

For the Record – Press Statements

Publication	Express and Star
Date of article	13/05/2013
Reporter	Heather Large
Headline	Gospel singers and pet therapy to help patients
First paragraph/s of article	Visits from gospel singers, manicurists and an animal therapy dog are being brought in to make stays at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital better for patients. Staff are trying to improve patient experience at the site and have been working with the Kissing it Better charity to invite community volunteers and groups into the hospital to entertain patients.
Press enquiry	<p>Heather Large from the Express and Star is writing a story about the positive Care Quality Commission report which states that patient meals at The Dudley Group are being revamped.</p> <p>She would like some more information about what the Trust is doing to improve the experience of patients at our hospitals.</p>
Trust response	
<p>COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST</p> <p>Following patient feedback from our surveys, patient panel and also our Friends and Family test, the Trust has been reviewing the way we deliver our inpatient meal service.</p> <p>Fresh food pre-packed into individual meals is being piloted at Russells Hall Hospital to widen the choice of meals offered to patients.</p> <p>Steamplicity, the method of steam heating fresh and raw food at ward level to retain taste and goodness, offers patients a choice of 26 meals including vegetarian options and food for special diets.</p> <p>Patients select their meals from a menu on the same day and they are individually</p>	

plated before being brought to the correct temperature in a kitchen on the ward.

The trial on ward our respiratory and the Medical High Dependency Unit, follows feedback at a Patient Panel where patients told us what they liked, did not like and where improvements could be made.

C5 patient John McCutcheon, who was admitted to hospital with a chest infection, gave the food a tentative thumbs up.

“I’ve had the chicken dinner and cod in parsley sauce. It’s not like my wife’s cooking but it’s very pleasant,” said 84-year-old John.

Michael Davies, aged 76, from Stourbridge said the new style meals are “far better”.

“The quality of the food is good and it’s nice and hot,” said Michael. “It’s an excellent menu and the fish and chips are really nice.”

Christine Grainger, from Quarry Bank, gave a mixed review of the food.

“You get it a lot quicker and the presentation is good and the crumbles are gorgeous,” she said.

“The food is better although it’s a bit bland. But then I am a fussy eater,” added Christine.

The Trust has held taste tests for our Governors, patient panel members and also for staff to sample the food.

Paula Clark said, “We are the first Trust in the West Midlands to trial this more efficient plated service.

“We are gathering as much feedback as possible to help us in our decision-making process around how we can improve our mealtime service.”

This is all part of our efforts to improve patient experience at the Trust.

During 2012/13 the Trust has worked with the Kissing it Better charity to invite community volunteers and groups into the hospital to entertain our patients.

Entertainment has included:

- Gospel singers
- Face painting, hand massage, manicures and make up from Dudley college beauty students
- Regular visits from Buster the dog (and his owner Anthea) from Pets as Therapy

These activities have been so successful that we plan to develop this initiative during 2013/14.

We also introduced bespoke welcome leaflets to each ward. The ‘Welcome to the

Ward' leaflet contains important information such as: visiting times, mealtime routines, uniforms who's who and ward contact numbers both for relatives and in case of health concerns once patients go home. The leaflets are printed on A5 card to sit on the bedside cabinet where visitors can also read the important information contained within.

Feedback from patients has also informed us that we could make improvements around accessibility. With patients' help we have drawn up an action plan and have, so far, ordered 30 more wheelchairs for main reception at Russells Hall Hospital and worked on our hearing loops system (including a number of portable hearing loops that departments can access as and when needed).

We gather feedback from our inpatients via our Friends and Family Test in which we ask all patients who are being discharged whether they would recommend the service they had received to a friend and family in their hour of need. Patients are asked to rate us on a scale of 0-10 and offer suggestions where they think improvements could be made.

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