

28 February 2023

Policy/procedure in relation to excess noise on wards

Can you please advise if you have a policy/procedure in relation to excess noise on wards? Specifically, around a patient disrupting other patients on the ward.

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) value the importance of a quiet, restful and healing environment for our patients, reflected in the Trust's 'Visiting' Policy and 'Prioritising the Mealtime Experience Policy'.

At times, managing noise specifically in relation to a patient disrupting other patients and Noise at Night can be challenging given the complexity of patients we care for across our wards and the ongoing pressures across the Health and Social Care system.

The BHSCT advocate the five regional 'Always Events', these are defined as aspects of the patient and family experience that should always occur when patients interact with healthcare professionals and the healthcare delivery system. *Noise at Night* is an 'Always Event', in 2018, the Trust took forward a Quality Improvement project, to reduce noise at night at ward level. A number of interventions were put in place; these included information for staff and patients, infographic, ward checklist and the introduction of Chatter Trackers on the participating wards. This initiative supports staff to minimise noise levels at night by discontinuing any non-urgent activities which may cause interruptions to patients sleep.

The BHSCT also measure 'Noise at Night' as part of their ongoing Real Time Patient Experience Feedback Survey and any concerns are raised directly with the Ward manager for action with the support of the Patient Client Experience Team when required.

The Trust's 'Managing Aggression Group', are considering the issue of disruptive behaviours in ward areas, the BHSCT acknowledge this can be distressing for other patients. This work is ongoing.