

Press Release

22 November 2007

RUH celebrates “good” rating for patient environment

Latest results from the Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) inspections of NHS hospitals published today, awards the Royal United Hospital with a ‘good’ rating in all three categories; covering environment (including hospital cleanliness), food and privacy & dignity.

The hospital’s ‘good’ rating for cleanliness is a welcome improvement from the ‘acceptable’ rating the RUH received in 2006, whilst its ‘good’ rating in food and privacy & dignity has also been sustained.

The RUH’s PEAT inspection was carried out by a full NHS team which included matrons and sisters, infection control nurses, facilities managers, and representatives of the Patient Forum. In addition to the mandatory annual PEAT inspection, the RUH carries out a further three checks a year with representatives of the Patient Forum in order to regularly monitor and assess the hospital’s performance.

Over the past year, as part of an ongoing campaign to tackle hospital infections, the RUH has invested an additional £100,000 in deep cleaning ward and patient areas and increased the number of in house cleaning staff.

In September new visiting arrangements were introduced, limiting visiting times to afternoons and evenings – this has helped cleaning staff get to the patient bed areas in the mornings. In addition, friends and family have been encouraged to use hand gel or soap to clean their hands on entering and leaving wards. Cleaning audits have since shown improvements in hand hygiene whilst many patients have welcomed the increased privacy and dignity that the new visiting times have brought.

The trust has also continued with a programme to refurbish and upgrade some of the older parts of the hospital. In October Marlborough ward was reopened after a complete refit costing £700,000. The new look 17 bedded ward now has 6 side rooms with en-suite side facilities for those with infections. The sluice and kitchen have been refurbished to provide spacious and easy to clean facilities, and all the ward equipment and services such as medical gases, nurse call, electrics and water have been replaced.

Mike Newport, the hospital's facilities manager, says: "We are delighted to have received a good rating across the board in the latest PEAT results. This represents a great achievement by all the facilities and hotel services staff who work extremely hard to make the hospital clean and welcoming for patients, staff and visitors. As part of our drive to improve hygiene, we have increased the number of cleaning staff we employ and invested further in our hotel services particularly the ongoing ward deep-cleaning programme. Within the RUH there are areas which are harder to clean and we are also carrying out a programme of modernising and refurbishing wards and patient areas to further improve the hospital environment."

Ends

Notes to Editors

- **The RUH's catering dept feeds up to 650 patients a day and over 1500 staff and visitors at its in-house restaurants, the Lansdown and the Atrium .**
- **Eight extra staff have been taken on to do deep cleaning – with 215 cleaners employed altogether**

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