Trust staff are finding out just how important they are to people’s experiences of care at Rotherham Hospital. They have been taking part in ‘Being with Patients’ training which aims to help them better understand what it means to be a patient or relative using our services.

To date 200 staff have already taken part in a ‘Being with Patients’ Awareness Day which is based on people’s experiences. Actors portray these experiences to demonstrate how staff behaviours and attitudes, however subtle, can positively or negatively influence how the public experience us.

Brigid Reid, Deputy Chief Nurse, who developed the approach in East Lancashire and has now brought it to Rotherham, says: “Whilst we work with patients’ everyday we can sometimes forget what it’s really like for them, how vulnerable they feel. Every patient’s experience is different and this programme is an excellent way for us to see things from the perspective of patients and relatives. We are exploring how we can make a positive difference remembering every interaction we have, even with each other, is an opportunity to increase or decrease people’s confidence in us.

“The programme is giving staff a valuable chance to reflect on how they may be perceived and how their approach influences how others respond. Caring is our core business and this approach enables staff to feel valued, refresh their skills and remember why they joined the hospital and the NHS.”

The ‘Being with patients’ team have been getting a great response to the training. Brigid explains: “Staff are telling us that the scenarios from the Awareness Day really bring to life the way they behave and it has helped some of them re-assess their practice. Just remembering how we come across - especially by our facial expressions, body language and tone - can improve our approachability and treating every patient as an individual can make a big difference.”

Brigid hopes the training will have a lasting positive effect on staff, she says: “Through more encouraging feedback, as well as challenges, and coaching of staff by their managers we aim that the program will equip staff with a renewed emotional connection to the people who are our patients and their relatives, and it will give them the confidence and skills to continually improve their practice.”
Equality is everyone’s business and I want to look at the way we work as a Trust to help us to continue to move forward and work even more closely with people across Rotherham.

Mahmood Hussain
Equality and Diversity Advisor

The Trust has recently welcomed a new Equality and Diversity Advisor to make sure they continue to fully represent the people of Rotherham. Mahmood Hussain has joined the Trust from Rotherham Council and says he is really looking forward to working with everyone: “Equality and diversity is about everyone working together. It is our staff, patients and visitors making sure that all groups in Rotherham are represented and catered for.”

Mahmood says his first step will be getting people to think outside the box:

"The make up of the Rotherham community has a massive impact on the health services we provide. For example, like many places we have an aging population which means demands for certain types of healthcare are greater than others. But the aging population has another impact on the hospital – particularly as an employer. As more and more people reach retirement age, recruitment could become an issue for us so we need to find ways of ensuring we make the most of the experience and expertise we have.

"Also certain illnesses affect certain groups more than others, for example people of South Asian heritage are more likely to suffer from diabetes. As a health provider it is important that we understand the things that effect the population of Rotherham and this is where I can help.

"Equality is everyone’s business and I want to look at the way we work as a Trust to help us to continue to move forward and work even more closely with people across Rotherham. Equality and diversity can cover so many people and everyone is important to us."

CONTACT US

Can you help us find our shining stars?

The Trust is looking for outstanding members of staff for its Pride of 2010 annual awards scheme.

If you know someone who went that extra mile for you then please let us know.

Forms can be found next to the red boxes dotted around the hospital or call Service Improvement on 01709 307928.

If you have a story that you would like to see in a future issue of Newsweek, please get in touch with Communications on extension 7563 or email communication@rothgen.nhs.uk.