

If you need some help or further information

Ward/Department: In the first instance, please speak to the staff caring for you, or ask to speak to the manager or matron.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS provide advice and support for patients, relatives and carers. They are here to listen to you, help to resolve concerns and queries and provide general information on NHS services.

Located next to the shop on the main corridor (Level 3) at Lister Hospital.

☎ 01438 285811 (Monday to Friday, 9am - 4pm)

E-mail: pals.enh-tr@nhs.net

Patients, relatives/carers visiting Hertford, New QEII and Mount Vernon sites should also contact PALS on the details above.

Complaints Department

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please write to:

Chief Executive
East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust
Lister Hospital
Coreys Mill Lane
Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 4AB

or you can call the Complaints Team on ☎ 01438 284387

or E-mail: patcomplaints.enh-tr@nhs.net

You can also refer to our patient information leaflet:
“Comments, Compliments, Concerns, Complaints”

Action against Medical Accidents

An independent charity that promotes better patient safety and justice for people affected by a medical incident.

☎ Helpline: 0845 123 2352
www.avma.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

Provides information and support to anyone affected by death.

☎ Helpline: 0808 808 1677
E-mail: helpline@org.uk
www.cruse.org.uk

Date of publication: January 2014

Author: Jacqui Evans, Julie Duckett-Brown

Reference: Being Open Version: 02 (Sept 2017)

Review Date: Sept 2020

© East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

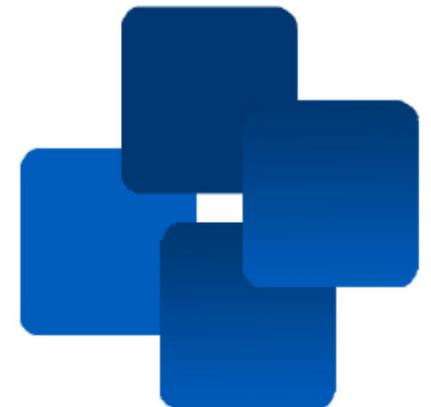
www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk

You can request this information in a different format or another language.

Information for patients, relatives and Carers

Duty of Candour (Being open)

Sometimes things go wrong



Our aim is to keep you safe

At East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust we do as much as possible to keep you safe while you are in our care. Our staff are highly trained and follow strict procedures to help prevent mistakes. However, hospitals are complex environments and sometimes things do go wrong; unfortunately this may cause harm to a patient.

How can you help us to keep you safe?

Here are a few suggestions for how you can help us to keep you safe whilst in hospital:

- Do speak out if you have any questions, or concerns.
- Tell staff about your allergies or anything you have a reaction to.
- Ask staff if they have washed their hands – it's OK to do this.
- Ensure staff confirm your identity before giving you medication or treatment.
- If you have any doubts or queries about the medicine you are asked to take, check that it is for you.
- Carefully read all the forms you are asked to sign, and ask the staff to explain anything you do not understand.
- Make sure you understand any risks or complications of treatment, or ask if you're not sure.

And lastly, make sure you receive your test results, even if you have to follow them up after you go home. **Do not assume** "no news is good news".

NHS Constitution

"The NHS pledges to ensure that when mistakes happen or if you are harmed while receiving health care you receive an appropriate explanation and apology, delivered with sensitivity and recognition of the trauma you have experienced, and know that lessons will be learned to help avoid a similar incident occurring again."

The NHS Constitution, October 2015

What is 'Duty of Candour'?

Duty of Candour is a legal duty on hospital, community and mental health trusts to inform and apologise to patients if there have been mistakes in their care that have led to significant harm. Duty of Candour aims to help patients get accurate truthful information from their health provider.

Our commitment to you

We recognise that it is important for you and your family to be fully informed and receive a sincere apology for harm and distress caused, with full explanations for these circumstances.

In the rare event that a mistake occurs with serious or long-lasting consequences, we want to be open with you about what happened and include you in what happens next.

By **being open** we make a commitment to you and your family/carer to:

- Apologise for harm caused.
- Explain, openly and honestly, what has gone wrong.
- Describe what we are doing in response to the mistake.
- Provide the name of a person for you to speak with.
- Offer support.
- Include you in discussions and seek your views.
- Give updates on the results of any investigation.

How we will keep you informed

A senior healthcare professional will meet with you and/or your family/carer as soon as the error comes to light to discuss the circumstances around what has happened.

Later, you and/or your family/carer will be notified in writing by the Patient Safety team of the formal investigation process and a meeting with investigators will be offered to you and/or your carers.

When the investigation is complete, which may take up to three months, we will offer you and/or your family/carer a copy of the investigation report and invite you and/or your family/carer to attend a meeting with clinicians to discuss the investigation findings and to answer questions you may have relating to the report.

How we learn from a mistake

Following each investigation the recommendations are analysed and an action plan is compiled with details of the changes to be made to prevent a re-occurrence. The investigation reports, action plans and specific learning points are discussed at different committees and are shared widely with Trust staff. This promotes awareness.

Some investigation reports are used for staff training. These will always be anonymised. Sometimes a patient or family member is invited to attend one of the Trust's meetings or training sessions to give an account of their experience. This can provide a better understanding of incidents and how they could be avoided in the future.

Your ongoing care

You may feel anxious about talking through your experience with someone who has been caring for you, especially if you need further treatment. You can expect that your treatment will continue to be given with respect, compassion and dignity. We learn and improve by acting on feedback from your experience.

Making a complaint or claim

Being open with you and involving you in understanding what has happened, does not affect your right to make a formal complaint or claim for compensation.