

Carer's contract & what you can do to help

This is an agreement which we sometimes use when carers wish to continue with their caring role whilst the person they support is in hospital.

Every contract is individual and recognises that as a carer you are an expert in providing day to day care to the person and that you can help staff in looking after the patient.

The contract is a written agreement drawn up between nursing and rehabilitation staff and you as the patient's carer. Where the patient is able to exercise choice it also includes the agreement/ wishes of the patient. This enables us to work in partnership for the benefit of the patient and specify which responsibilities we as hospital staff undertake to provide and which aspects of care that you will be continuing to provide.

This might include choosing to provide personal care, help with meal times and cognitive stimulation (e.g. by bringing in old photographs to chat about for instance).

Further information

If you need further information please contact our Mental Health Liaison Team between 08:00 and 17:30 Monday to Friday:

Bleeps: 2127, 4900 and 4887

Other contacts that you may find useful for more information are:

PALS QEH: (for any concerns, compliments or complaints)

Alzheimer's Society: 0300 222 1122

Lily (Living Independently in Later Years):
Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk 01553 616200

Age Concern: 0800 169 2081

MIND:
West Norfolk 01553 776966
Norwich & Central Norfolk 01603 432457

With Thanks to The Alzheimer's Society.

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*statistics from the Alzheimer's Society

Mental Health Liaison Team

Dementia Care in an Acute Hospital

Patient and Public Information



Introduction

The Alzheimer's Society states that the number of people with dementia is steadily increasing and if the current trend continues, the number of people with dementia in the UK is forecast to increase to 1,142,677 by 2025*.

With this in mind The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) King's Lynn has successfully transformed its services to make them as dementia friendly as it can.

Facilities available for people with dementia that come to QEH

QEH has facilities across the hospital to meet the needs of patients living with dementia. This includes dementia friendly signage, adapted bathroom facilities, orientation clocks and access to help from dementia support workers.

There is a dedicated 'dementia friendly' medical ward, 'West Newton', which has specialist features including colour-coded bays and visual aids to help patients navigate their way around the space; specialist ambient lighting which helps to calm patients, two en-suite rooms and a lounge with kitchen facilities. There is also a small garden for patients' families and carers to relax in.

Patient-centred care

QEH is focused on providing patient-centred care that recognises the importance of maintaining dignity and treating everyone as an individual.

We encourage families/ carers to complete a 'Hospital Passport' for patients admitted to our wards. It can include details of what an individual likes/ dislikes, food preferences, normal routines and behaviours & information on subjects they enjoy talking about such as personal interests and previous important life events.

Activities such as cognitive stimulation, gentle physical activity and lunch clubs are offered to keep minds active, encourage interaction and improve wellbeing. A balanced diet is offered which is low in saturated fat and salt, does not have too many dairy products or meat and includes plenty of fish, fresh fruit and vegetables.

QEH is also part of a national programme of screening to support the diagnosis of dementia. Patients over the age of 75 are screened within 72 hours of admission and where the results indicate that it may be beneficial; some patients are then referred to the local memory clinics for further support.

Referrals are also made to Chatterton House, part of the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust, who offer specialist mental health services for people with dementia, including a Dementia Intensive Support Team.

Specialist Mental Health Liaison Team

QEH have a specialist nursing team who visit patients with dementia, amongst other issues, who undertake specialist assessments and provide treatment and medication advice. They check cognitive function and memory and ensure families/ carers understand the results of any tests and what the next steps might need to be.

They support and train all staff to ensure that they are all dementia aware and know what to do or who to speak to for advice.

They provide support for families and carers, giving them reassurance, practical advice and guidance and are involved in discharge planning. They ensure that carers are involved in planning the person's discharge and understand the plan of care to follow once the person leaves the hospital. This may include advice & information on voluntary and support organisations.