

## PROTECTED MEALTIMES BRIEFING PAPER

### INTRODUCTION

At Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust our aim is to introduce a protected mealtime service to help all our patients to get the most from the food provided.

Keeping nourished-getting better is about identifying individuals at risk of being malnourished, providing good nutritional care and stopping inappropriate weight loss and dehydration in NHS provided care

Better Nutrition and Hydration means better health and faster healing, recovery and reduced length of stay

The protected mealtime philosophy focuses not only on the quality and nutritional value of food but also the patients' experience of eating.

### BACKGROUND

Approximately one in three of adults (up to 50% surgical and 44% medical) show signs of malnutrition on admission to hospital, and often their stay exacerbates their condition. presentation of food and the timing and content of meals are all important elements in encouraging patients to eat well. The importance of mealtimes needs to be re-emphasized and ward based staff given the opportunity to focus on the nutritional and hydration requirements of patients at mealtimes.

**Protected Mealtimes** are periods when patients are allowed to eat their meals without unnecessary interruptions and when nursing staff and the ward team are able to provide greater levels of assistance and support to meet patient's nutritional requirements

The therapeutic role of food within the healing process is well documented. Food, and the service of food, is now regarded by many as an essential part of treatment.

### Regulatory requirements and evidence supporting *Protected meal times*

1. Implementing Protected Meal times will enable us to ensure we meet the essential standards of quality and safety for compliance with Regulation 14 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (regulated Activities) Regulations 2010 Outcome 5 Meeting Nutritional needs and compliance with NICE Guidelines (Nutrition Support in adults 2006)
2. The outcomes of the Patient Environment Actions Team (PEAT) assessment affect the compliance ratings for the organisation and include a standard for protected mealtimes to be introduced. Our next assessment is due in Jan/Feb 2012

3. The importance of the patients' experience and nutritional requirements is also highlighted by the "Essence of care" 2010 food and nutrition benchmarking within the Trust. By achieving this standard, we achieve many of the national standards
4. The council of Europe-Committee of minister resolution REsAP(2003 3 on food and nutritional care in hospitals, states that interruption of patients mealtimes by ward rounds, teaching and diagnostic procedures should be minimised as the committee recognise the beneficial effects of proper food service and nutritional care in hospital on the recovery of patients and the quality of life.
5. The GMC have produced a draft Consultation document "Good medical Practice 2012", which outlines the duties of a Doctor registered with the General medical Council. In Domain 2 (Safety and Quality section) it outlines the duties to be that you should
  - a. act without delay if you have good reason to believe that you or a colleague may be putting patients at risk
  - b. Protect and promote the health of patients and the public

In the sub section to this document it outlines in section (e) taking prompt action when problems with basic care for patients who are unable to drink, feed or clean themselves may lead to patient safety, dignity or comfort being compromised.

## **PROTECTED MEAL TIMES POLICY**

Providing a protected meal time period emphasizes the importance we place on mealtimes as part of the care and treatment provided for our patients. It creates a more relaxed and calm atmosphere, giving patients time to socialize and digest their food

Implementing a Protected Meal times policy contributes to improving Patient safety and the patient experience

A protected Meal times policy has been produced which provides more information on protected meal times (Appendix 1)

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF PROTECTED MEAL TIMES**

It is proposed that Protected Mealtimes will be launched and promoted during January 2012 with a target implementation date of Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012 across both sites.

### **Proposed Promotion Material**

1. Promotion Information Stands [locations;- main Entrances to Hospital, Ward Block Entrances
  - a. Pull up banner which says  
*Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust will be operating Protected Mealtimes from the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012.*  
*Therefore if you are visiting a ward displaying the Protected Mealtime poster, please respect this and try to visit outside the mealtimes.*  
*If you normally visit at mealtimes in order to help or encourage your relative or friend to eat, we are happy for you to continue to do this.*  
*Please ask the nurse in charge how you can help*

- 10 pull up banners for entrance
- 20 A1 posters/laminated for clinical areas
- Individual Ward door graphics-life size photo image of ward manager holding a poster displaying times for Protected Mealtimes.
- Each ward will have a large sign/poster fixed to the ward entrance doors which will be seen when the ward doors are closed for protected meal times. We proposed that this will be a life size photo image of each Ward Manager as the Protected Mealtimes Champion holding a sign which identifies the Wards Protected Mealtime.
- Patient information leaflets
- Staff information leaflets/posters
- 40x A3 laminated/encapsulated Ward posters of Code of Practice for Protected Mealtimes for Ward Kitchens

### **PDSA cycles and evidence to date**

The LIPS Nutritional group have worked with a number of wards to undertake PDSA cycles to test out the requirements for full roll out. The requirements have been discussed in detail with ward managers and senior nurses, with briefings to all disciplines. A positive evaluation was provided by the recent CQC report in areas where this had been implemented.

Food service audits carried out during 2011 have indicated that patient's mealtimes have been disturbed by various professional for a variety of reasons, including that of nursing practice (drug rounds and other interventions). Recent PDSA cycles have highlighted the challenge of varying meal time deliveries.

Please note that the meal delivery system is different at both sites.

#### Princess Royal Hospital

Meals are delivered via a bulk heated trolley system and meals are served by catering Hostesses/hosts.

#### Royal Shrewsbury Hospital

Meals are delivered via plated meal system and meals are served by ward staff only.

### **Audit and review**

Following the implementation of Protected Mealtimes we plan to carry out audits to monitor compliance with the **Protected Mealtimes** initiative to identify areas of non compliance and equally identify best practice on wards where protected mealtimes have been successful.

Patient interviews will be carried out to identify if they were disturbed during their mealtime and to establish the reasons for this. This will be supported by the Patient engagement and involvement panel (PEIP) who have a programme of work to undertake these audits.

Feedback from these audits will be provided for each Centre, to provide evidence of the effectiveness of the implementation and in order for any operational challenges to be identified and resolved.

The Associate Director of Patient safety will provide updates on progress being made through the Monthly Quality report (with the support of the LIPS Nutritional working group). This will be evidenced by audit findings so that variance to the expected standards can be managed effectively and improvements made.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Board are requested to:

- **Support the approach** to the launch/ promotion and implementation programme.
- **Note** the supporting Protected meal times policy (Appendix 1)
- To **Note** the audit tools for subsequent review and the PEIP involvement in that programme.
- To **note** the monitoring arrangements which will be need to be monitored through each Centre Governance meetings.

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