

Nursing and Midwifery Matters



Care, Compassion, Courage, Commitment, Communication, Competence



Let's use Francis Report to get even better

Nursing in the NHS has been a hot topic in the media this week after the Government gave its response to the Francis inquiry into the failings of care at Mid Staffordshire. Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt spoke about changing the culture of staff working in hospitals and set out a number of measures to be introduced. These include:

- Having a legal duty of candour to be open and honest about mistakes.
- Making it a criminal offence of any wilful neglect to hold staff to account.
- Introducing a care certificate to ensure healthcare assistants have the right skills and training.
- Every patient having the names of a responsible consultant and nurse listed above their bed.
- Hospitals having to publish details of nurse staffing levels on a new national safety website and on wards for patients to see.

Mr Hunt said the aim of the measures was “restoring trust, reinforcing professional pride in frontline staff and above all giving confidence that they (patients) will be given the best and safest care and the way to do that is to be completely open and transparent.”

I can understand that what has been said above can be difficult to hear for us as nurses and midwives who virtually without fail come into work every day and try our very best for our patients. It is never nice to hear criticism about our profession but I feel we should welcome this renewed focus on patient care and embrace the changes that come with it.

We will be reviewing our nursing response to the Francis Report and ensure that actions are taken to improve care based on the recommendations. The core elements of the changes - setting high standards, providing compassionate care, being open and honest with patients and learning from our mistakes - are already top priorities for nurses and midwives at BSUH but there is always room for improvement. Rather than see the introduction of these new measures as a negative reflection of our work, we should see them as an opportunity to become even better than we already are.

Competence

Congratulations to Nurse Consultant Eileen Nixon who has successfully completed a PhD in Future Planning for HIV Healthcare Services, officially making her a doctor. It is a fantastic achievement and a great asset to nursing at the Trust in her speciality. Well done again Dr Nixon.

Eileen, and the Trust as a whole, is supporting National HIV Testing Week which starts today. The campaign is being run by HIV Prevention England (HPE) and aims to increase HIV testing to reduce undiagnosed and late diagnosed HIV and to support behaviours that prevent infection.