



PATIENTS COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

May 2018

NEWS, VIEWS AND COMMENT FROM THE ROYAL EDINBURGH HOSPITAL

Patients Council Meeting – 19 March 2018

Our guest speaker, Professor Alex McMahon, NHS Lothian's Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals, and Executive Lead for REAS and Prison Healthcare, told us about forthcoming developments on the Royal Edinburgh site. We mentioned the shortage of parking spaces, the importance of retaining green spaces for the use of patients, and the need for measures to assist patients in the new Royal Edinburgh Building to reach the shops in Morningside.

We discussed developing a discharge questionnaire for REH patients, which must be relevant to mental health and detained patients.

We talked about the financial challenges facing health and social care and the effects of staffing shortages and snagging issues on patients. Many people would prefer to be treated at home but they don't get enough support in the community. Then when they need to be admitted to hospital, there are not enough beds available.

The new building is a big improvement but the ward communal areas are too small. We discussed medication issues and the prominence of the medical model. Patients feel they are just medicated and treated as troublesome children. Nurses spend less time talking to patients, the human touch has been lost, patients feel there is a punishment regime and described their experiences of the use of force by nurses. In-patients need to be advised of their rights and information given on admission needs to be re-visited regularly.

Passes are a major problem for patients, not being allowed out for fresh air as often as they need. Nurses are not available on the wards during handovers. The key-worker system is a great idea but doesn't always work. Smoking is a huge issue – legislation/policy needs to be changed. Occupational Therapists and Activities Nurses were greatly praised.

Alex can be contacted on Twitter or email: alex.mcmahon@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Stephen Polockus was elected to the Patients Council Management Committee.

We agreed to help design a discharge questionnaire.

Poetry Corner

Musings

We laugh, we cry, we love, sometimes we hate,
The grassy field, we see the gate,
Should we enter, should we not, is it safe?
Could we be shot?

Or charged by an angry bull, have
We transgressed that golden rule
That says Stay! Stay away from here,
We know to avoid a fear.

We stay in our comfort zone, the place
We like to call home, offers solace, calm, and rest,
- My parents always did know best.
Now they are gone, a vacuum left,
I will always feel bereft,
Time though distances from the pain,
And healing will come again.

If reincarnation is the truth, and
Although we'll never have the proof,
I am content to think this way
And enjoy my mug of Earl Grey.

Martin McAipine

Keeping in Touch

The new General Data Protection Regulations will be coming into effect on 25 May 2018. To keep our mailing list compliant with the new regulations, please complete the attached form and return it to us to let us know that you want to continue to receive our newsletter. Thank you!

Group Advocacy

Lately, patients have been raising issues like:

- **Patients' belongings**

Rehab patients in particular have been regularly complaining about their personal property going missing on a frequent basis. From much-loved items of jewellery or pieces of artwork, to clothes, CDs, loose change - you name it and a patient has had it go walkabouts. We raised this issue with the Chief Nurse who reminded us that the standard NHS advice is not to bring valuables into hospital; she outlined the practical impossibility of staff accurately keeping track of all patient property and suggested people use the safes available in most ward offices. Missing property should be reported to the Senior Charge Nurses who can investigate.

- **Lack of staff availability**

Patients expressed frustration with the lack of consultant availability at times- if you go days (or even weeks) without seeing your doctor, it can feel like there isn't any meaningful progress being made with crucial issues like passes, medication changes or discharge planning. It can feel like your treatment plan has stalled. Some work has been done recently to re-distribute consultant's workloads which should help this issue.

- **Length of hospital stays/ pace of rehab**

In both the acute and the rehab wards, patients spoke to us about a nagging feeling that they were being kept in hospital for too long and that this could be as detrimental to recovery as being discharged too soon. The Chief Nurse told us that the creation of a Patient Coordinator post may help keep admission lengths to the bare minimum necessary.

- **Patients with mobility issues**

We've been advocating for the creation of accessible paths connecting the different parts of the hospital site together in ways everyone can use safely.

Have a look at our website

www.rehpatientscouncil.org.uk

Lots of information about the Patients Council and links to other interesting items

www.facebook.com/rehpatientscouncil/

twitter.com/rehpatients

**The Royal Edinburgh Hospital
Patients' Council**

The Patients Council is an independent collective advocacy project for people who use or have used the services of the hospital. We provide a forum for common issues about mental health treatment and care and represent patients' interests in order to improve services. We hold general meetings every two months. To get involved with mental health issues from the service-user's viewpoint, contact our staff.

Telephone: 0131 537 6462

Email: info@repatientscouncil.org.uk

Write: The Patients' Council, Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Morningside Terrace, EH10 5HF

Our Management Committee

Martin McAlpine, Stephen Muirhead,
Alison Robertson, Patricia Whalley,
Safini Bibi, Stephen Polockus

Co-opted members:

Cathy Robertson, Isla Jack

**PATIENTS COUNCIL
MEETINGS 2018**

2 – 3.30pm, The Hive

29 January

19 March

28 May

23 July

24 September

26 November:

**Annual General
Meeting**

**1.30 – 3pm
with refreshments**

Please contact us if you would like a copy of the History of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital Patients Council.

To receive the newsletter direct, by post or e-mail, please complete and return this section. We will hold your information securely and only ever use it when we have news to share. You can ask us at any time to stop sending you the newsletter and we will then delete your information.

I would prefer to receive the Newsletter by post *email* *(tick as appropriate)*

Name _____

Address _____

Post code _____

Email _____



The Royal Edinburgh Hospital Patients Council is a registered charity
Scottish Charity No SC021800
Our offices are in the Outpatients corridor in the Andrew Duncan Clinic
www.repatientscouncil.org.uk

All patients, former patients, staff and visitors are warmly invited to attend

PATIENTS COUNCIL MEETING

From 2.00 – 3.30pm on

Monday 28 May
in The Hive

We will be joined by

Evonne Rendall

Health Improvement Practitioner for
Smoke Free Lothian

and

Alexis Rumbles

Acute Team Lead for Smoke Free
Lothian