
What matters to patients/service users?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Receiving high quality and safe care and getting better, particularly during covid. ➤ Having knowledgeable, skilled, pleasant staff to assist them through their journey. ➤ The Let's Talk Project has been very important to patients - each patient is offered a weekly phonecall from staff to a nominated person, providing them with an update on their relatives progress/wellbeing. ➤ Virtual visiting for patients during covid ➤ Being fully informed of all aspects of their care ➤ A better variety of food on the ward as many patients are long term (15/16 week stay) and complain about the repetitive nature of food. ➤ Staff who understand their journey and are empathetic to this. ➤ Success of funding applications to deliver access to specialist and costly cancer drugs. ➤ Access to other specialist cancer centres in Dublin & London. 	
What matters to staff?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintaining good staffing levels during covid has been very challenging due to the acuity of treatment - redeployment of staff has been a substantial challenge, losing 2 non-medical prescribers and a Clinical Nurse Specialist has caused particular difficulties. ➤ Staff are very proud that they have successfully kept the ward covid free, they described the weekly testing of all staff entering the ward and patients by the SIP in 10N following NICE guidelines issued in summer 2020. They recognise that whilst this is very resource intensive it has been very successful in keeping the ward covid free. Staff also found this testing very reassuring in delivering safe quality care. ➤ Staff are very proud of their Patient Experience results which sit continuously at 99/100%. ➤ Feeling valued is important, having time to give quality and compassionate care ➤ Good communication across the entire MDT. ➤ Sharing of learning from incidents at staff meetings, patient safety handovers, safety briefings, email and supervision. ➤ Maintaining normal daily practices to deliver quality care – safety briefings, informal debriefs, staff meetings, clinical supervision, facilitating leave and off-duty requests. ➤ The successful delivery of the business case for the new Level 3 haematology centre, which will require access to other specialist services on site such as respiratory and cardiology support. Staff articulated their concerns about this as they will not have access to on site Airvo or CPAP and regular cardiac monitoring. 	
Areas of good practice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weekly screening of all staff entering the ward. ➤ Informal debriefs following challenging days – staff find these very helpful. ➤ Virtual Visits for patients and Let's Talk Project ➤ Adherence to medicines code and the NMC code/standards of medicine management by checking at the bedside, double checking all CDs/chemotherapy/intravenous drugs. 	

- Locking medicines up – keys held by nurse in charge and only given to designated pharmacist. Introduction of the Omnicell CD storage cabinet.
- Having all known infections on the safety briefing & highlighted on patient handover/ patient flow bed lists. Isolating all known infections in a single room and using all the infection control measures
 - Recording a minimum of 4 hourly NEWS, recognising abnormal scores and following triggers.
 - Manning and daily peer review of all calls on the 24 hour helpline – educating patients/relatives on the helpline.
 - Ensuring patients are fully informed on all aspects of their care.
 - Ensuring patients and relatives are fully informed of all incidents.
 - Having staff attend the Deteriorating patient course/IHLS training.
 - The team has continued to support new staff's learning and development, facilitating them to complete mandatory training, technical skills and SACT competence despite the many day to day challenges this created during covid.
 - Assisted colleagues in other departments during times of staffing challenges and supported a band 5 nurse to redeploy to ICU.
 - The team has continued to support family friendly policies and has engaged within the restrictions with pizza lunches/coffee mornings etc.
 - There was evidence of very strong leadership and a genuine sense of a team working effectively and with commitment and energy to provide high quality compassionate care. The Ward Sister said that the whole team is excellent and continuously go the extra mile, however she identified the Lead Nurse Debbie McKelvey for her contribution to patients and the staff team.

Areas for Improvement

- The business case has been approved to improve facilities on 10N to meet Neutropenic patient policy and NICE guidelines, which in turn will greatly improve patient safety with the provision of single ensuite rooms. The team believe that moving this to the next stage will be vital for the haematology service.
- Post pandemic the team wish to reduce visiting times to 2 hours in the afternoon and 2 hours in the evening. Previously there was open visiting on the ward.
- Facilitating more time for complex applications (cost per case applications) to access new and innovative drug treatments, and clinical trials.

In summary, this is a well run ward with a committed energetic staff who are focused on delivering the best treatment and care to their patients. During discussions it was apparent that they work well as a team and are happy to go the extra mile to support their patients and each other. They are very proud of their continued patient experience score of 99-100%.

The team is very excited about the approval of their business case to refurbish the ward to provide a level 3 haematology centre but they are fearful that the removal of respiratory and cardiology colleagues from BCH may jeopardise their plans. It would be useful if Exec Team could meet with the team to discuss their concerns.

What would make this visit even better?

A face to face visit to view existing facilities and have the opportunity to meet with other staff members.