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PRESS RELEASE

Scheme speeds up service for patients

Basing pharmacy specialists in the Emergency Department at Russells Hall Hospital has helped improve patient experience by ensuring people get the appropriate medicines as quickly as possible.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust has been piloting the scheme over the busy winter months. It means any medicine queries and supply requests do not have to go through the main hospital dispensary.

Chief pharmacist Ruckie Kahlon said: “Having pharmacy staff in ED improves medicine management. They have become part of a multi-disciplinary team and can support with patients with complex medical problems who may come in already on critical medication. It is proving invaluable in providing clinical contributions to patient care.”

The project, involving a clinical pharmacist and pharmacy medicines management technician, has reduced turnaround times for medication supply for new patients and is also a way to improve education on medicines and prescribing for nursing and medical staff.

The funding was part of a £2.5m boost to the Black Country Sustainability and Transformation Partnership, set up in 2016 to plan health services in the area in a more co-ordinated way.

Dr Helen Hibbs, senior responsible officer for the Black Country and West Birmingham STP, said: “The NHS Long Term Plan highlights the value of the role of pharmacists, particularly when working as part of wider health and care teams. In the Black Country and West Birmingham we are committed to developing ways of integrated working which make better use of the pharmacy workforce, and improve care for local people.”

The Trust’s Pharmacy Department has also been held up as an example of good practice nationally for its rapid turnaround of medicines requiring a monitored dosage system for patients waiting to be discharged.

Prescriptions are sent to a local provider who assembles and checks the dosage systems and then delivers them directly to the ward. When the hospital is very busy, extra deliveries are made so patients can be discharged promptly and beds freed up.

The patients' GPs are called within seven days of discharge to inform them about the monitored dosage system supply and any medicines changes and their usual community pharmacy is given details of the hospital admission and prescriptions given.

Ruckie Kahlon said: "We are delighted that the effectiveness of this provision to support patients going home has been highlighted by NHS England as a good example of working."

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Approved by: