Focus on Emergency Access

Season’s greetings from the chief executive

Launch of new nursing and midwifery strategy

plus

Win a meal for two
**UCLH physician wins Entente Cordiale cancer prize**

**Assisted conception unit gains licence to screen embryos for bowel cancer**

**WEB WATCH www.uclh.nhs.uk**

**Launch of new Nursing and Midwifery Strategy**

**In brief**

Here’s what’s been happening at UCLH in the last month….
At the end of this month, the Trust will be judged for the first time on its ability to treat, transfer or discharge 98 per cent of emergency patients within just four hours of their arrival in A&E.

Much rides on our achieving this cornerstone target of NHS modernisation. Here we take a look at how A&E has been gearing up to meet the challenging target, and how the department is but one element in what is a Trust-wide effort.

For Simon Weldon, the Trust’s new general manager for Emergency Access, the challenge of achieving the new A&E target comes in two parts: first, getting there and second, staying there.

“Ensuring that we reach 98 per cent by the end of December is only the first part of the challenge, but I believe we are now in a position to achieve it,” he says. “Everyone is very focussed on the target and pulling out all the stops.”

Every patient counts

Indeed, by mid-November, A&E was dealing with 97 per cent of patients within four hours. Simon said: “Thanks to the efforts of many staff over the last couple of years, we’re now within one per cent of the new target.

But alongside that, guided by a comprehensive Trust-wide plan, the building blocks are being put in place to ensure that we meet the target each and every month from here on in. “Sustaining a performance of 98 per cent is going to be much harder than meeting the target in the first place. It will require us to do things differently in future,” says Simon.

A raft of new developments are being rolled out within A&E itself, including new equipment to enable near-patient testing to reduce diagnostic delays, new IT to help with capacity planning, and several new staff posts.

Ensuring quality

Craig Wood joined as the department’s new modern matron in November. He has a clear remit to ensure that quality remains as important as quantity in the drive to meet targets.

“I’ll be working to further improve standards of nursing care and things like cleanliness and communication, which also impact on the patient’s experience,” says Craig. “And I’ll be supporting our emergency nurse practitioners, helping them to develop their skills and the minor injuries service which they provide.”

A&E’s medical staff will also receive a boost in the new year. Two extra consultants are to be recruited in a bid to strengthen clinical leadership in the department, and to speed up the process of assessing patients needs.

Whole hospital effort

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Wicked problems

Summing up progress so far, Simon Weldon says: “The Trust has tackled lots of the issues that cause delays to the emergency patient’s journey. What we’re left with now are the ‘wicked’ problems – very complex issues that will be much harder to solve.”

Typically, these issues – for example ensuring appropriate care for the comparatively large number of patients that come to UCLH A&E with emergency mental health needs, and the lack of care home places for elderly patients who are ready to be discharged – require collaboration with other local NHS and social care agencies.

“Hospitals are not island states,” Simon emphasises. “We are just one part of a network of services that has to co-operate in managing unplanned care more effectively. We’re beginning to make progress on that front with our external partners but there’s still a long way to go yet.”

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The ground floor of the hospital will naturally be the busiest part of the hospital as the gateway to all areas of the building. The ground floor also hosts a multitude of services and facilities crucial to the day-to-day running of the hospital.

What is on the ground floor?
- Main entrance and reception desk
- Main waiting area
- Discharge lounge
- Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)
- Patient affairs
- Hospital shop
- Security
- Transport services
- Pharmacy
- Chapel / Chaplains
- Volunteer services
- Cashiers
- Catering
- Bed management
- Patient Emergency Response Team
- Hospital at Night
- Accident & Emergency

First impressions count!
Karin Roberts is the move co-ordinator of the new hospital.

Access to the building
There are three access points for patients on the ground floor and it is hoped the limited number will make the building more secure. The main entrance will be used for patients arriving by public transport or on foot, while those brought in by ambulance will be dropped off either at the main entrance of the rear entrance. The rear entrance via Grafton Way will also be used for patients arriving by ambulance.

Patient transport
Operating on one site will make patient transport a much more efficient and effective service. Currently transport services work across multiple sites where waiting facilities are often poor, unsupervised and without refreshments. In many instances patients have no one to ask if and when their ‘lift’ home is on its way.

Making good decisions
Karin said: ‘We haven’t yet decided the reception opening hours because we need to ensure that they complement the opening times of all departments in the hospital. At the moment this is different in different areas and departments. It makes sense if there is more consistency in how we operate as a whole hospital, but clearly before decisions are made we want input from all areas in order that we reach as good a consensus as possible.’

UCLH patients help shape national improvements in services
Trust patients are to play a vital role in helping to shape national improvements in healthcare services, UCLH has been chosen to be one of the NHS Acute Trusts nationwide taking part in the Patients Accelerating Change (PAC) project, jointly run by the Clinical Governance Support Team (CGST) and healthcare research charity, Picker Institute Europe.

UCLH will be focusing on improving the management and explanation of test results. Patients in two outpatient services have been asked to provide feedback and information to help health professionals decide where priority changes can be made to provide a better service for future patients.

Service improvement facilitator, Zubair Hussaini, said: ‘We are delighted to be involved in this programme and believe it will help us better understand what patients want from their health service. We have been encouraging as many patients as possible to participate through patient user groups, informal interviews and patient questionnaires. So far, the response has been very positive.’

She added: ‘UCLH chose the topic of information around test results because it believes this has, historically, been an area where Trusts have not communicated as well as possible with their patients and this is an area we would like to help correct.’

Get in on the Act
The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 comes fully into force on 1st January 2005. Intended to encourage a culture of openness, the Act means that members of the public (from the UK and abroad) can ask the Trust to provide them with information relating to the Trust’s business. Anyone in the Trust could receive a request, which must be in writing (including emails and faxes) and include a contact name and address.

If you receive a request for information in writing, it should be passed on to the Trust’s archivist and FOI co-ordinator, Annie Lindsay, who will be managing all requests with support from representatives from every department. We only have 20 working days to respond, so it’s important that requests are passed on as soon as they are received.

Leaflets will be available for staff to give to members of the public if they are asked about the Act. More information is available on the Intranet or from Annie Lindsay on x3717.

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Write to us at Freedom of Information, University College Hospital, 235 Euston Road, London NW1 2BU.

Charge nurse Mark Turner has worked in our A&E department at University College Hospital since 1997. One aspect of Mark’s role involves working as a floor coordinator to manage the patient flow through A&E. Here he tells us about his job:

What does your role involve?
As a charge nurse, I’m responsible for the day to day running of the department — sorting out any problems and helping out with any ‘blue’ calls, such as cardiac arrests. As a floor coordinator, you don’t get involved in anything clinical but look after the management of patients and ensuring we don’t breach the four hour wait target. The floor coordinator works very closely with the bed management team to move patients who are clinically stable onto another ward.

What do you like about your job?
Every day is completely different and I like the stimulation of working under pressure. I enjoy working with a variety of patients and dealing with the resus calls.

What are the main challenges of your job?
Working as a floor coordinator and having to ensure that all the teams across the Trust adhere to the four hour targets and the escalation procedure so that we provide the best patient care. You also have to deal with all sorts of emotions and all kinds of people and at the same time keep the department running smoothly.

What are you most likely to say? What’s got the G345’s (key)ès?
Not another blue call!

What work-related thing could you not do without?
A fantastic and dynamic team, and a sense of humour.
Inside Story is produced by the Communications unit at UCLH. If you have any news, views, or stories, send them (with photos if you have them) to: Marisa Dean at Trust HQ, John Astor House, in Foley Street or contact her on: x4386 or by email marisa.dean@uclh.nhs.uk.

A date for your diary!
The UCLH nurses’ ball takes place on Friday 18 February 2005 at the Savoy Hotel. Sponsored by the UCLH Specials Trustee, the ball promises to be an evening to remember with a cocktail reception followed by dinner and disco. Tickets, costing £35 each, are available from Maureen Brown (NHNN & ED) on 020 7837 3611, x2200, Syliva J arnott (Middlesex & Heart) on x5944, Lydia Fearn (Admin only) x0568 at the Heart Hospital and Debbie Glastonbury (UCH) on x8446.

South African Savannah Trek
Overseas treks have raised more than £3.4 million for key projects at UCLH. The latest challenge, organised by the UCL Hospitals Charitable Foundation, is to the unforgetable savannah of South Africa in March 2005. Participants will spend six days trekking across a variety of terrain, including game reserves, with the chance of seeing Africa’s fantastic wildlife.

WIN
Win a meal for two in Greek restaurant!
The Apollonia Restaurant & Taverna is offering one lucky reader the chance to win a meal for two with a bottle of wine.

COMPETITION
Generous donation to neonatal unit
Generous fundraising from Woolworth’s store in Camden Town have presented a cheque for £6050 to the neonatal unit at the EGA. The money was collected during the year under the organisation, Kids First. Baby Noah, pictured with his mum Amanda, was on hand to collect the cheque on behalf of the unit.

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!
It’s time to start thinking about making those New Year’s resolutions! If yours include getting fit, then there’s no better time to join the 52 Club. In just a few weeks’ time, the fantastic transformation of the club will be complete dramatically improving the facilities which are available to all Trust staff.

Congratulations to November’s competition winner, Joanne Harris, clinical practice facilitator for the new general manager for Emergency Access?

The tiles inside the swimming pool are also being replaced and the air conditioning system is being upgraded.

So what are you waiting for? To find out more, contact the 52 Club on x 5408 or pop along to the club at 52 Gower Street.

UCLH managers put to the test
Congratulations to Trust managers who proved their skills at the Health Service Journal’s annual Management Challenge by winning two out of three awards!

Acting as the senior management team of the social services department of the fictional community of Stepfordville, the UCLH team worked with other NHS teams who represented the healthcare organisations of Stepfordville, to resolve various issues and incidents that occurred during the event.

From dealing with a major accident on the motorway and holding a press conference about MRSA, to defining a strategy to reduce emergency admissions and presenting this to the Strategic Health Authority – all of these had to be dealt with by the team in real time.

By identifying and acting on the key issues, getting patient/user perspectives and taking a “whole system” approach, the UCLH team were able to impress the assessors and win awards for “Patient choice and responsiveness” and “Developing a preventative approach”.

The UCLH team consisted of Debbie Brazil, general manager, outpatients, transport & booking; Marita Brown, head of leadership development; Paul Reeves, modern matron, A&E, and Nick Samkange, business manager, cancer services.

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From left to right: Nick Samkange, Marita Brown, Paul Reeves and Debbie Brazil.

Win a meal for two in Greek restaurant!
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Who is the new general manager for Emergency Access?
Entries can be emailed to marisa.dean@uclh.nhs.uk or sent by internal mail to December competition, Communications unit, Ground floor, John Astor House, Foley Street. Entries close on January 7.

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