

Patient Safety Week 2011

12 -18 September

'It starts with me'

Chairman, Dr. Jeffrey Ellwood launched patient safety week at Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust this week saying "It starts with me, it starts with the Board". He unveiled a new banner which tells patients how the Trust has responded to patient concerns and improved safety.

Patient safety week is a National initiative. At Dorset County Hospital we are using patient safety week to share across the organisation, the changes in practice hospital staff have made over the last year to improve the safety of the services we provide for patients.

The Trust can demonstrate improved safety having invested in Vital pac, a clinical system which provides an early warning system to advise clinicians when a patient's condition worsens.

Infection rates have reduced, VTE (blood clot) prevention assessment has improved and unannounced inspections by the Care Quality Commission and Primary Care Trust have not uncovered any major concerns.

The week has also provided an opportunity for staff involved in the 5 main workstreams to show cases their achievements.

The workstream have focused on improving leadership, increasing safety in operating theatres by the introduction of daily safety team briefings between the doctors and the nursing staff where all aspects of patient safety are discussed prior to the operating list starting. The hospital also uses a patient centred checklist devised by the World Health Organisation for every patient who requires surgery in the operating department.

The Critical care workstream has resulted in the introduction of relative radio pagers so families are able to leave CRCU knowing they can always be contacted. Safety brief happening on all shifts and Patient diaries have been introduced, which enables patients to read what happened during the time they were sedated in the Intensive care setting, for example who visited them and care given. These diaries assist people to come to terms with what happened to them.

In the Intensive care unit it has been approximately 1449 days since last MRSA bloodstream infection.

The Pharmacy team provide a medication history checking service when patients are admitted to hospital. A new Oral Anticoagulant Prescription has been introduced to ensure that high risk Warfarin treatment is prescribed and monitored appropriately.

The Safe Practice Committee reviews all medication incidents and publishes a Safe Practice Bulletin each month to help minimise some of the risks identified. Clinical staff read the bulletins and follow the advised actions to improve patient safety.

The introduction of Pharmacy Medicines Management Link Nurses on all wards will champion and reinforce medicine safe practice across the Trust.

The key areas of ward workstream have focused on earlier identification of a patients condition deteriorating, this has been helped with the introduction of the electronic flagging system and the introduction of bedside handover of nursing shifts. Structured ward rounds to improve communication and effective care planning and an audit programme and actions to improve areas of care relating to falls and pressure ulcers.