

Gateway Reference: 15335

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To: Medical and Nursing Directors of SHAs
Copy to: Chief Executives of SHAs

We are writing, as the National Clinical Directors for Dementia and Older People, to draw your attention to the independent clinician driven audit of Dementia Care in General Hospitals by the Royal College of Psychiatrists released on 16th December 2010. As you know, care of people with dementia in the general hospital is a recently articulated priority in our latest Dementia Implementation Plan.

Briefly, the results show a disappointing profile of the standard of dementia care. The headlines include: 95% of hospitals with no mandatory dementia awareness training; a third of patients had no nutritional assessment; half of people had no assessment of their cognitive function; one third of people referred to psychiatry liaison services were not seen within 96 hours and; the majority of NHS Boards did not review information on people with dementia. The Report presents an excellent opportunity to highlight areas where care for people with dementia can be improved. The issue of dementia care was discussed with SHA Chief Executives last month by our SHA National Dementia Champion, Sir Ian Carruthers.

We would value the opportunity to meet with you and your colleagues, in particular the Medical Directors of trusts in your region, to discuss how we could help make best use of the results in raising the profile of and standards of dementia care. For example, we might provide a focus for discussion, assist in the further assessment of practice in individual trusts, identify from you (and share with you) examples of good practice, outline some of the national guidance and guidelines available and help align any developments with NHS and social care topics such as QIPP, the new Dementia Commissioning Pack, the Operating Framework and long term conditions.

It would also be an opportunity to look, across the board at the quality of care for people with dementia in line with our other priorities of reducing anti-psychotic prescribing, early diagnosis and dementia care in care homes.

We will be in touch shortly with some more detailed suggestions, but, in the meantime, it would be helpful to have your reaction to the results of the audit and to our offer.

The links to the Audit, the recent Alzheimer Society and NHS Confederation Reports on Hospital Dementia Care and our revised Dementia Implementation Plan are as follows:

www.nationalauditofdementia.org.uk

http://alzheimers.org.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=356

<http://www.nhsconfed.org/Publications/reports/Pages/Dementia-report-Acute-awareness.aspx>

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Aboutus/Features/DH_119830

Yours sincerely



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