Open All Hours: Implementing a Seven Day Palliative Care Service

Background
Chelsea and Westminster Hospital has 430 inpatient beds and in early 2014 the Specialist Palliative Care nursing team consisted of:

- 2 x Band 8a    Face to face service    Mon – Fri 9-5

Supported by a full time registrar, a less than full time consultant and 24/7 telephone advice from Royal Trinity Hospice.

The team were made aware of unmet need when they reviewed patients on a Monday who had been symptomatic over the weekend.

Aims
- To introduce a weekend and bank holiday specialist palliative care service
- To improve the quality of care, experiences and outcomes of patients and families with specialist palliative and end of life care needs at the weekends

Methods and Resources
Funding for one band 6 nurse was redeployed from an existing post. A band 7 post was funded by Macmillan and matched by the Trust with another band 6.

Nursing staff by October 2014

6 months training for the band 6’s prior to weekend working

January 2015 - team started working Sat mornings and by late February - team working Sat and Sun mornings. Consultant and lead end of life nurse covered weekends whilst nurses upskilling. Awareness of the new service was communicated with posters in all adult ward areas and on the Trust’s daily communication board. By end of April 2015 - service up and running 8-4 Sat, Sun and Bank Holidays.

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan–April weekend visits</th>
<th>October weekend visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>129 visits in total</td>
<td>65 visits in total</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 new referrals</td>
<td>9 new referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 cancer</td>
<td>26 cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 non malignant</td>
<td>18 non malignant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time 30mins</td>
<td>Average time 32mins</td>
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Reasons seen
- 118 - Symptom control
- 41 - Carer support
- 32 - Psychological support
- 32 - Dying
- 14 - Management advice
- 3 - Discharge planning

Reasons seen
- 48 - Symptom control
- 21 - Carer support
- 6 - Pysch support
- 4 - Dying
- 11 – Management advice
- 1 - Discharge planning

New referrals to the team

Conclusions
The increase in new patient numbers is in excess of the new patients seen at weekends. This suggests that the increased visibility of the team is leading to increased recognition of patients in need of specialist palliative care.

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