

For the Record – Press Statements

Publication	Express & Star
Date of article	14 th December 2013
Reporter	Lisa O'Brien
Headline	42,000 safety incidents at hospitals in a year
First paragraph/s of article	<p>More than 42,000 NHS safety incidents were reported in Wolverhampton, Staffordshire and the Black Country in a year, new figures show.</p> <p>Hospital trusts in Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, Walsall, Sandwell and Dudley reported the figures to the National Reporting and Learning System for the 2012/13 period.</p> <p>The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust had 11 death reports and 30 severe harm cases in the first half of 2012/13, compared to two deaths and four severe harm reports in the second half, while incident reports overall rose from 4,049 to 4,735.</p> <p>Chief executive Paula Clark said: "We take every incident seriously and encourage staff to err on the side of caution."</p>
Press enquiry	Following the publication of a report on safety incidents by NHS Patient Safety the Express & Star asked the Trust for a comment about the figures relating to The Dudley Group.
Trust response	
<p>COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST</p> <p>The safety of our patients is the top priority for our staff at The Dudley Group.</p> <p>We have a good safety culture here supported by a very honest and open reporting system, and we believe that's the best way to encourage learning and make improvements into patient safety.</p> <p>The recent published data shows our trust has a lower rate of incidents per hundred admissions than four of our neighbouring trusts in the West Midlands. We are pleased to see our robust reporting is reflected in the median number of days between incidents occurring and being reported is nine. This is significantly lower than the seven trusts in the region.</p>	

We take every incident seriously and encourage our staff to err on the side of caution and grade the level of severity as high pending a full investigation to determine all the facts and identify the cause of the incident. The severity will then be reviewed and often downgraded to reflect the actual harm, if any, which has taken place. Over the last 16 months we have strengthened our system for the review of severity levels which is now giving us a more accurate representation of harm figures.

We use a number of measures and checks to ensure we are providing safe services and care for our patients.

- As a Board of Directors we have presentations from our matrons and our clinical directors
- As a Board of Directors we carry out patient safety walkabouts and talk to staff on the frontline and ask how things feel for them; what's working well for them and what needs improving
- We also carry out a number of audits at ward level – like our Nursing Care Indicators which measures patient safety and care
- We have a whistle blowing policy which staff can use if they have concerns about patient safety and we have signed up to the Nursing Times Speak Out Safely campaign to reinforce the message to our staff that they can safely and confidently raise concerns about patient care and safety.
- We also take part in the patient Safety Thermometer audit which looks at patient harms on a census basis once a month and we are very much in the pack with other trusts

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