

HASC update on Staffing issues across our Older People's Mental Health services

We are still experiencing some challenges in maintaining our staffing levels across our Older People's Mental Health services and have been working hard to ensure we have consistent, experienced and appropriately trained staff in our services to care for our patients.

Patient safety and the health and wellbeing of our staff is always our priority and, due to these significant and sustained staffing challenges, action is now required to maintain safe care across our Older People's Mental Health services.

As you are aware, due to this ongoing issues regarding the safety of our staffing levels, in mid-October we took the decision to temporarily suspend admissions to Poppy Ward, based at Gosport War Memorial Hospital and Beaulieu Ward based at The Western, Southampton to help us maintain a safe level of care to our patients.

Poppy and Beaulieu wards were selected based on a careful analysis of both the current staff vacancy rate, and the quality of the ward environment, across all wards in our service. The aim is to ensure that wards with the best environments, and the least staffing challenges, remain open to admissions.

We are pleased to update you that, thanks to the hard work from our staff, we have managed to improve our staffing levels on Poppy ward and, as a result, have been able to re-open to patient admissions.

In regards to Beaulieu Ward we are still struggling to maintain safe staffing levels. We are currently doing everything we can to put measures in place to ensure this ward is safely staffed.

We currently have 9 patients being supported on Beaulieu ward, we have identified 4 of these patients who can be safely discharged. We are working closely with our colleagues in Adult Services, at Hampshire County Council, and at Southampton Clinical Commissioning Group to help put measures in place to ensure these patients, can be discharged in a safe and timely manner. All patients being supported on the ward are being reviewed to ensure that care plans and risk assessments are up to date and meet the patient needs.

Additional actions are being taken at organisational and system-level to resolve our staffing challenges across all our OPMH services to ensure that patients, who are ready, can be discharged safely. We are also working very closely with the recruitment team to develop a tailored recruitment plan for all our Older People's Mental Health services.

Please note, despite best efforts and significant system-wide support, further action cannot be ruled out at this stage.

Please find below an overview of the actions being taken. We will keep you fully updated with all developments and decisions made.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Nicky MacDonald, Associate Director for Learning Disability and Older Persons Mental Health Service, by e-mail nicky.macdonald@southernhealth.nhs.uk or by telephone on 023 80874681.

OUR VALUES



**Actions being taken to ensure safe services
across our Older People's Mental Health services (OPMH)**

Patients	Staff
<p>All staff across all seven of our OPMH wards are currently looking at managing care plans and are working closely with adult services at HCC and the CCG to identify which patients can be safely discharged.</p> <p>Options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate care homes - Moving forward on Delayed transfers of care (DTC) - Discharge to community team - Possible Out of Area beds. <p>We are working with patients and their families to keep people safe and expedite long term discharge plans with partners.</p> <p>Our Trust's Patient Experience Lead is enabling families to feedback their experience and our freedom of speak up guardian within the Trust has attended to provide opportunity for staff feedback.</p>	<p>Daily staffing calls are being held to help maintain safe staffing levels on the ward – these address staffing levels shift by shift and day by day.</p> <p>We are Working with our Trust's Safer Staffing Lead to help maintain safe staffing levels and a good skill mix.</p> <p>Agency and NHS Professional staff are used on both Beaulieu and Poppy wards however Beaulieu ward are finding it more difficult to fill their shifts.</p> <p>The senior team have cleared diaries to ensure that they can focus on staffing issues and expediting Detocs and are visible on both the wards on a daily basis to support staff on the wards.</p>
<p>Our OPMH Bed Manager and our Senior Management Team for the Trust is attending extraordinary meetings with HCC adult services and South East Clinical Commissioning Groups to try and see how they can provide additional support.</p>	<p>We are currently implementing a number of measures to help increased clinical leadership into Poppy and Beaulieu wards with clinical educators and increased operational /admin capacity provided.</p>
<p>There are currently some patients who are ready for discharge from our wards and the trust continues to work with commissioners and adult services to find suitable ongoing care packages for these patients as swiftly as possible.</p> <p>We are maintaining a steady flow of patients with organic needs through Elmwood at Parklands and Poppy ward at Gosport ward Memorial Hospital – this means that we can admit any new OPMH patients with organic needs to Elmwood or Poppy Ward, if appropriate, as opposed Beaulieu Ward.</p>	<p>Beaulieu ward has a new Matron and a new ward manager which should also help with the cultural issues.</p> <p>The organisational development team are also working with the service to organise sessions with the staff to support the changes required.</p>
<p>We are liaising with the psychiatric liaison services in the acute hospitals to ensure that only patients appropriate to be nursed on these wards, are transferred.</p>	<p>We are also working with system partners to ensure a joined up approach to resolve staffing challenges and ensure patients are able to receive the most appropriate care in the right setting as swiftly as possible, throughout this period.</p>
<p>A new model of care is currently being explored with Commissioners and the Trust have tasked their Graduate Trainee with business support to work on this alongside the consultant nurse and also consultant psychiatrist time.</p>	