

County Durham LINK Meeting/Event

Date: 18th March 2010
Event: Meeting with staff at the Children's Ward in Darlington Memorial Hospital
Number/range of attendees: 6 young people from 2D, Rob Fothergill (2D) and support, Clare Sandford (County Durham LINK), Colin Smith (Charge Nurse/manager), Margot Davies (Children's Ward Manager), Emma Booth (Play Specialist).
Purpose of meeting/event: To discuss ideas for improving the decor in the Children's Ward at Darlington Memorial Hospital
Record completed by: Clare Sandford
<p>Colin started the meeting by running through the actions from the last time he met with the young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bishop Auckland Hospital waiting area – the soft play is being removed and changes are imminent. Colin is carrying out monthly cleanliness checks which have been good so far. • Everyone agreed that the smell often associated with hospitals hadn't been noticed in the walk through the hospital on this visit. • Gowns – a new style of gown is being introduced for adults and Colin is hoping that a similar one will be produced for children. • A&E at Darlington Memorial Hospital – there has been a lot of work done at Darlington. The A&E department is now split into 2 separate areas; one for children and one for adults. A&E is following government guidelines so no-one will have to wait longer than 4 hours to be seen in A&E. Two specialist Children's nurses have been employed at Durham Hospital and Colin hopes the same will happen at Darlington very soon. • Colin holds a monthly meeting with consultants and doctors. He brought up the issue raised about young people not being able to understand the language used by some doctors. The



comments were well received and the consultants and doctors have agreed to speak directly to the young people and to use appropriate language in the future. Nurses on the ward will also try and help with this issue by double checking the young person has understood.

- Outpatient appointments – Unfortunately, Colin is struggling with the issue about missing school to attend outpatient appointments. This is something that has also been brought up by diabetic children and Colin will continue to encourage those responsible for issuing appointments to think about the impact on a child's schooling.
- Medicine – Still tastes bad!
- Car parking – Still a huge problem. There is a consultation being carried out with hospital staff to look at ways of improving the situation. A suggestion has been made that if a staff member lives less than a mile from the hospital they should walk rather than drive to work but no decisions have been made yet.

Colin then introduced Emma Booth. Emma is a Play Specialist at Darlington Memorial Hospital and does activities with young people to help prepare them for hospital procedures. She also does distraction therapy and can be a support for the young person whilst in hospital.

The young people were taken around the Children's Ward and asked for suggestions for a number of areas including:

- School room
- Teenage room
- Children's playroom
- Hallway
- Entrance to the ward

The young people came up with some great ideas and whilst some may be too expensive to put into place or not practical for the hospital setting it is hoped the hospital staff will be able to use some of the ideas to update the Children's Ward.

Colin asked the young people to do some extra work on some of

the ideas and Rob agreed that they would tackle it during the Easter holidays.

Actions:

Rob and the young people to come up with the following:

- A 'Rules' poster for the teenage room
- Relevant information to put into the Teenagers Information file. E.g. Support available
- It was suggested at the entrance to the ward to have the word HOSPITAL with different words for each letter. Rob and the young people to think of possible words.

The Outpatients (Adult) Manager has asked if the young people could look at the spaces used by young people in the general outpatients ward and make some suggestions – Clare to arrange a meeting for May/June.