

## Notes from care home online forum – 17 April 2023

Hosted by Derry Nugent (DN)

DN opened the forum and all participants introduced themselves.

### **Presentation by Judy Mattison, Lead Dementia Nurse for Northumbria NHS Healthcare Trust**

Judy gave a presentation about the Acute Admiral Nurse service which covers all inpatient areas within Northumberland and North Tyneside. The geography of Northumberland and the ageing population present challenges to the service.

The Acute Admiral service:

- provides support for family carers in hospital
- helps to manage co-morbidities/frailty
- provides education for hospital staff
- works alongside and supports clinical and ward staff
- preventative management of risks to health
- facilitates effective discharge
- supports patient transitions

Judy explained the NHS Well Pathway for dementia and the three tiers of support ranging from low level need advice and support (tier 1) to complex Admiral Nurse support (tier 3). Judy talked about the Northumbria Dementia and Delirium Strategy 2021-26 and gave an overview of the Admiral Nurse staff team.

The Acute Admiral Nurse service can be contacted by calling 0191 282 8923 or emailing: [AdmiralNursesNHCT@northumbria-healthcare.nhs.uk](mailto:AdmiralNursesNHCT@northumbria-healthcare.nhs.uk)

### **Questions and comments**

How do people get in touch with the Admiral Nurses and how does the referral system work?

Some patients will already be known to hospital staff. The service also works closely with Carers Northumberland and Chrysalis and the nurses can work with these organisations if the patient is already being supported. To refer someone to the service you can call or email and a form will be sent to you. Staff working in the Trust can complete an online referral form.

Someone asked how training can be arranged for her team?

Training can be arranged by sending Judy an email and she will put the team in touch with Clinical Educator, Dylan Evans.

One attendee said she was pleased this training is available for doctors as her experience of dementia awareness with her mum had been poor, for example doctors speaking loudly to the patient as if they are deaf or talking to the relative and ignoring the patient.

DN asked if care homes are aware of the service?

The service is currently notified the day after a dementia patient goes into hospital. Judy said a soft launch of the service took place in February and the team is currently getting out and about promoting it. If anyone knows of any groups who would be interested in the service please let her know.

DN asked if the service covers outpatients too?

The formal referral process is for inpatients but the Admiral Nurses can help with the whole healthcare journey.

One attendee said it needs to be advertised where the service is based and there should be dementia training on all wards. Some patients may seem like they have dementia but they might be depressed, bereaved or on medication.

Judy said the service is based in Seaton Delaval as this is a central location. The service sits with the safeguarding team. Judy works remotely sometimes and travels to the various hospital sites. All staff at the Trust are given Dementia Friends training and online training. Face-to-face training is difficult due to staffing issues so the team have started going on to the wards instead.

Action – HWN will look at how to help get the word out into care homes and make relatives aware of the service.

### **Carers Northumberland respite care survey**

Hannah Corcoran from Carers Northumberland spoke about a survey that was sent to all registered carers about respite care. This follows a conversation at the last care home forum with Alan Curry about the difficulties carers have pre-booking beds for respite care.

- There were 44 responses
- 32% said they had accessed respite care
- 40% said they did not receive respite care when they requested it
- 68% said the ability to pre-book respite care would be useful

Common themes were poor communication with Adult Social Care, limited availability and only being able to book four weeks in advance is very stressful if wanting to book a holiday. One carer only received confirmation of the respite place hours before her flight. Being able to book in advance would be beneficial to carers. Some carers are paying for private respite care if they can afford it.

One attendee asked what the reason was for the short notice. Hannah said it is the way the current Adult Social Care system works to limit the number of empty beds.

DN said Alan Curry has confirmed that Adult Social Care is going to block book one bed for respite care as a result of the conversation at the last care home forum. This will need to be formally commissioned and go out to procurement. The group welcomed this news and will keep a watching brief as this develops.

### **Enter and View project**

DN explained what Enter and View is and that HWN is looking to work with two care homes in the county to see what learning can be taken forward from the pandemic. The plan will include holding focus groups and one-to-one meetings with relatives. DN asked the group to consider what issues we should focus on for the Enter and View visit.

The main areas mentioned were:

- Laundry – clothes disappearing/ residents wearing clothes that belong to other people
- Activities programme – is there a planned programme of meaningful and varied activities and how do residents/relatives influence the programme? Is there a designated Activities Coordinator with capacity to run these activities?
- How the care home reacts when relatives raise issues – one attendee said she had to repeatedly ask for issues to be sorted and went to the manager after three weeks of nothing being done.
- Visiting during outbreaks – although post-pandemic some relatives are still experiencing difficulties visiting when care homes close during a Covid outbreak.

DN said she will keep the group informed about the Enter and View visit. The next care home forum meeting will be in a few months. Date TBC.