Improving the emergency care experience for older people – Frail Elderly Pilot

The purpose of this Stop Press is to describe developments in the care of older people who attend the Emergency Departments at University Hospital Crosshouse and University Hospital Ayr and to invite you to a drop-in session to find out more. Starting in September 2013 in Crosshouse and a month later in Ayr, a multidisciplinary team will pilot a new pathway for patients who are aged 65 and over. The pilot will run until March 2014, with ongoing monitoring and formal evaluation after three and six months.

Why are we doing this?

The pilot follows the success of an exercise which took place over five days at Crosshouse in May 2013. That trial was one of the many small tests of change being championed by the Emergency Care Quality Improvement Programme project team, led by Dr Crawford McGuffie. It dramatically reduced the time patients aged 65 and over had to wait to be seen by a Consultant Geriatrician; identified safe, more appropriate options than admission for many of these patients; and even reduced the time other patients not included in the pilot had to wait in the Emergency Department.

The frail elderly pathway pilot involved basing a multidisciplinary team in the Emergency department, including:

- a consultant doctor specialising in older people care;
- advanced nurse practitioners;
- mental health liaison staff;
- a pharmacist; and
- the Intermediate Care and Enablement Service (IC&ES), with referral on to appropriate services depending on person’s needs.

Other professionals were also on hand for support and advice, including district nurses and social workers.

Over the five days the team saw 44 patients. Of these, 17 were admitted – four to the Clinical Decisions Unit and 13 to the 72-hour assessment beds. Twenty-five patients were able to be discharged, and two were transferred. Only one patient who was discharged required to be re-admitted; while one other had a further planned admission.

By piloting this approach over a longer period, encompassing the winter months, the Emergency Care Quality Improvement Programme project team will be in a position to assess the long-term effectiveness of this approach and make recommendations for potential longer-term changes.

17 September 2013
Public consultations tell us that, given the option, people want to stay in their own homes for as long as possible; that prolonged hospital stays are not good for frail elderly patients; and that some admissions could be avoided, if services and support were available closer to people’s home, in their own communities.

What happens next?

A&E, University Hospital Crosshouse

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<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
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<td>Starting early September 2013 Consultant Geriatrician and IC&amp;ES team members in A&amp;E assessing people aged 65 and over.</td>
<td>Starting end September/beginning October 2013 Full team in A&amp;E assessing people aged 65 and over.</td>
<td>Continuous process of qualitative and quantitative evaluation with a three and six month formal review.</td>
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March 2014

A&E, University Hospital Ayr

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<td>Starting October 2013 IC&amp;ES team members in A&amp;E assessing people aged 65 and over. Seven-day working of IC&amp;ES team.</td>
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March 2014

Drop-in sessions

The team Frail Elderly Project Team will be holding a series of drop-in sessions for staff; and during the six-month period will be gathering feedback from patients, carers and relatives.

University Hospital Crosshouse
Wednesday 18 September, 11am, Discussion Room, Lab Corridor
Thursday 19 September, 2pm, Discussion Room, Lab Corridor

University Hospital Ayr
Wednesday 16 October 2013, 11am, Room 6, Macdonald Education Centre
Thursday 17 October 2013, 2pm, Common Room 2, Macdonald Education Centre

Find out more

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To read previous Stop Press bulletins about the Emergency Care Quality Improvement Programme (ECQIP), click here.