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14 OCT 2011

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6<sup>th</sup> October 2011

**Private and Confidential**

Mr Peter Irving  
Chairman  
County Durham LINK  
Pioneering Care Centre  
Carers Way  
**Newton Aycliffe DL5 4SF**

Dear Mr Irving

**Enter & View Report: Emergency Departments, University Hospital of North Durham and Darlington Memorial Hospital.**

Thank you for the Emergency Department reports which were completed following a visit by the County Durham LINK Enter & View group on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011 at University Hospital of North Durham (UHND) and on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2011 at Darlington Memorial Hospital (DMH).

The Trust has taken the recommendations suggested very seriously, and actions have been developed as a result of your findings.

I have outlined below, the actions we have progressed in order to ensure patients receive a positive experience when visiting our Emergency Departments.

**Actions from the Emergency Department, University Hospital of North Durham**

The issues highlighted within the UHND report have been progressed, and feedback is provided below after discussion with Mrs Gordon, Matron for the Emergency Department at UHND.

**To improve status updates**

The triage nurse will ensure the information board is up to date with appropriate waiting times. Patients are to be informed of this during the triage assessment. This has been actioned with immediate effect.

**To delegate contact with staff at times of sickness, to a non-clinician to release nurses for clinical duties**

Senior nurses are aware that they can delegate this task to a non-clinical member of the team as and when required.

All Senior Nurses have been reminded of this.

**Provision of a Bladder Scanner would assist the throughput of patients.**

A business case has been submitted on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2011. It is anticipated we will be informed of the outcome by December 2011.

**Improvements could be made to the children's waiting area. Can charitable donations or fundraising be utilised to improve the surroundings for children?**

Improvements have been made to the paediatric area. A quote has also been obtained to paint a wall freeze in the paediatric waiting and treatment area.

**Monitoring of hand gel dispensers could be monitored more closely and members of the public encouraged to use them.**

Signage in the waiting area has been improved to encourage use of the hand gels and staff have been made aware of the importance of this.

Mrs Gordon thanks the Enter and View Team for their constructive feedback. The report has been shared with all staff so that they have a greater understanding of the patient perspective of the department.

Recommendations are acknowledged and are in the process of implementation.

**Actions from the Emergency Department at Darlington Memorial Hospital**

The issues highlighted within the DMH report have been progressed, and feedback is provided below, after discussion with Mrs Potter, Matron for the Emergency Department at DMH.

**To improve status updating. Provide verbal updates and keep the board up to date**

The board that provides the waiting times has been relocated to a more prominent position. The detail of waiting times will be updated every two hours. This will be monitored closely to ensure accuracy. This has been actioned with immediate effect.

**The card/triage system, was not actively in use and there was a lack of understanding of the process**

Patients are provided with an orange or green card as part of the triage system. The reception staff are being monitored on a daily basis as to the use of the cards and how effectively the system is working.

**To delegate contact with staff at times of sickness, to a non-clinician to release nurses for clinical duties**

This will become a clerical function in the short term. Senior nurses are aware that they can delegate this task to a non-clinical member of the team as and when required.

All Senior Nurses have been reminded of this.

**Children's waiting area could benefit from extra toys and activities.**

Some toys have been replaced and extra activities are in place. We are cautious of the importance of safety and cleanliness of toys within the waiting area and this is taken into consideration.

**Monitoring of hand gel dispensers could be monitored more closely and members of the public encouraged to use them.**


The dispensers are checked on a daily basis. Staff are routinely reminded of the importance of this function.

Feedback regarding the cleanliness of the Emergency Department entrance at DMH has been discussed. A cleaning exercise to the external area has been agreed and will progress shortly.

Mrs Potter sends her thanks to the Enter and View Group for comments raised and hopes the actions that have been implemented will reassure the LINK of the importance of improving services as a result of patient feedback.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your visit and the observations made by your team.

Yours sincerely



**LAURA ROBSON**  
**Executive Director of Nursing and Service Transformation**

CC Mrs M. Grieveson, Associate Director of Patient Experience and Safeguarding