

For the Record – Press Statement

Publication and reporter	Birmingham Mail, Anuji Varma
Date of article	01/05/16
Headline	Hospital grub ratings - mixed fortunes for Midland hospitals
First paragraph/s of article	<p>A Black Country hospital is one of the worst places for patient food - with a one in seven dishes tasted during a survey given a poor rating.</p> <p>The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which runs Russells Hall Hospital, had one of the highest proportions of poor food in hospitals in England.</p>
Press enquiry	<p>The Trust was contacted by the Birmingham Mail in relation to the published food scores for the Patient-led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE) which took place in May 2015.</p> <p>The reporter stated in her request that one out of seven meals tested as part of the assessment were rated as 'Poor' and asked for the Trust to comment on this.</p> <p><i>It should be noted that the article states that 'Six out of 39 food items ... were given a poor rating <u>for either taste, texture and/or temperature</u>'. This does not make it clear that the poor ratings actually only related to temperature. None of the tested dishes received a poor rating for either taste or texture.</i></p>
Trust response	
<p>COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST</p> <p>Patient-led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE) take place every year and, as part of this programme, teams assess the quality of inpatient food against three areas: taste, temperature and texture.</p> <p>Our PLACE team last visited Russells Hall Hospital in May 2015, and tested the</p>	

quality of food on four of our wards. We were pleased that, overall, they rated our food favourably.

Of the 39 dishes tested, Taste was rated as Good or Very Good in all but two meals, and Texture was rated as Good in all but one of the dishes. Temperature was rated as Acceptable in 33 of the 39 tested meals, and was the only category to receive any Poor ratings.

Following the publication of the national PLACE scores in August 2015, we were pleased to find that our overall food score had improved from 84.28% in 2014, to 86.08% in 2015.

We have done a lot of work with our patients to improve our food over the last 12 months and, since the 2015 PLACE assessment, we have introduced a new *Chosen by Patients* menu with increased choice and dishes tried and tested by our patients.

In addition to PLACE, we use a variety of tools to monitor food quality, including local food surveys which are completed throughout the year. Last year, more than 3000 patients took part in our local food surveys.

Our local food surveys show us that, since introducing our new menus, patients are more satisfied with the food they receive whilst in hospital. For the 2015/16 year overall:

- 63% of patients who received inpatient meals rated them as Good or Very Good, a further 24% rated their meals as Fair
- 87% of patients said they always received a choice of food
- 79% of patients said their food was always served at a suitable temperature for them to enjoy

We look forward to welcoming our PLACE teams back to the hospital next month and hope that our improvements are reflected in this year's scores.

***** ENDS *****

Notes for editors

For further information please contact Alice Ford, Communications and Staff Engagement Officer for The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust via (01384) 244403 or email communications@dgh.nhs.uk