

**Summary Report on CQC concerns regarding provision of services for people with mental health needs at Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (CQC report dated 17<sup>th</sup> January 2011)**

## **1. Executive Summary**

CQC published a report which was critical of the standards of care for people with mental health problems at Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (SUHFT).

Since this report, the PCT, SEPT, Essex county council (ECC) and SUHFT have made a number of changes. These include:

- Extended availability of psychiatric liaison from mid-May 2011
- Formal service specification agreed clarifying responsibilities and response times
- Improved training for SUHFT staff
- Environmental improvements
- Re-organisation of Crisis Resolution home Treatment (CRHT) to reduce any duplication
- Improved monitoring of breaches: Monitoring information circulated on weekly basis
- Bi-monthly system meeting to resolve issues
- Resolving inter-hospital transport issues
- SUHFT clinical staff now have access to psychiatric medication

## **2. Background**

The CQC inspectors visited Southend Hospital on 12 October 2010 in response to 2 serious untoward incidents reported to them.

In summary the main concerns were related to:

1. Unacceptable delays in carrying out psychiatric assessments of patients in the A&E department

2. Delays in moving people to more suitable services, often due to delays in receiving external specialist input.
3. Further environmental measures required to reduce risks
4. Hospital staff not receiving enough training to give them the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of people with mental health problems

### **3. Main body of report**

This report summarises the investigations and actions taken to resolve the issues raised in the original report and subsequent concerns raised by LINKs.

#### **3.1 Response times**

CQC raised concerns about unacceptable delays in psychiatric assessments of people in A&E due to lack of specialist support. As a response the following actions have been completed:

#### **Actions completed:**

- **The PCT, SEPT and SUHFT have now signed a service specification which stipulates that SEPT will attend A&E within 2 hours for urgent referrals.**
- **The Psychiatric Liaison Nurse Service at Southend Hospital's A&E department was previously 2pm to 10pm, 365 days per year. It has now been increased to 8am to midnight, 365 days per year. Doctors still cover the A&E for 24 hours in a shift pattern from 9.00am-9.30pm and from 9.00pm-9.30am**
- **The PCT receive weekly reports on A&E psychiatric breaches.**
- **The PCT will audit the causes of all breaches to assess whether actions taken are effectively reducing unacceptable delays in September 2011.**
- **The PCT have agreed to meet bi-monthly with Southend Hospital, Essex County Council and SEPT to agree measures to further reduce any risks of breaches to the 4 hour A&E response time, including AMHPs and any pathway issues.**
- **SUHFT now hold a stock psychiatric medication for patients that are able to be discharged and this is supported by SEPT pharmacists who 'top up' the medication. This is in addition to the stock of drugs that was already kept in the department for acute intervention.**
- **SUHFT nurses have received break away training**

### 3.1 Delays in moving people to more suitable services, often due to delays in receiving external specialist input.

Following a meeting with East of England Ambulance Service , SUHFT and NHS SEE it has been clarified that for inter-hospital transfers, ie between SUHFT A&E and Basildon, the Blue light ambulance service is appropriate.

A contractual anomaly which states that the contract only covers inter-hospital transfers within the PCT area is being taken up with NHS Norfolk as the lead commissioner for the contract for the East of England region, who have agreed to modify the contract to allow for the particular circumstances within south east Essex.

Requests for such transport are classified as 'GP Urgents' and have a maximum contractual response time of 4 hours. However, at the point that the request is placed by Southend Hospital staff with the East of England Ambulance Service for transport, the appropriate time frame, ie less than four hours can be negotiated dependant on clinical need and vehicle availability.

For transport out of the NHS South East Essex immediate area, arrangements are made on an individual basis.

It was agreed by all parties at the meeting that the primary aim is to facilitate timely transport. Financial considerations where the transport need is clearly outside the contract will subsequently be managed. The joint meeting will review any future breaches to ensure lessons are learned and breaches minimised.

### 3.2 Further environmental measures required to reduce risks

- A & E Mental health Triage and Nursing notes has been updated to include an assessment in line with the Trust policy "Enhanced supervision for patients in the clinical setting" , the assessment stipulates who patients should be observed by i.e Nurse , Security, and how often these observations should be undertaken, constant, 15 minutes, 30 minutes or hourly.
- Personal alarms are in place for SEPT and SUHFT staff when assessing patients in the mental health assessment room; this is in addition to the emergency buzzer already in place.
- SUHFT have engaged with SEPT to ensure that mental health assessment area is fit for purpose.

3.3 Hospital staff not receiving enough training to give them the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of people with mental health problems

- **75% of Nurses at SUHFT have received conflict resolution training, which includes break away techniques.**
- **All Security staff have received conflict resolution training.**
- All nursing staff within the department have received non face to face training in the assessment of patients with mental health needs;
- There is a programme in place for SEPT staff to deliver face to face training to at least 50% of A & E nursing staff by December 2011. This number will increase to at least 75% by April 2012.

#### 4. Conclusion

The PCT, SEPT, SUHFT and ECC has undertaken a thorough review. The PCT believe that the service is now more comprehensive, better managed, and better monitored. There are better systems to continue to learn and improve the service people receive when in psychiatric crisis.

Prepared by NHS South East Essex, on behalf of the partnership working group (SUHFT, ECC, SEPT, PCT) set up to resolve the issues raised by the CQC report.