

**Update on Eliminating Mixed Sex Accommodation
PCT Provider Services
Community Hospitals and Intermediate Care facilities.**

1. Introduction

Herefordshire PCT Provider Services believes that every patient has the right to receive high quality care that is safe, effective and respects their privacy and dignity.

National policy sets out clear standards with regard to respecting the privacy and dignity of patients whilst they are staying in hospital. There are clear guidelines that determine that patients should not normally have to share sleeping accommodation or sanitary facilities with members of the opposite sex. This applies to all areas of in patient care. However, there are some exceptional circumstances (such as where the patient needs very specialised or urgent care), where providing fast effective care for patients may take priority over ensuring same-sex accommodation.

2. Community Hospitals and Intermediate Care Facilities

As part of the NHS commitment to eliminating mixed sex wards, all providers of health care are required to develop local action plans outlining how they plan to eliminate mixed sex accommodation in all of their in patient areas.

In order to ensure that Herefordshire PCT Provider Services are complying with national policy an audit of the community hospitals and intermediate care facilities was undertaken on 30th July 2009. The action plan associated with this was reviewed in March 2010

The inpatient units visited and audited were:

Hillside Intermediate Care Facility.
Bromyard Community Hospital
Ross Community Hospital
Leominster Community Hospital

3. Audit

The overall findings of the original audit found that all three Community Hospitals and Hillside all comply with national policy however there were a number of areas where the gender assigned configuration of Community Hospital ward areas and bathrooms could be improved to ensure that the dignity of patients is maintained at all times.

The detailed findings for each hospital are below.

3.1 Hillside Intermediate Care Facilities

Good Practice Statement	Compliance	Actions August 2009	March 2010
All rooms/Bays are single gender	yes	All single rooms	
All Bathrooms/Toilets have appropriate signage to designate gender	N/A	All en suite – do not need to be signed	
Patients do not have to work through accommodation designated for the opposite sex to reach their bathroom facilities	yes		
Bathrooms are en suite or adjacent to bays/rooms	yes	All en suite – 2 assisted bathrooms separate	
There are adequate bathrooms and toilet for the numbers of patients	yes		

3.2 Bromyard Community Hospital

Good Practice Statement	Compliance	Actions August 2009	March 2010
All rooms/Bays are single gender	yes		
All Bathrooms/Toilets have appropriate signage to designate gender	no	One bathroom no gender signage – sign to be ordered	March 2010 complete
Patients do not have to walk through accommodation designated for the opposite sex to reach their bathroom facilities	yes	bays/rooms situated around a central communal area	
Bathrooms are en suite or adjacent to bays/rooms	no		
There are adequate bathrooms and toilet for the numbers of patients	no	Inadequate numbers of bathrooms, adequate numbers of toilets.	March 2010: Refurbishment has now taken place and one bathroom has been replaced with a wet room; both bathroom and wet room have changeable gender signs.

3.3 Leominster Community Hospital

Good Practice Statement	Compliance	Actions August 2009	March 2010
All rooms/Bays are single gender	no	One male pt in single side room within female pt bay – ensure ward configuration prevents this	
All Bathrooms/Toilets have appropriate signage to designate gender	yes		
Patients do not have to work through accommodation designated for the opposite sex to reach their bathroom facilities	yes	As above – however pt was isolated so would not leave room	
Bathrooms are en suite or adjacent to bays/rooms	no		
There are adequate bathrooms and toilet for the numbers of patients	yes		

3.4 Ross Community Hospital

Good Practice Statement	Compliance	August 2009	March 2010
All rooms/Bays are single gender	yes		
All Bathrooms/Toilets have appropriate signage to designate gender	no	Bathroom 1.43 – no gender signage – sign to be ordered	March 2010: completed
Patients do not have to work through accommodation designated for the opposite sex to reach their bathroom facilities	yes		
Bathrooms are en suite or adjacent to bays/rooms	no		
There are adequate bathrooms and toilet for the numbers of patients	yes		

4. Conclusion

In general all the Community Hospitals comply with the guidance with regard to mixed sex accommodation. Hillside immediate Care facility is fully compliant.

Whilst compliant there is room for improvement. The gender ratio of patient's changes frequently and this does not make it easy to have permanent gender specific bays or toilets. Therefore the configuration of the inpatient areas with regard to gender sometimes patients have to be moved dependent on the gender ratio, generally there are more female than male patients. The design of Leominster and Bromyard make it particularly difficult.

The guidelines are specific that no patient should have to walk through accommodation with patients of the opposite sex, however in order to improve on this where possible patients should not have to use bathrooms which are adjacent or opposite accommodation of the opposite sex. Where this is not possible staff need to be extra vigilant with regard to maintaining patient dignity.

5. Recommendations

Current Position

5. Recommendations	Current Position
Order interchangeable signage for the two bathrooms without them	Completed
Each community hospital to have individual site plans with gender assigned bays/rooms and bathrooms for each potential gender configuration of room/bay occupancy. To ensure that every configuration complies with guidance and facilitates patient dignity	in the development to be in place 01.05.2010
Statement regarding commitment to eliminating mixed sex accommodation along with current site configuration plans to be displayed.	as above
To explore with the works department the possibility of increasing number of bathrooms at Bromyard Community Hospital.	changes have been made to the configuration but there is not opportunity within the current layout of the ward to facilitate another bathroom
Ask the involving people team to include questions with regard to patient perception of whether they are in mixed sex accommodation as part of their routine feedback sessions	Request made March 2010

Review by: Jan Reynolds

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