

Staffordshire LINK

Commentary on the Quality Account of The Burton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

An early draft of the Quality Account was presented to LINK representatives in order to enable participation in four discussion groups centred on Frail Elderly Services, Outpatient Department Experience and Equality of Care and Quality Metrics. Participants were asked as a group to suggest ways that negative points listed in the Quality Account in relation to these services could be improved. LINK participants appreciated being able to contribute to this early consultation phase of the production of the Trust's Quality Account and would like this process to continue in subsequent years. A final draft of the Trust's Quality Account was submitted to the LINK for commentary.

The Quality Account is a lengthy and at times, heavy going and complicated document to follow for members of the public/lay person. In particular, there are several phrases whose meanings are not apparent until later in the document, these include:-

- Clinical dashboards
- Clear measurable metrics
- Wayfinding

These terms are not likely to be understood by members of the general public who do not have a background in the NHS and a Glossary of terms would be very helpful for those less familiar with acronyms and professional jargon as we read through the report. A 'Contents' page would also help the reader to get an overall idea of the structure of the Quality Account.

Part 2 Developing the Quality Account, sets out how the Trust has developed their Quality Account and identified its priorities for 2011/12. Consideration should be given to involving local PPGs in the area to give their feedback via the people they represent and the inclusion of a question or two regarding patients' experiences of Burton Hospital could be incorporated into any surveys the PPG may undertake in order to feed this back to the Trust.

Part 2 Review of Priorities for 2010/2011 and Priorities for the coming year could be set out in a clearer and easier to understand format for example the use of a traffic light system to indicate the levels of achievement in respect of priorities set for 2010/11 as well as the use of charts and diagrams where possible to reduce the lengthy text. Priority 2 on page 7 appears to infer that improving high quality care is only for older people and again this leaves the reader unclear about the remit of this priority.

The Quality Account provides details of the Priorities for 2011/12 and the action to be undertaken to ensure that progress is made as well as the targets to be achieved. There are, however, a number of areas within those priorities which it is hoped will be addressed:

- **Priority 1** – provision be made for patients who are visually impaired, or are unable to read the information provided.
- **Priority 2** – more information as to how it will be ensured that elderly patients maintain adequate nutrition levels whilst in hospital and also a strategy for preventing unnecessary falls.
- **Priority 3** – important that provision is made for those patients who have communication problems and that signs/information provided by the Trust is in an easily understood format. This should include letters sent out to patients prior to their appointments.
- **Priority 4** – the inclusion of a proposal to introduce a 'Patient Passport' similar to that being introduced at Mid Staffs NHS Foundation Trust.

Part 3 Quality Overview includes details of the Trust's performance against local indicators and targets. Table 9 sets out results in respect of Patient Safety Measures, Clinical Effective Measures and Patient Experience Measures and shows a Risk Adjusted Mortality Index (RAMI) of 90 but does not provide a more detailed breakdown of the Trust's mortality rates ie. age, ethnicity, still born, expected, unexpected to make this index figure more meaningful.

Part 3 Overview of patient experience. Section 3.3.5 discusses the patient/relative surveys and gives the results but it is difficult to ascertain how good the results are when the actual total sample size taken is not known and its relevant size to the total yearly number of patients.

Section 3.4.1 states the Trust's commitment to having a well trained, motivated workforce to deliver improved patient experience and sets out the results of the annual staff survey showing change in performance at Burton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust between 2010/11 and 2009/10 and its ranking in 2010/11 compared with all acute Trusts. It is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions from the results when:

- The 2009/10 figures are not included
- What % of the hospital staff took part in the survey is not stated
- The ranking indicates in the main average or better than average figures but does not set out actual figures for other acute Trusts in comparison to Burton Hospital's figures.

Staffordshire LINK would wish to thank the Trust for giving them the opportunity to comment on the Quality Account both at an early stage and on the final draft.