A PROJECT TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PATIENTS AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

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Introduction

On discussion with the COMPLAINTS department and evaluation of their data, it became clear that the area of most dissatisfaction amongst patients was communication with healthcare professionals. An effective way to ameliorate this is design of a patient information leaflet. According to the MHRA (Medicine’s and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency), “Self-care, a key government objective, relies heavily on patients having sufficient high quality information on which to base their decision-making”.¹

A patient leaflet provides uniform, objective information to which the patient can refer to at all times..

The Trauma and Orthopaedic sector was chosen due to its performance as the third worst in communication in the Trust and personal knowledge of the department.
Method

- Leaflet drafted according to BSUH guidelines
- Draft circulated for patient and staff feedback
- Leaflet sent to Communications Department for CPIG* ratification
- User-friendly and attractive layout
- Approved leaflet sent to Clinical Media Centre for printing
- Introduce leaflet on a trial basis to Trauma department
- Audit effectiveness of leaflet during trial period

Discussions with:
- Communications department
- League of Friends
- Trauma & Orthopaedic team
- Patients
- Clinical Media Centre

*CPIG = Carer and Patient Information Group
Welcome to the Trauma Service

Results

“You may find that your operation is subsequently postponed to later in the same day or to a different day. We try to avoid this where possible”

“The consultant in charge may change during your stay in hospital, this will not affect your care.”

“If you have any concerns at any point then you should ask the doctors and nurses on the ward”

Feedback from Staff:

“Why don’t you introduce it on a trial basis ASAP” Consultant, T&O

“It looks fine and full of useful information”

Consultant, T&O
Conclusion

Objectives:

• Improving communication between patients and healthcare professionals
• Enhancing patient experience of the trauma service by informing expectations

Method:

• Discussions with; Communications, Clinical Media Centre, the League of Friends & Trauma and Orthopaedic department
• Use of policies and guidelines
• Feedback from staff and patients

Current Stage:

• Formatting and printing
• Next steps- trial of leaflet; audit of effectiveness