



Press Release
11 May 2016

Training helps acute hospitals in East London and West Yorkshire deliver Gold Standard end of life care

Three Wards from two acute hospitals today received awards from the Honorary Secretary of the British Geriatrics Society (BGS) in recognition of the care they provide patients nearing the end of their lives.

Two wards at Airedale General Hospital and one at Queen's Hospital, Romford, received the Gold Standards Framework Centre (GSF) Quality Hallmark Award, endorsed by the British Geriatrics Society at the BGS Spring Meeting in Liverpool today (11 May).

The hospitals demonstrated that, with earlier recognition of patients in the last year of life, improved communication with those patients and fellow professionals, and better coordinated care, they are able to provide a higher all round quality of care for people in the final year of life.

Professor Keri Thomas, GSF Clinical Director said: "A third of hospital patients are in the last year of life. If we recognise them early enough this presents hospital doctors and nurses with a huge opportunity to be more proactive and enable better planned care in line with people's preferences, but only if they have the tools to take full advantage of it.

"The care of the elderly wards at Airedale General and Queen's, Romford, have completed the Gold Standards Framework training and accreditation and embedded key initiatives to ensure better care for patients. Through identifying patients earlier, engaging them and their families in advance care planning discussions, continually revising those plans and sharing this information with others, they can ensure that patients are discharged home more speedily, care is well planned in the community and dying patients receive high quality care in the last days of life."

Both Airedale NHS Foundation Trust and Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals Trust, are GSF cross boundary care sites which have supported a number of their GP surgeries and care homes to complete the GSF training, developing a model of cross boundary end of life care. Airedale also has in place a dedicated telephone service, known as the Gold Line, for people identified as being near the end of life and on the GSF register.

Dr Martin Vernon, BGS End of Life Care lead, said: "When the NHS was founded nearly 70 years ago, one-in-two people died before they reached 65. Now this has dropped to about one-in-eight. People aged over 85 are the fastest growing part of the population. Population ageing, effective management of long-term conditions and improved life expectancy are success stories for the NHS

but they also present significant challenges to us all. Hospitals increasingly care for greater numbers of older people approaching the end of their life with frailty and complex health conditions.

“The vast majority of these patients are cared for by generalist doctors, nurses and other members of the multidisciplinary care team. It is of increasing importance that hospital staff are empowered to support delivery of coordinated care to this most vulnerable of patient groups. BGS has therefore been pleased to work with GSF on its acute hospital accreditation program as one way of helping to drive up quality in the delivery of end of life care through maintenance of recognised standards.”

Staff from the two hospitals received their awards from Andrew Williams, BGS Honorary Secretary. The acute elderly medical ward at Queen’s, Romford, and the orthogeriatric ward and general medical ward at Airedale, follow in the footsteps of wards at Royal Devon and Exeter and Royal Lancaster Infirmary which, in 2015, became the first to be recognised having completed the GSF Acute Hospitals Training Programme and after meeting the requisite five key standards.

The GSF programme is designed to help frontline generalist doctors and nurses meet the pressing challenges of identifying patients in the last year of life, communicating effectively with them to plan their care and then coordinating that care according to their wishes.

The wards at Airedale and Queen’s Romford have demonstrated measurable changes to the way they systematically organise their care as well as the impact on patients and their relatives and carers and staff.

The wards undertook several on-line evaluations, assembled a portfolio of evidence demonstrating the attainment of five key standards and underwent a visit from the GSF assessment team.

The GSF accreditation for Acute Hospitals is endorsed by the British Geriatric Society (BGS) which also partnered in its assessment.

Recognising the significant differences the programme can make, four whole hospitals at Barking Havering and Redbridge, Jersey, Doncaster and Wolverhampton, have now embarked on the GSF Acute Hospitals training.

The successful hospitals are among more than 40 to have completed the GSF Acute Hospitals Training, a two-year programme which also aims to enable the provision of integrated tailored care reducing the length of patients’ hospital stay and improving the discharge process, leading to better outcomes once the patients return home.

Dr Raasheed Mohammed, Consultant Geriatrician at Airedale, said: “The GSF and Gold Line provides me with the added reassurance that my patients and their family have a plan, and the added resources in place as they move from Secondary care to the community”

Heather Wright, Palliative Care Team Leader, Barking Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals Trust. “We believe that the GSF has developed within the hospital a greater awareness for the need to have conversations about death and dying in order to plan end of life care. By raising awareness this has enabled clinicians to gain confidence in identifying patients earlier in their disease trajectory and helped to prompt effective end of life communication where needed.

“Sunrise B have created a system with the facilitation of the GSF team and End of Life Care Facilitators to go from identification to identifying needs and then signposting and sharing of information with other end of life services. It is excellent that after two years’ hard work Sunrise B have now been accredited and can be our flagship ward to help in the roll out of GSF across the trust.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

The **Gold Standards Framework Centre** started in 2000 in primary care, now runs training programmes in end of life care in all settings, and is the biggest and most comprehensive programme to improve care at the end of life.

Gold Standards Framework gives outstanding training to professionals providing end of life care to ensure better lives for people and recognised standards of care.

GSF helps health and social care professionals feel better equipped to deal with the challenging task of looking after patients until they die by providing a framework for earlier identification, assessment of needs and then planning of care of those people in the last years of life.

Among its key aims are offering everyone the chance to record an Advance Care Planning discussion to clarify their needs and preferences.

More information on the Gold Standards Framework can be found at:

www.goldstandardsframework.org.uk

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