

For the Record – Press Statement

Press enquiry

3rd January 2018

Following an enquiry from BBC Midlands Today about two deaths in our A&E Department, the following statement was issued.

COMMENT FROM DIANE WAKE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

The emergency access standard (95% of patients to be seen, treated, admitted or discharged within four hours) is not a measure of individuals or teams but one of the whole health and care system.

The Dudley Group has had variable performance towards this standard as have many trusts across the country and the challenge to meet this standard is not unique to Dudley.

The Trust has seen an increase of 13% in patients arriving by ambulance. Over recent years an average number of ambulances per day was 120, we are now seeing up to 170 per day. This increase in ambulances puts huge pressure on the emergency department as the patients are acutely unwell and often have many co-morbidities. At times we are struggling with the numbers of ambulances as we have experienced ambulances arriving in clusters which can cause delays in handover, but everyone is doing their utmost to ensure we look after the patients and that we work as a healthcare system together.

We are also seeing more out of area patients from South Staffordshire, Worcestershire and Sandwell which culminates in further delays in the system when these patients are well enough to leave hospital. We continue to work very closely with our social care partners in all local authorities to ensure patients are discharged however this morning (3rd Jan) we had over 100 patients medically fit for discharge.

The health economy winter plan is designed to help us deal with these pressures such as making more GP appointments available. We have also made 60 additional beds available and increased our ED staffing of both nurses and doctors to help us cope with the increase. We have unfortunately had to cancel all non-urgent operations until February and we are only running outpatient clinics where the clinical need means patients may end up as emergencies if they are not seen. This will help ensure senior decision makers can focus on our urgent care patients and in reach into ED. This is in line with other Trusts.

The Dudley Group and all its staff are absolutely committed to providing the safest possible care to all of our patients and wish to thank all of our staff who are working

incredibly hard in the most intense circumstances.

We urge patients who do not have a serious or life threatening condition to use alternative health services as we will always see patients in order of clinical need and patients with minor injuries or ailments may have longer waits.

*** ENDS ***

Notes for editors

In response to your first two questions we cannot comment on individual patients. I can reassure you that we have an open and transparent culture of reporting any incidents to ensure we learn from them. All serious incidents are subject to a full internal investigation and where appropriate external advice or investigation is sought.

Press enquiries

4th January 2018

Several local and national media asked the Trust to confirm reports that two people had died in our A&E Department. The following statement was issued.

COMMENT FROM DIANE WAKE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

I can confirm we have had one death in the waiting room of our emergency department in November 2017 and this is currently under investigation.

No patient has died on a stretcher in the corridor as has been reported in the media.

ENDS

For further information please contact Liz Abbiss, Head of Communications for The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust via 01384 244403 or email communications@dgh.nhs.uk