



Category: Healthcare Campaign

Company: Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Entry title: #letsbeopen

Brief and objectives:

The importance of involving families in healthcare is well documented. The Royal College of GPs advises: “carers often know the people they care for better than anyone else” and a 2012 British Association of Critical Care Nurses review concluded nurses should be “aware of the physical and psychological benefits of visiting to patients.”

But prior to August 2016, visiting hours on 30+ wards at Derriford Hospital were restrictive and inconsistent.

The Communications Team was approached by a Matron, who had trialled open visiting on her ward. She wanted help to overcome resistance and fear among colleagues and make open visiting standard.

Objectives:

1. Deliver a campaign to change attitudes amongst staff and win support for open visiting (#letsbeopen)
2. Promote #letsbeopen to patients and visitors.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

Target audience:

- Patients and their families
- Staff.

As research we:

* Reviewed and learned from John’s Campaign, which supports open visiting for carers of patients with dementia.

* Gathered our target audience views.

Patients and visitors

Complaints and feedback supported the need for change e.g

'@Derriford_Hosp disgusting go to say goodbye to grandma for the last time & get told to leave as its not visiting hours I live 5 hours away.'

Staff

Feedback demonstrated a significant divide between supporters and those reluctant to change, with some senior nursing staff (matrons and ward managers) particularly resistant. They feared it would “cause too much disruption”, “pose an infection control risk” and “be impossible to implement.”

We needed to change a strongly entrenched view of ‘we know best’ into: ‘care is best done in partnership with patients and their families.’

In contrast, supporters understood the benefits. One consultant expressed: “Families can often provide additional history especially during post take ward rounds, making an accurate diagnosis more likely ... Families should feel fully part of the care of their loved ones...”

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

We identified nurse leaders as change agents, without their support, #letsbeopen would not happen.

Strategy:

- a) Use EAST behavioural change principles to encourage staff adoption
- b) Involve staff and patients in designing the change
- c) Engage in dialogue with patients and families, promoting #letsbeopen benefits.

EASY ... to implement

With our ambassador Matrons, we held and attended meetings, including Matrons’ Meeting, Your Voice (open staff forum) and Ward Sisters’ meeting. Staff felt open visiting must be balanced against the need to give care in a safe environment and wanted a framework to support them. After researching other organisations, a bespoke Visitors’ Charter was drafted to empower staff and ensure visitors were clear on the ‘contract’ between them and the hospital. This was refined with staff and patient involvement.

ATTRACT!

The driving force of #letsbeopen was creating a stronger care partnership between professionals, patients and families and the logo we designed represented intertwined hands.

Key messages (staff):

- Restricted visiting impacts emotionally in a negative way on patients and carers.
- This is welcoming families in, not shutting them out from helping care for their loved ones.

Key messages (patients/families):

- Families are welcome to stay with their loved ones.
- Families often know most about their loved ones. They are invited to be involved in care and care planning.

SOCIAL

To change attitudes we had to create new social norms; with our Matron ambassadors advocating and role-modelling amongst their peers. Ward teams were encouraged to be photographed showing their support.

TIMELY

August was chosen as a quieter time in terms of pressures on staff.

Implementation of tactics:

INFLUENCING BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

We engaged staff in discussions across a range of platforms - face to face meetings; Daily Email, Vital Signs, screensavers; social media.

We involved patient representatives via the Patient Experience Committee and Healthwatch.

We listened to feedback and acted e.g creating and refining the Visitors' Charter.

We introduced #letsbeopen publically mid-July, to gauge the public's view, using social media, our news blog and the media. The response was largely positive e.g:

'This will make a massive difference. I know in my many stays it always seems forever until my husband can visit. great news'

PROMOTING THE VISITORS' CHARTER

We arranged for the Charter to be signed in front of staff by our Chief Executive, Medical Director and Chief Nurse. This was filmed and promoted.

GO LIVE

On August 1st new ward visiting times (7.30am–10pm daily) were introduced across the hospital, supported by a Visitors' Charter. Only maternity and critical care were exempt.

The Communications Team, lead Matrons and senior nurses were present in the hospital from 7am, wearing #letsbeopen t-shirts, handing out information and talking to staff and visitors.

We filmed and shared a video of a relative describing their positive experience.

We used social and traditional media to promote the new hours.

Measurement and evaluation:

OUTPUTS AND OUTTAKES

Our initial #letsbeopen post reached 12,300 people on Facebook, receiving 641 reactions, comments and shares: the majority of which were significantly positive. Interviews were given to ITV West Country and Radio Plymouth and all coverage was favourable.

The 28 ward photos of support were shared internally and on social media daily. They reached 62,213 people on Facebook, generating 2,221 reactions, comments and shares.

OUTCOMES

In March 2017, seven months after #letsbeopen launched, we surveyed ward managers. 73.3% said the changes had been positive and 66.7% reported feeling supported by the Visitors' Charter.

IMPACT

Better communication

The number of enquiries from patients and families relating to 'communications' during August – December 2016 reduced by nearly 50% in comparison with the same period in 2015.

Improved patient experience

There was a marked improvement in the response rate for the Inpatient Friends and Family Test, with an 11.6% difference between August 2016 (45.4%) and August 2015 (33.8%). The percentage of inpatients recommending Plymouth Hospitals increased from 94.9% (August 2015) to 96.7% (August 2016) and there was a rise in compliments received August – December 2016, compared to the same period in 2015.

Budget and cost effectiveness:

Spend: £9,790.

- In-house design/print: £1,590
- Comms delivery (including staff costs): £8,000
- Only external cost (printing t-shirts): £200

Cost effectiveness is demonstrated by the improvement in patient experience and communication with patients and families. This contributes to better care.