

Powys Teaching Health Board

Unannounced Cleanliness Spot Check

Date of visit 19 December 2011

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Contents

| | Page Number |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Findings: Areas of Strength, areas for Further Improvement and Actions that Need to be Taken..... | 3 |
| 2.1 General Environment of Brecon War Memorial Hospital | 3 |
| 2.2 Y Bannau Ward, General Practice Medical Ward | 3 |
| Environment..... | 3 |
| Linen, Waste and Sharps Handling and Disposal..... | 5 |
| Equipment and Storage | 6 |
| Staff Knowledge and Practice..... | 6 |
| 2.3 Epynt Ward, Rehabilitation and Palliative Care Ward..... | 6 |
| Environment..... | 6 |
| Linen, Waste and Sharps Handling and Disposal..... | 8 |
| Equipment and Storage | 8 |
| Staff Knowledge and Practice..... | 9 |
| 3. Conclusion | 11 |
| 4. Next Steps | 13 |

1. Introduction

1.1 In May 2006, in response to concerns raised by public and patients across Wales, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) announced its intention to undertake unannounced cleanliness spot checks of healthcare organisations across Wales and a programme of unannounced visits is carried out every year.

1.2 Many different sources of information relevant to this agenda is considered and used to shape the direction of the spot check programme, which is kept under review in light of any new information that comes to our attention.

1.3 As part of our Unannounced Cleanliness Spot Check discussions are held with clinical staff and direct observations of clinical areas are undertaken. The check list used to guide the spot checks is based on the Infection Control audit tool developed by the Infection Prevention Society (IPS).

1.4 Further information about HIW, its spot check visits and the audit tool used can be found at www.hiw.org.uk

Visit to Powys Teaching Local Health Board

1.5 On 19 December 2011 HIW visited Brecon War Memorial hospital which is part of Powys Teaching Local Health Board and undertook cleanliness spot checks of the following areas:

- Y Bannau Ward, General Practice Medical Ward.
- Epynt Ward, Rehabilitation and Palliative Care Ward.

1.6 Our findings are set out in the following sections of this report. Areas of strengths as well as areas for further improvement, including recommendations for actions are highlighted.

2. Findings: Areas of Strength, areas for Further Improvement and Actions that Need to be Taken

2.1 General Environment of Brecon War Memorial Hospital

The general environment of the hospital was considered to be of an acceptable standard of cleanliness. Public corridors and walkways were found to be free from clutter and inappropriate items.

2.2 Y Bannau Ward, General Practice Medical Ward

Environment

The general standard of cleanliness was found to be acceptable.



- The ward has invested in disposable curtains and this is considered noteworthy practice as disposable curtains can help with the reduction of healthcare associated infections when used alongside other infection control measures.



- All commodes were examined and were found to be clean. However, there is a potential risk of contamination as the commodes were found to be in a poor state of repair and need to be replaced.



- Communal toiletry items were found on the ward, these should be removed as there is the potential if used by a number of patients for them to become contaminated.



- In the patient waiting area there was a room identified as a toilet, however the toilet had been removed and the room was being used to store a number of different and inappropriate items. The Health Board needs to consider an appropriate use of the room as the current practice is unacceptable.



- The dirty utility is a room which is used for the disposal of waste products. This was found to be unorganised, cluttered and a number of inappropriate items were being stored such as pressure cushions. The current practice is inappropriate and the items should be removed.



- The dirty utility was also found to be storing domestic equipment including the domestic trolley and cleaning detergents. As the room is used to dispose of dirty waste, the current practice is inappropriate and domestic cleaning equipment should be stored separately.

Patient over-bed tables and bed ends were found to be worn and as wood cannot be cleaned effectively there is a potential risk of contamination. These should be replaced.

Linen, Waste and Sharps Handling and Disposal

The ward had a dedicated room to store linen; however the room was also being used to store a number of different items including dirty linen trolleys. This is unacceptable as dirty linen should be segregated appropriately and clean linen should be stored in a designated area which is free from inappropriate items.



- Some of the bins on the ward were rusty and have damaged the floor. In order to avoid any further damage these should be replaced.

We found that the ward complied with national standards in relation to the handling and disposal of sharps.

Equipment and Storage

There was a documented cleaning schedule in place on the ward. Generally equipment was found to be clean and instruments were safely and appropriately stored. However, oxygen and suction devices were dusty. Staff should ensure that all equipment is cleaned to an acceptable standard.



- Manual handling equipment such as hoists and stand aids had 'I am clean' signs placed on them to identify that they were clean and ready to use, this worked well as all items were found to be clean.

Staff Knowledge and Practice

Generally the staff we spoke to during the visit had received infection control training within the last 12 months and staff had an acceptable knowledge of when they should wash their hands and when they should wear gloves.

Hand hygiene audits are taking place on the ward, however results are not being displayed. Audit results should be displayed and staff informed of these so that any issues identified can be addressed in a timely manner.

2.3 Epynt Ward, Rehabilitation and Palliative Care Ward.

Environment

The ward has recently undergone refurbishment and was considered to be of a good standard of cleanliness.



- Corridors were found to be clean and free from inappropriate items.



- All commodes were examined and were found to be clean and ready to use. However, there is a potential risk of contamination as the commodes were found in a poor state and need to be replaced.



- A pressure cushion was found to be damaged allowing fluids, dirt and bacteria to penetrate the material. This was removed at the time of our visit. The health board should ensure that pressure cushions are routinely checked and any damaged cushions removed and replaced.



- The corner of the wall in the domestic room was found to be damaged; this issue needs to be addressed before it deteriorates.

Patient over-bed tables and bed ends were found to be worn and as wood cannot be cleaned effectively there is a potential risk of contamination. These should be replaced.

The dirty utility was found to be disorganised, cluttered and a number of inappropriate items were being stored such as pressure cushions. The current practice is inappropriate and the items should be removed.

Linen, Waste and Sharps handling and Disposal

All clean linen on the ward was stored correctly on a linen trolley and used linen was segregated in appropriate colour-coded bags and stored correctly prior to disposal.



- Generally, the ward handled and disposed of waste correctly, with the exception of one bin where a clinical waste bag had been placed in a domestic bin. Staff should ensure that the correct waste bags are placed in the correct bin.

2.1 We found that the ward complied with national standards in relation to the safe handling and disposal of sharps. However, sharps trays were identified as being dirty. Staff should ensure that sharps trays are cleaned appropriately after each use.

Equipment and Storage

2.2 There was a documented cleaning schedule in place on the ward. Generally equipment was found to be clean and instruments were safely and appropriately stored. However, oxygen and suction devices were found to be dusty on this ward. Staff should ensure that all equipment is cleaned to an acceptable standard.

Staff Knowledge and Practice

2.3 Generally the staff we spoke to during the visit had received infection control training within the last 12 months and staff had an acceptable knowledge of when they should wash their hands and when they should wear gloves.

2.4 Hand hygiene audits are taking place on the ward; however results are not being displayed. Audit results should be displayed and staff informed of these so that any issues identified can be addressed in a timely manner.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Overall, we found the two wards we visited to be of a good and an acceptable level of cleanliness.

3.2 However, we identified a number of concerns during the cleanliness spot check that were issues for both two wards visited, including:

- The poor condition of the commodes.
- Dusty oxygen and suction devices.
- Disorganised, cluttered dirty utility areas.
- Hand hygiene audits not being displayed for staff.

3.3 We are concerned that these issues could indicate organisational wide issues. Therefore we require the Health Board to undertake its own audit of all wards at Brecon War Memorial Hospital to seek its own assurances and report back to HIW with the results of this audit.

4. Next Steps

4.1 The Health Board is required to complete an action plan to address the key issues highlighted and submit it to HIW within two weeks of the report being published. The action plan should clearly state when and how the issues we identified on the two wards we visited have been addressed as well as timescales for ensuring the issues are not repeated elsewhere across the Health Board.

4.2 This action plan will then be published on HIW's website and monitored as part of HIW's regular monitoring process.

4.3 Healthcare Inspectorate Wales would like to thank Powys Teaching Local Health Board, especially the staff on Y Bannau Ward and Epynt Ward who were extremely helpful throughout the inspection.