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NIGHT SKILL MIX REVIEW GOSPORT WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Sue Hutchings, Snr Nurse Co-ordinator was requested by Jan Peach Service Manager to conduct a review of the night staff in November 2000. The reason for this was that it was known that D grades were regularly taking charge of wards at night and also as a consequence of the Minor Injury Closure at GWMH. Issues raised from that report were;

1. D grade regularly taking charge of their ward at night
2. Only one trained nurse on wards at night and this could obviously be a D grade
3. As a consequence of Minor Injury closure is there still a requirement for a G grade on nights?
4. Was there a trained nurse establishment deficit.

From this report further work has been carried out to answer these questions.

1. D grades regularly taking the ward at night

The wards involved were Dryad and Sultan, where there is 110 hours (2.93wte) that potentially may need to be converted into E grade hours at a cost of £10,473.

Dryad

Reviewing past off duty it appears that this ward has been short of an E grade since December 1999 due to;

Maternity Leave

Sn Collins works 2 nights per week and commenced maternity leave Dec 1999 followed by unpaid leave. She returned to work September 2000 This equates to 9 months absence in which a D grade acted up

Long Term Absence

Sn Evans has been on compassionate leave and is now on long term sickness. (Now on half pay and seeking early retirement on ill health grounds. Moved to live with mother in the Midlands from 2.3.01) From December 1999 2 nights were not covered by a senior nurse and this increased to 5 nights in September 2000. D grades have filled this gap.

Concerns are expressed that these absences haven't been handled appropriately, and that arrangements for a member of staff to be upgraded for the maternity leave were not made which could then have been extended to cover the absence of Sn Evans. Had this step been taken D grades would not have been working on their own and for one or two of them it would have meant extra pay plus the chance to develop in a more senior role. There are no vacancies on this ward.

Sultan Ward

From the off duty it does appear that Sn Dolan and Sn Dunleavy do take charge on frequent occasions, but not always on their own ward. ✓ 6/4/01

At the time of this report Sultan ward have no vacancies for night staff.

2. Only One trained on duty at night

To cover all wards safely we require a minimum of two trained with support from 2 unqualified. At present the only ward with this ratio is Daedalus. However this ward does have vacancies of 50 hours (1.33wte) D grade. These posts have been unfilled since September 2000 despite advertising regularly. Table produced to show relevant costs (appendix 1)

3. G Grade required on night duty

Since the closure of the Minor Injury Unit in August 2000 the role of the G grade has been depleted. They are still responsible for dealing with emergencies when they arise, completing the night rota and covering breaks. Consideration of the expensiveness of this resource is needed. The G grade hours could be converted to an F grade, which may mean that any surplus funding could be recycled into additional E grade hours.

4. Trained skill deficit

As a result of the questions raised and the evidence presented that D grades were acting up at night a review of the off duties and establishment was conducted to identify any deficits. These are identified in appendix 1. The table identifies the trained and untrained establishment requirements that would provide cover for annual leave and sickness. It is respected that establishments historically have not been funded to include cover for absences but without this additional input the wards are reliant on excess hours, agency/bank staff for support. All of which are becoming increasingly difficult to achieve.

CONCERNS

Whilst the skill mix gaps are not great there is no flexibility in the establishments and therefore no cover for any type of absence, which leaves the hospital in a very vulnerable position.

Skill mix gaps (appendix 1) have been identified at a total cost of £44,310. If the gaps are not funded D grades will continue to be required to cover either their own ward or move to cover other wards for absences.

If skill mix is not increased the use of agency/bank staff will continue.

Wards will continue to be vulnerable if agency/bank cannot be arranged to cover absences.

50 hours (1.33 wte) D grade vacancy on Daewidus ward.

This is CES funding and adverts have been placed at least 4 times without any success. This ward is very vulnerable with 24 rehabilitation patients consideration of alternative cover may need to be given;

Two options considered - advertising for E grades

- consider twilight trained nurses from 7pm to midnight.

Apparent lack of proactive thinking to resolve problems

RECOMMENDATIONS

30 hours D grade to be upgraded to E grade on a temporary basis until decision made re Sn Evans

Senior staff to be ward based, trouble shooting from the wards as far as is practical.

G grade to be downgraded to F. This would long-term free up some funding to enable upgrading of D grade to E on Sultan. G grade would however be protected as per Whitley handbook ? 4 years and this has not been built into cost of skill mix review (appendix 1)

With General Manager's agreement seek additional funding to enhance the skill mix at total cost of £44,310

Seek to enhance establishments when development opportunities arise.

Upgrade those D grades currently acting up at a cost of £10,473.

All night rotas to be the responsibility of the relevant Clinical Manager to prevent potential concerns of increase work load from them it could also be done by the senior member of the night staff team. This may also provide more incentive to encourage staff to rotate to nights and thus attract 10% enhancement.

The night cover rota should be completed by the F grades on a rotational basis identifying any cover problems to a relevant clinical manager who would assist in resolving the problem.

Better planning of rotas

More proactive thinking to cover known absences.

Appendix 1

Night Staff Review Mix

Based on:

2 trained and 2 untrained per ward per night = 9.0 wte

Site cover to be ward based

Clinical Managers responsible for night rotas

Ward		Present Funded Establishment	+/- Variance (including AL and Sickness)	Variance in hours	Variance £	Cost £ Upgrade £	Total £
Dryad	T	4.13	- 0.37	- 14 hrs	9,866	3,947	13,815
	UT	4.29	- 0.21	- 8 hrs	4,392		
Daedalus	T	4.67	+ 0.17	+ 6 hrs			
	UT	4.39	- 0.11	- 4 hrs			
Sultan	T	4.01	- 0.49	- 18.5 hrs	13,072	6,526	19,598
	UT	4.13	- 0.37	- 14 hrs	6,507		6,507
TOTALS			- 1.37	- 52.5	33,837	10,473	44,310

Appendix 2

Night Skill Mix Review Action Plan

Ward	Action	Date to be achieved	By Whom
Dryad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade D - E x 1 on temporary basis + back pay from Sept 1999 - March 2001 • Advertise E post when current holder's medically retired 	6.4.2001	JP GH
Sultan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade D - E x 2 backdated August 2000 	6.4.2001	JP
Sultan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downgrade G → F 	3 months notice from 18.7.2001	JP
All Wards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with CMs re review outcome • Meet with SSNs • Planning meetings to implement changes • Variance identified of - 1.37 wte at cost of £33,837 	End July End July End August Current financial year through discussion	JP/MM JP/MM JP/SC/MM/CM/SSN /TU JP/FC