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BACKGROUND

As part of our planning response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Associate Chief Nurse Craig Bradley at Gloucestershire NHS Foundation Trust proposed the use of yellow lanyards for staff with additional respiratory care skills. The initiative led to an additional team of specialist nurses working together, educating, training and supporting Trust wide health care staff in managing patients; albeit outside of their speciality.

The early identification of the yellow lanyards enabled staff who were caring for patients with Covid-19 to easily identify those staff with the additional respiratory skills to gain support. Staff wearing the yellow lanyards were expected to meet a set criteria.

WHAT WE DID – OUR ROLE

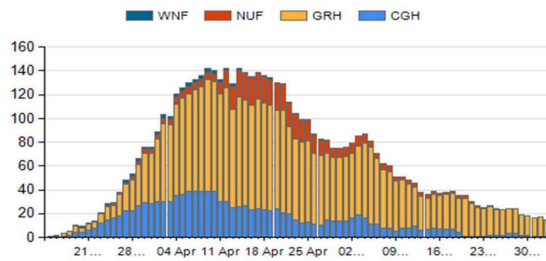
The Yellow Lanyard Team consisted of 40 nurses working on two sites across the Trust [(Gloucester Royal (GRH) and Cheltenham General Hospitals (CGH)]. The nurses within the team were nurses working within different areas around the Trust as well as those working within the Respiratory department.

Our role particularly focused on non-invasive training (Continuous positive airway pressures) a leadership strategy employed by the Trust to manage COVID-19 patients with high FiO2 requirement in a respiratory high dependency unit (HDU) setting. The respiratory HDU was relocated and expanded to 31 beds compared to a normal capacity of 10 and all patients requiring non-ventilatory support only were managed on it unless deemed at high risk.

We also liaised with our lung physiology department daily for equipment calibration and programming enabling us to manage the quick turnover of patients admitted.

Additionally we offered training opportunities to all staff including NEWS monitoring, documentation, adequate use of personal protective equipment, oxygen management, initiating Hi-Flow nasal oxygen, and escalation of patients to intensive care alongside delivery of conventional respiratory care.

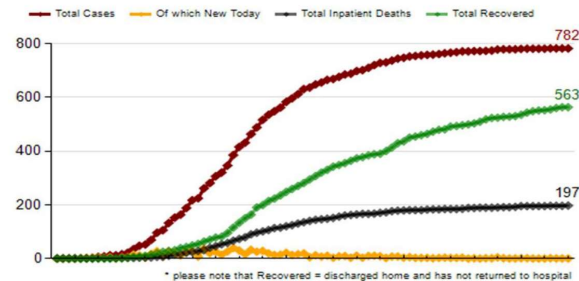
Figure 1. The Yellow Lanyards - Gloucestershire Foundation NHS Trust COVID-19 Initiative



1a. Beds occupied by COVID-19 patients as of midnight each day



1b. Yellow lanyards used by specialist respiratory nurses



1c. Cumulative total COVID-19 positive cases by day

OUTCOMES

Our strategies upskilled healthcare worker to manage the ever increasing case load of COVID-19 patients using enhanced decision making, critical thinking and improved communication skills preparing them to work in the ever changing environment. The Yellow Lanyard Team was an asset during the pandemic available 24/7 and successfully managed patients to recover from their illness (Fig 1c).

SECOND SURGE AND FUTURE PLANS

The Trust has expanded the respiratory HDU capacity currently for patients receiving aerosol generating procedures and we aim to utilise the skill set of our trained staff with the prospect of offering immediate support for patients with COVID-19 with current and future surges.

OUR TEAM

We would like to thank everyone involved in the Yellow Lanyard initiative. Below are the teams of the Yellow Lanyard Team:

Nathalie Forsey, Louise Lakin, Emilie Kerslake, Catz Matthews, Kerry Mayer, Sophie Waite, Matt Rumming, Amy Kelly, Penny Byrne, Jodie Crawshaw, Melou Cabugsa, Megan Atkinson, Ellie Birch, Cynthia fowler, Paul Mulles, Paul Limboy, Alvin Mocon, Fiona Mather, Nikoleta Stoyanova, Lisa Forth, Deborah Merrett, Jesusa Mempin, Rachel Fisher, Alexandra Heys, Sophie Benson, Dani Brooks, Homairah Daya, Fiona Haines, Tay-Louise O'dea, Matthew Ammaikunnel, Jane Cowell, Sophie Evans, Michelle Fearn, Jenna Frostick, Emma Jeffery, Johncy Joseph, Laura McColl, Ailyn Pejoto, Vicki Hargreaves, Rachel Wilcock, Jennifer Wronski, Debbie Killman, Caroline Broekman, Sue Farrants, Fran Meek, Matt Nelmes, Caroline Nelmes, Kelly White, Lisa Underwood, Sam Stacey