

For the Record – Press Statements

Publication	The Sunday Times
Date of article	21/07/2013
Reporter	Jonathan Ungood-Thomas
Headline	Don't fall ill at the weekends/Revealed: hospitals with one consultant for 100 patients
First paragraph/s of article	<p><i>*Article did not mention The Dudley Group*</i></p> <p>Our campaign for a seven day health service has been given new urgency by the disclosure that some hospitals have one consultant per 100 patients on Sundays/Some hospitals are asking a single consultant to oversee 100 patients during busy periods at the weekend, The Sunday Times can reveal.</p>
Press enquiry	<p>The Sunday Times has looked at a Dr Foster Intelligence national survey about the number of doctors on duty at the weekend at hospital trusts in the country, specifically at 11am on Sunday June 17th 2013.</p> <p>The figures show that we had one consultant on duty and on site at that time and five senior doctors.</p> <p>He asked: Does the Trust think this is adequate?</p> <p><i>*Following clarification of our data with the journalist, The Sunday Times did not feature The Dudley Group in its article.*</i></p>
Trust response	
<p>COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST</p> <p>The Dudley Group did not just have one consultant on site at 11am on Sunday 17th June 2012. The Trust had 22 consultants on call, many of them on site.</p> <p>In response to the ambiguous Dr Foster Intelligence survey question, the Trust submitted data based on the rota for the general medical speciality <u>only</u> which referred to the consultant on call and on site for acute medical admissions. The medical speciality is one of several specialties.</p>	

Dr Foster Intelligence acknowledged that the question had confused “a few” people when it posted a clarification on its website, which read as follows:

“Following a few queries on the staffing section we would like to provide some clarification regarding the two cohorts of staff requested...:

*‘What was the number of all medical staff scheduled to be on site and on call on Sunday June 17th at 11am?’ **All medical staff** includes physicians, surgeons, radiologists etc’.*

The Dudley Group had submitted its answers, based on the rota for the medical speciality, *before* this clarification appeared on the Dr Foster Intelligence website. The data is therefore misleading.

The Trust had **22** consultants on call, many of them on site, on Sunday 17th June for each of the medical and surgical specialities, for example, cardiology, stroke, respiratory, general surgery, urology, trauma and orthopaedic, anaesthetics, ITU.

As part of their duties, the on call consultants would normally come on site to review patients admitted under their care.

On top of this, we had resident medical doctors across each speciality below the level of consultants on site and immediately available.

Our Accident and Emergency is separately staffed. On that day, three senior doctors, including a consultant, were on duty and on site supported by 12 junior doctors.

There is consultant presence seven days a week on our labour ward and in neonatal paediatrics.

In October 2012 the Trust approved a business case to increase the medical cover in the Acute Medical Unit to provide 13 hours of consultant cover, seven days a week as recommended by the Royal College of Physicians. This is now operational.

Ensuring our patients receive the best possible care from highly-skilled staff is a top priority for The Dudley Group.

In 2010/11 the Trust had 197.64 whole time equivalent consultants (including locums). In 2012/13 the figure was 236.80 (an increase of 39.16 consultants).

We have a team of senior staff working on improving care for patients 24/7 including weekend working and more efficient handover.