

| Healthwatch Cheshire West Enter and View Report - NHS | |
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| Enter and View Visit to | The Countess of Chester Hospital Countess of Chester Health Park Liverpool Road CHESTER CH2 1UL |
| Date | 10am on Tuesday, 6 February 2014 |
| Authorised Representatives | Mrs Betty Shepherd and William Giffin |
| The Authorised Representatives wish to thank Sian Williams, the Deputy Director of Nursing and Quality, the Ward Sister, Sharron Parker and the Staff of Ward 42 | |
| Background | The Countess is a Foundation Trust Hospital, covering the Chester and Ellesmere Port area. Ward 42 is the Cardiology ward but if patients require any procedures e.g. an angiogram or the fitting of a pacemaker they are transferred to other wards. |
| Overall Impression | Our overall impression was of a busy, well organised ward with a good atmosphere both staff and patients. |
| Any ideas or suggestions for improving service? | After our tour of the ward we discussed our initial findings with Sister Parker, including the possibility of charts in the toilets showing when they had last been cleaned. She seemed generally receptive. It would be an improvement if the two side rooms not presently en suite could be converted. A notice board showing name of the person in charge and the name and grade of the nurses on duty would we felt be an improvement, especially if a photograph of the member of staff was displayed by their name. |

Welcoming

We were directed onto the ward by Sharron Parker who is the Ward Sister in charge. She gave us an overview of the Ward and gave us freedom to examine the Ward and interview anyone we wished. She presented as efficient and friendly.

The ward is unisex but patients are separated into male and female bays and their privacy is ensured at all times. There are four single bed side rooms, two of which have en suite facilities. Three of these are currently used to isolate patients with infections. The patient without en suite facilities has exclusive use of one the toilets which are normally shared reducing the number available to other patients. There are 24 patients and staffing is adequate although at break times when three members of staff are absent at the same time it was felt that this was stretching it to the limit. Each bay is staffed by a Registered Nurse and a Student Nurse. Patients are almost invariably elderly with other health issues including dementia and occasionally learning disabilities.

At the time of our visit three of the female patients had dementia and were at risk of falling, so an extra nurse was on duty to ensure there was always a Registered Nurse on duty in that particular bay.

We spoke to the nurse on duty who informed us that she enjoyed that specific task as she was able to get to know the patients and spend some time with them without the normal quite hectic pace. She added that she felt that this was why she had become a nurse.

All patients appeared clean, tidy and comfortable.

Safety

The environment appeared safe for patients.

We examined the toilet facilities. All appeared to meet the requirements of disabled users and were clean and tidy.

Caring and involving

All seven patients we spoke to stated that the food was of good quality with a reasonable choice. One male patient, who was a Chef by occupation, stated that he was very impressed commenting, "Especially as I know how little they get per patient."

One minor complaint was voiced that a male patient had to wait what he considered too long after ringing to indicate that he needed to visit the toilet. The patient commented to us that he felt that this was not acceptable, especially as in the next bay two nurses were dealing with a female patient. He was unable to say what the nurses were engaged in with the patient. Following that incident it was ensured that he had two urine bottles by his bed in case of emergency although on the incident complained of he had urinated involuntarily.

We spoke to a Qualified Nurse who was fulsome in her praise of Sister Sharron Parker and her approach to teamwork. When asked to give a specific example she stated that one Sunday Sister Parker had, entirely of her own volition, worked an extra shift to support the team.

Well organised and calm

The overall impression was of a clean, well ordered environment.

Additional Comments

None at this time.