

INVESTIGATION OBSERVATION WORK

Structure:

Each session will enable you to:

- Look around clinical areas
- Watch what's going on in clinical and public areas

Duration:

Each session will last no longer than a couple of hours. All members of the investigation team who wish to do so will carry out observations.

Where:

Observation sessions will be conducted on all wards caring for older people.

What:

The aim of the observation sessions is to capture information about the following:

- Profession to professional interactions (e.g. are discussions about patients held in public areas, are communications about patients clear at shift handover, what happens at multidisciplinary team meetings)
- Professional to patient/carer interactions (e.g. privacy and dignity issues, respectful communication, positive and negative body language, help with feeding, telephone use)
- Risk management issues (e.g. cleanliness, hand washing, cleaning of spills, 'sharps' hazards, MRSA arrangements)
- Facilities (e.g. access for people with physical and sensory disabilities, toilet and washing facilities)

Things to consider:

- Examples of respect to privacy, dignity, individual needs, confidentiality, respectfulness, sensitivity, kindness (to patients **and** relatives)
- Are people asked personal questions in public places?
- Do staff speak to patients on an equal basis (e.g. draw up a chair, pull curtains if needed, appropriate use of first name)?
- How long do patients wait (and what kind of response do they get) - if they ring a call bell on a ward. Are the bell, water jugs, glasses etc. within easy reach? Do they get an explanation for a long wait?
- Positive and negative body language (e.g. smiling, greeting appropriately)
- Are telephone messages from relatives quickly passed on?
- What kind of information is discussed with relatives on the phone (privacy)?
- Is the identity of callers checked?
- Do patients sitting in armchairs look comfortable?

Ground rules:

- Introduce yourself to the person in charge of the ward and any staff you come across
- Don't engage with patients except for simple pleasantries
- Be careful not to place yourself in situations where you may over hear confidential information