

Caroline Harrington - Assistant Business Manager

From: David Barker - Communication Manager
Sent: 19 October 2001 13:07
To: Caroline Harrington; Eileen Thomas; Fiona Cameron; Humphrey, Lesley; Ian Piper; Max Millett; Reid, Ian (Dr) (Elderly)
Cc: Galley Sue (QEV) IOW Ports & SE Hants HA; Code A
Subject: Q+A briefing sheet re GWMH



All,

here's a draft of the Q+As for staff which may also be useful as a media brief too. Max and I have got it to this stage but there may be amendments or further questions you feel should be included, in which case please bring those to Monday's meeting.

{Sue/Charlotte - to you for info but please feel free to comment back to me}

Hoping to circulate a draft press release (ours) later today. It's likely we'll be sharing these two docs with CHI today as well.

Thanks

David

① date - 22 not 23

② ? put 'full confidence' para first.

Getting ready for CHI

Questions and answers about the investigation at Gosport WMH

The Commission for Health Improvement announced on Monday 23rd October their intention to undertake an investigation into inpatient general medical care of older people at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

As most staff are probably aware the announcement comes in the light of concerns about the standard of care at Gosport back in 1998/9 voiced by several complainants through Portsmouth News articles in April 2001.

We hope that the CHI visit will help reassure people about the care provided today and allow us to demonstrate the progress we have made in service provision over the past two or three years.

A CHI investigation is new ground for all of us, so some answers to a few questions may be helpful.....

? What is CHI?

The Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) was set up by the government to improve the quality of patient care in the NHS across England and Wales. CHI started operating on 1st April 2000 and has a programme underway which aims to reduce unacceptable variations in care and ensure that every NHS patient receives a high level of care. The patient's experience is at the heart of CHI's work.

? What does CHI do?

According to its website (www.chi.gov.uk) CHI will raise standards by:

- assessing every NHS organisation and making its findings public
- investigating when there is serious failure
- checking that the NHS is following national guidelines
- advising the NHS on best practice

CHI will be independent, rigorous and fair in its work, highlighting best practice in the NHS and encouraging others to adopt it, while not flinching from saying clearly where urgent improvement is required.

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CHI does not, however, investigate individual complaints. The appropriate professional regulatory bodies, individual organisation's complaints procedure, Community Health Councils and the Health Service Ombudsman exist to deal with such cases.

? Why is CHI coming to Gosport?

In some instances CHI conduct investigations where things have 'gone wrong' and public confidence in the NHS may have been affected. Clearly the recent high profile media coverage of particular cases of care at Gosport in 1998 ^{may} have raised concerns sufficient to warrant an investigation by CHI. However, it must be stressed that in the specific cases concerned, all external clinical assessments and reviews of the cases confirmed clinical practice to be within an acceptable range.

? What services will CHI focus on?

The investigation will primarily focus on inpatient general medical care of older people (inpatient, continuing and rehabilitative care) at Gosport War Memorial Hospital (Dryad, Daedalus and the Sultan ~~GP~~ wards). It will, however, look at how the service provided by these wards relates to other services (in the rest of Gosport WMH, Portsmouth Hospitals Trust specialties, Haslar, primary care etc) and at the framework of Trust policies and procedures that supports it.

? What will the investigation cover?

The investigation will particularly look at whether, since 1998 (when the reported incidents occurred) the Trust has ensured good quality patient care. It will look in detail at particular concerns:

- arrangements for administering drugs
- clarity of responsibility for patient care
- transfer arrangements for patients between Gosport WMH and other local hospitals

There are also specific elements within the service that CHI will want to look at closely:

- staffing and accountability arrangements, including out of hours
- guidelines and practices in place to ensure good quality care and effective performance management
- arrangements for the prescription, administration and recording of drugs
- communication and collaboration between the Trust and patients, their relatives, carers and with partner organisations
- arrangements to support patients and their relatives and carers towards the end of the patient's life
- supervision and training arrangements in place to enable staff to provide effective care

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in addition CHI will examine how lessons to improve care have been learnt across the Trust from patient complaints. The investigation will also look at the adequacy of the Trust's clinical governance arrangements to support inpatient continuing and rehabilitative care for older people.

? Will this mean that complaints will be reinvestigated?

No - CHI does not investigate individual complaints nor does it duplicate or repeat work already undertaken by professional bodies (eg. UKCC, Ombudsman etc). However, although it will not reinvestigate complaints, it will look at what issues arose and how the Trust has learned from them.

? How will the investigation be conducted?

The investigation is likely to last about 24 weeks, from late October. The initial stages are largely concerned with information gathering, followed by a one week visit by a team from CHI to the hospital - this is likely to be in January.

The investigation will involve patients, staff and stakeholders and provide opportunities for staff and members of the public to talk to the team.

CHI will publish a report, with recommendations at the end of its investigation (towards the end of March seems likely).

? Who forms part of the CHI team?

Team members are largely NHS employees from other areas, although the party includes an investigation manager, employed directly by CHI and a lay member. The investigation team members' skills and experience are matched to each investigation.

In this case we expect the team to comprise: a chief executive from a community trust, a senior nurse with elderly care experience, a consultant geriatrician, another health professional (therapist or pharmacist), a lay member and the CHI investigating manager.

? Will this mean more media coverage?

It's inevitable that there will be local (possibly national) media interest when news of the investigation is announced and this may mean that some of the coverage from earlier in the year will be resurrected. Although this will not be an easy time for those involved, we will be trying to get some clear messages across:

- we welcome the CHI visit and its review of the service we provide for older people at Gosport War Memorial Hospital as it affords the opportunity to have a thorough look at the service from an independent perspective.

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- to be effective, investigations such as these rely on a spirit of cooperation and openness and we will be happy to work alongside CHI to ensure that we apply whatever lessons that can be learned to further improve the service we offer.

- the Trust has full confidence in the staff who work at Gosport War Memorial Hospital and in the excellent services that they provide. We are keen to support them during the review process to ensure that they can contribute to it fully.

- we recognise that concerns were expressed publicly about the care provided in specific cases at the hospital, in 1998, but we hope that the CHI visit will help reassure people about the care provided today and allow us to demonstrate the progress we have made in service provision over the past two or three years.

ends

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