

**South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**

**Older People's Mental Health Inpatient Services**

Professor Subha Thiyagesh

We're proposing some changes to our older people's mental health inpatient services. So our older people's inpatient wards are at Calderdale Royal Hospital site, at the Fieldhead Hospital site in Wakefield, at the Dewsbury District General Hospital site, and in Hemsworth on the Poplars ward.

Our older people's mental health inpatient wards care for people with dementia and for those with functional mental health needs. It covers anxiety, depression, and psychosis. At present, both patients with dementia and those with functional mental health needs share the same space. The proposed changes involve developing specialist wards. It means we can significantly improve the care that we can provide to our service users and carers, and it will make a big difference to the quality of life.

Richard Watterston

The two client groups at times don't always fit together. People with functional mental health problems can't always relate to the requirements for the care of people with dementia.

Sometimes people with dementias can get very vocal, shout out a lot, can cry, can get upset, and sometimes people with mental health problems who want to be quieter can get quite agitated. Their presentation can directly affect a different patient's presentation.

People with dementia do get great benefit from reminiscence therapy and looking back at familiar objects. So in an ideal environment, things from the bygone area would be left around and the decor of the unit would be in that fashion. That type of environment doesn't suit people with functional mental health problems. At times people with functional mental health problems do want to self-harm or have an attempt on their own life. So ward environments cater for that type of patient.

Kirsty Brooke

Poplars is a unit that cares for people who have a diagnosis of dementia. Due to its location, it is a satellite unit. We can't take direct admissions. People with dementia can become distressed and increasingly confused with several changes of environment, so they wouldn't come to us first because of our location and not having the correct facilities to support a direct admission. We are away from any help from other wards and we don't have easy access to physical health care.

So one of the main benefits of having a specialist dementia unit in the right place would be to have the patient directly admitted to the dementia ward. This would improve overall care and experience. We'll be able to promote more independence, for example, like growing vegetables, being able to make a cup of tea when they want a cup of tea.

#### Richard Watterston

If the areas were different and there was a dementia-specific environment and a functional-specific environment, the treatment that they receive is more specific to their requirements and the environment does match their presentation. The care could be very specifically tailored for people with dementia. The environment would be better. There would be more space. There would be the lifting equipment, the handling equipment, the beds and the furniture that are specific for dementia care.

Likewise, the functional inpatient units would be tailored for more activity, more ability. The layout would be different. It would be more geared up for rehabilitating people and then getting them back out into the community. Patient care would therefore be better.

#### Kirsty Brooke

Ideally, patients with dementia would be admitted to a ward that's purpose-built, that provides access to equipment that would promote and maintain independence, such as walking aids, lighting, access to space, access to purpose-built kitchens to enable people to support their own food and fluid needs. They deserve the best care and we need to be able to provide holistic care for them and their families. We need to make it as pleasant a journey as possible.

#### Professor Subha Thiyagesh

So we're proposing to have the specialist dementia ward at either the Fieldhead site in Wakefield or at the Dewsbury District General Hospital site. Our specialist functional wards will be at our other main hospital sites.

I think it's really important for people to engage with this as part of the consultation process. Your views will help us make the right decision for the service users and carers and the loved ones. It also means then that the service that we provide for our populations will be fit for purpose in years to come.

Please visit our website to find out more. And finally, thank you so much for your interest in the consultation.