

For the Record – Press Statements

Publication	Express and Star
Date of article	Saturday 24 th January
Reporter	Adam Burling
Headline	Hundreds of patients left waiting on trolleys
First paragraph/s of article	Nearly 800 patients waited for up to 12 hours to be admitted to A&E in the West Midlands in just one week – with many left on trollies. It comes as bosses say hospitals are reaching
Paragraphs relating to The Dudley Group	<p>Paragraph 6: The University Hospital of North Midlands NHS Trust, which covers Staffordshire, had 64, with 67 in Dudley at Russells Hall Hospital, and 12 at the Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, which includes Sandwell Hospital and City Hospital in Winson Green.</p> <p>Paragraph 11: Paula Clark, chief executive of the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said 93.8 per cent of patients at Russells Hall Hospital had been seen within the four-hour target in the same week. She said: “We have taken a number of measures to help us discharge medically fit patients as soon as appropriate to free up beds and improve patient flow through the hospital”.</p>
Press enquiry	<p>The Express and Star contacted the Trust figures for trolley waits published by NHS England for the weekend ending 11th January 2015. They said the figures state that 67 patients ‘waited between four and 12 hours on a trolley’.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is the Trust happy with this figure? 2) Is anything is being done to reduce it? 3) What the reasons are for patients facing that wait?
Trust response	
COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	

It is never ideal for a patient to be waiting in our Emergency Department to be admitted into hospital. However, we can only transfer patients to their ward once a bed becomes available. On some occasions, a bed may be available on the ward but the patient cannot leave the department because they are too unwell or unstable to be transported safely.

The NHS nationally has seen unprecedented levels of demand on its emergency services this winter. We are pleased we performed well against the national average of patients being seen, treated, admitted or discharged within four hours with 93.8% of patients achieving this against a national average of 84.3% week ending 11th January 2015. Week ending Sunday 18th January we are pleased we saw 98% of patients within the four hour target. In the week ending 11th January, of the 1849 patients that attended our emergency department, 67 patients waited for between four and 12 hours to be admitted following the decision to admit them to hospital. As a proportion of all our emergency admissions, just 8% of patients waited longer than four hours to be admitted compared with 12% nationally.

We have taken a number of measures to help us discharge medically fit patients as soon as appropriate to free up beds and improve patient flow through the hospital. We start planning for discharge as early as possible, have a team of site co-ordinators who co-ordinate patient flow 24 hours a day and have a dedicated Discharge Lounge where patients can wait comfortably to be discharged. We have also recently purchased 20 beds in three nursing homes in Dudley for patients who need therapy or rehabilitation.

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Notes for editors

- 'Trolley Wait' is a term used to describe the time from a decision being made to admit a patient into hospital to them being admitted to their destination inpatient ward. Patients waiting to be admitted will do so in an Emergency Department cubicle. They will have been seen by a doctor and their treatment will have already begun.

For further information please contact Alice Ford, Communications and Staff Engagement Officer, The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust on (01384) 456111 extension 3403 or email alice.ford@dgh.nhs.uk