

Primary Care Matters

Practice Staff Newsletter

Welcome



Welcome to the February issue of our Practice Staff Newsletter.

The inquest into the death of Sean Turner in spring 2012, a child who died following congenital heart surgery at the Bristol Royal Hospital for Children, concluded on 23 January. The Coroner heard that Sean was born with a rare and complex heart condition and had

undergone a procedure which carries recognised risk. In a narrative judgment, however, she said that there were lost opportunities to render medical care or treatment to Sean in the post-operative period including better management of his anticoagulation and not considering fenestration at a specific point. Robert Woolley, Chief Executive, therefore made a public apology to Mr and Mrs Turner and their family.

The Coroner said that she was aware of the actions taken by the Trust following Sean's death and she therefore did not make any recommendations for further action. As a Trust, we are acutely aware that in a high risk service like this, there will unfortunately always be adverse outcomes for some children and our mortality rates compare well to other national centres for this type of surgery. That said, we are determined to

learn the lessons from Sean's death for the future care of children like Sean.

Further inquests for children with heart conditions are listed in the coming months and, although the circumstances in each case are different, they will doubtless attract media attention. If you have parents who are concerned about any aspect of their children's care, please encourage them to contact the service by calling the Cardiac Liaison Nursing Team on 0117 342 8286. General contact with clinical cardiology colleagues should continue through the usual routes.

Last month, we extended our Elderly Admissions Unit. The 38-bed unit combines Ward 4 and Ward 12 at the BRI to recognise the increasing number of elderly patients being admitted to the BRI with complex issues.

Finally, I would like to remind you about our GP event on Thursday 25 February between 2pm and 5pm at the Chapter House Lecture Theatre (behind the Dental Hospital).

Deborah Lee
Deputy Chief Executive and
Director of Strategic Development

Outpatient Appointment Centre becomes more accessible to patients

The Trust's Outpatient Appointment Centre has moved to a new office in the BRI's Welcome Centre, to make it more accessible to patients.

The appointment centre provides an efficient outpatients booking service operating between 8am and 7pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm on Saturday making it much more accessible.

The appointment centre has an enthusiastic and dedicated team offering a number of services, from booking and rescheduling outpatient appointments to support for transport bookings and managing the recently rolled out Appointment Reminder Service.

In addition, the team is currently contacting patients on behalf of a number of hospital services. Due to the extended opening times, the appointment centre can also contact patients out of hours, when departments are closed but more patients are at home.

The centre will also provide a reception service, where patients can book or re-schedule an appointment in person.

Future developments

The appointment centre will host open events to give staff in hospital and primary care settings the chance to visit, to understand how the service works and discover how their patients could benefit.

To attend one of the events, or for more information about the appointment centre services, please contact manager Sharon Sampson on 0117 342 0488.

Weekend plain film service launched

In January, South Bristol Community Hospital's radiology department launched an appointment-only plain film service for GP referrals at weekends. It is an adult only (16 years and over) service operating between 9am and 5pm on Saturday and Sunday. All requests must be completed on the ICE system prior to the patient contacting the department for an appointment. No paper requests will be accepted for the weekend appointment system.

To book a weekend appointment, patients should call radiology on 0117 342 9696 between 4pm and 7.30pm, Monday to Friday, or 8am to 6pm, Saturday and Sunday. However, there is no radiologist cover for advice or urgent reports during the weekend. A report will be issued within the usual seven to 10 working days.

Please note, this service is not suitable for urgent conditions or patients who require transport services.

A good night's sleep for patients

In response to commissioners not routinely funding NHS treatment for snoring, the Trust is pleased to announce the launch of the new private service Injection Snoreplasty. It is a relatively new method for treating snoring which involves injecting fibro vein into the soft palate of the mouth. The fibro vein hardens the soft palate to reduce or eliminate the vibratory sound that causes snoring.

Research has shown that Injection Snoreplasty is effective in 76% to 92% of cases, which is in the same region as other more complicated and radical surgical treatment requiring general anaesthesia and prolonged recovery period. Compared to other surgical treatment modalities, Injection Snoreplasty is generally safe, relatively painless and quick to perform. There is no need for hospital admission as the treatment is clinic based and little or no time off work is required.

Spreading the word about infection control

The Trust's Infection Control Team has hosted two successful infection control and prevention sessions in the last quarter, with the aim of building on a joint hospital/community approach to patient care.

The first was aimed at care home managers and senior staff and focused on managing people with *Clostridium difficile* (C.diff). Presentations from medical microbiology, infection control and facilities staff generated a lively discussion and good ideas.

The second session was aimed at GPs and focused on microbiology and virology. It included presentations from the Trust's consultant microbiologists and a Public Health England consultant virologist. The Trust hopes to run more sessions this year.

If you have any feedback about items in this month's newsletter please contact gpliaison@uhbristol.nhs.uk

Extended admissions unit opens to improve outcomes for patients aged 75 and over

The Trust has opened its extended Elderly Admissions Unit, a 38-bed unit that combines Ward 4 and Ward 12 at the BRI to recognise the increasing number of elderly patients being admitted to the BRI with complex issues.

Over the past two years about 45 more elderly patients (aged 75 to 89) have been admitted to the BRI per month.

Patients being cared for on the EAU are assessed on admission by specialists in elderly care and are supported by social workers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and pharmacists.

This model of care should improve outcomes for those patients and reduce the amount of time they spend in hospital, as well as reduce the number of inappropriate patient transfers, which is important for patients with dementia.

The contact numbers for Ward 4 and 12 will remain the same.

Bristol Eye Hospital's Emergency line for healthcare professionals

If you are a healthcare professional you can call the Eye Hospital's emergency line on 0117 342 4613 to refer a patient.

The line is open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 4pm, Saturday and Sunday.

In addition, an ophthalmologist is on call and healthcare professionals can contact them via the switchboard on 0117 923 0000.

If you are unable to contact us by phone, send patients with a cover letter so we know why they're attending the emergency department.

The opening hours are 8.30am to 5pm, seven days a week. Outside of our opening hours patients should contact their nearest A&E department.

Email advice for GPs

GPs are being encouraged to use an email advice service set up by the Trust's Clinical Biochemistry department. The email address is BiochemAdvice@UH Bristol.nhs.uk and any messages sent are reviewed by a clinical biochemist or chemical pathologist and answered the next working day. At the moment few GPs use this email address.