

ITEM 17

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(One question from Mr Bren McInerney attached)

(Procedure attached)

Peter Lachecki
Chair

Question Submitted by Bren McInerney

Question

What assurance does Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust have that the complaints they receive on patient care is reflective of the complaints that people wish to make?

Response

Every person that uses our services is unique and this makes the generalisability of complaints data complicated.

A complaint is a statement that something is or has been unsatisfactory or unacceptable (negative patient experience). Nationally the volume of complaints has been rising steadily for more than 20 years and that picture is also apparent within this organisation. The fact that more people complain today is a concern and we want to be certain that this is not because the quality of care is deteriorating and so we take time to look at what **all of our patient experience data is telling us**. We encourage people to provide us with feedback and we also try to make it easier for people to complain.

As an organisation we pay close attention to people who raise concerns (near miss complaints) and complain about their experience. Our patients also tell us about their experiences in a variety of other ways (for example National and local Surveys, Patient Experience Stories, Shadowing patients through their pathways, Friends and Family Test (FFT), Healthwatch, Social Media, compliments and comments, feedback to our public governors and contacts with the PALs service).

Complaints data & triangulation

- Comparing our complaints to our national survey data has its strengths as it allows us to review both types of feedback data to see if complainants concerns are a problem to any other patients.
- Patients are increasingly using the internet to share information about their experience (for example www.nhs.uk/choices & Twitter). The Communications team review this data and share concerns raised with the Patient Experience Improvement Team.
- The Patient Experience Improvement Team produce reports to look at numbers of complaints, concerns, themes, trends and actions taken to make improvements. Reports are shared internally within the Divisions, at the Patient Experience Strategic Group and to the Quality and Performance Committee that reports to the Trust Board.
- The most common causes of complaints (after all aspects of clinical treatment) are about attitudes of staff, cancellation or delay of outpatient appointments and communication/information to patients. We have improvement work going on to make improvements in these areas.

Information

- Many people don't complain because they find it hard or think it won't make a difference. As an organisation we want to help people who want to complain about our services.

- Our complaints leaflet is within displayed within ward areas and the Patient Experience Improvement Team take a proactive approach to making sure that the leaflets are available by visiting patient areas. People are signposted from the first page of the Trust website to an area on the website that provides information for them about how to complain.

[Concerns and Complaints We're listening GHPI1398.pdf](#)

How we help people who are less likely to complain

- We know from research that some groups are less aware of how to complain about their negative experiences and some groups are just less likely to complain. As an organisation we have prepared information about how to complain for people who have a learning disability or want Easy Read information.
- We have had our complaints leaflet translated into different languages and we can get information interpreted when a request is made.

Complaints and PALS

[Concerns and Complaints_cs_Czech.pdf](#)

[Concerns and Complaints_Gujarati.pdf](#)

[Concerns and Complaints_pl_Polish.pdf](#)

[Concerns and Complaints_sk_Slovak.pdf](#)

[Concerns and Complaints_zhcn_Mandarin.pdf](#)

Accessibility

- We advise and encourage people to speak to ward or clinic staff about concerns as more often than not, our staff can deal with their concerns straight away.
- If people feel they are not being helped or they do not wish to speak to staff directly then we encourage and they can contact our PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service).

Stakeholder/community engagement

- As an organisation, the Head of Patient Experience and 2 members of her team, went out to visit the Gloucestershire Deaf Association to hear what it was like to experience our service from their perspective and to listen to their patient experience stories and to find out if we meet their needs. There were British Sign Language Interpreters there so that we could communicate with each other. We heard from several people who had recently used our services. We heard some really positive stories about when we had got things right for them and also we heard some stories of areas that we need to make improvements.
- We plan to proactively work with them and other organisations to hear what it is like to be on the receiving end of this organisation.

PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS AT BOARD MEETINGS

The Trust welcomes feedback from members of the public. We are committed to delivering the best care and constantly looking at ways to improve the services we provide at our hospitals. There are a variety of ways in which you can give your feedback. These are:-

- As a patient or visitor to the hospital by completing a comment card which is available on wards and departments.
- By contacting the Patient and Liaison Service (PALS) who offer confidential, impartial help, advice or support to any aspect of a patient's care. The team aim to help resolve issues and concerns speedily by liaising with appropriate staff on your behalf. PALS can be contacted by phone on 0800 019 3282; by text on 07827 281 266; by e-mail pals@gloucestershirehospitals@glos.nhs.uk or by writing to the PALS Office, Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Gloucester GL1 3NN. Complaints can be made to the Complaints Team by phoning 0300 422 5777, by e-mail complaints.team@glos.nhs.uk or by writing to the Complaints Team at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital/at the above address.
- By asking a question at our Board meeting by following the procedure below. Board meetings are open to the public and are normally held on the last Friday of the month and alternate between the Sandford Education Centre in Cheltenham and the Redwood Education Centre at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital. Meetings normally start at 9.00am

All feedback is taken seriously and is used to either praise staff for the excellent care or service they have provided or used to make improvements where needed.

Written questions for the Board Meeting

People who live or work in the county or are affected by the work of the Trust (including members of the Trust who live outside of the County) may ask the Chair of the Trust Board a question on any matter which is within the powers and duties of the Trust.

Ten minutes will be allocated at the end of the public section of each Board meeting for written questions from the public to be answered. Where it is not possible for all written questions to be dealt with within this timeframe a written response will be provided to the questioner and copied to all Board members within 7 working days of the meeting. In exceptional circumstances, the Chair may extend the time period for public questions.

Notice of questions

A question may only be asked if it has been submitted in writing to the Trust Secretary by 12.00 noon 3 clear working days before the date of the Board meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner. If a question is being asked on behalf of an organization then the name of the organization must be stated. Written questions are to be submitted to the Trust Secretary, Alexandra House, Cheltenham General Hospital, Sandford Road, Cheltenham, GL53 7AN or by e-mail to martin.wood@glos.nhs.uk No more than 3 written questions may be submitted by each questioner.

Procedure

At the Board meeting the questioner, if present, will be invited to read out the question. If absent, the Chair may read out the question. A written answer will be provided to a written question and will be given to the questioner and to members of the Trust Board before being read out at the meeting by the Chair. Copies of the questions and the responses will be recorded in the minutes.

Additional Questions

A questioner who has submitted a written question may, with the consent of the Chair, ask an additional oral question arising directly out of the original question or the reply.

An answer to an oral question will take the form of either:

- a direct oral answer; or
- if the information required is not easily available a written answer will be sent to the questioner and circulated to all members of the Trust Board.

Unless the Chair decides otherwise there will not be discussion on any public question.

Written questions may be rejected and oral questions need not be answered when the Chair considers that they:

- are not on any matter that is within the powers and duties of the Trust;
- are defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- are substantially the same as a question that has been put to a meeting of the Trust Board and been answered in the past six months; or
- would require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

For further information, please contact Martin Wood, Trust Secretary on 0300 422 2932 by e-mail martin.wood@glos.nhs.uk