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PRESS RELEASE

Christmas gift for Dudley orthopaedic patients

Patients waiting for joint replacements were given the unusual option of spending Christmas Day in hospital – with the gift of a new knee, shoulder or hip!

Surgeons in the Trauma and Orthopaedics Department at Russells Hall Hospital came up with the idea of offering patients the chance to have their operation over Christmas. It meant they would be able to celebrate the festive season surrounded by patients and staff on the ward.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust decided to run special operating lists on Christmas Eve specifically for this reason. While surgeons would normally operate on Christmas Eve anyway, it is usually limited to patients who can go home the same day. This year it was decided to make Christmas special and memorable for patients.

The ward round on Christmas Day by the consultant, registrar, nursing staff and hospital management was a good opportunity to spread festive spirit and present small gifts to the patients.

All of the hospital's inpatients on Christmas Day were given cards which had been written by members of the public, local schools and staff, after an appeal by the Trust saw more than 1,000 cards sent in.

One joint replacement patient who was in over Christmas said: "The staff were happy and upbeat despite them being away from their families and loved ones, which in turn made my stay as an inpatient comfortable and pleasant.

"Every member of staff I came into contact with, from the domestic staff to support staff, the nursing staff and my consultant were excellent and a total credit to Russells Hall Hospital."

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust has some of the shortest waits in the country for elective surgery - currently in the region of five weeks. Waits for first outpatient appointment are around two weeks. Some patients having surgery at the Trust will also have the opportunity to go home the same day after their joint replacement.

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