

Judith Morris  
Head of Nursing & Midwifery  
Stockport NHS Foundation Trust  
Poplar Grove  
Stockport

Wednesday, 07 July 2010

Dear Judith,

**RE: Stockport LINK response to The Stockport NHS Foundation Trust Quality Report 2009/2010**

Thank you for guiding The LINK through the Quality Report 2009/10, which will enable us to make a statement about the report.

The LINK would like to first of congratulate Stockport NHS Foundation Trust on achieving a rating of excellent for financial management and good for the services The Trust provided in 2008/09 by the Care Quality Commission.

The LINK would like to commend the priorities for improvement identified in the 2008/09 report. Although cannot fully respond on the first five of the priorities (advancing quality, early recognition of the acutely unwell, reducing harm from inpatient falls, prevention of MRSA and C. Difficile and care of patients with fractured neck of femur), it appears improvements have been made or areas have been identified for improvement such as systems being put in place to understand necessary structures to improve patient care.

The LINK is an organisation whose focus is public and patient experience and satisfaction in health and social care services and feel that we can comment on the last of the 5 priority areas which is 'patient and family engagement'. The report highlights the Trust's efforts to expand engagement in the design and improvement of services and have hosted 6 patient and family events where feedback was shared and changes made as a result. Unfortunately the Stockport LINK was neither invited nor involved in these events and therefore feels unable to comment on the quality of them.

The Stockport LINK would like the Trust to engage with the LINK about public events and involve them more in the planning and development of services and policies that will directly affect patient care.

In part 3 of the report under other information the Trust highlights a section on responding to complaints; the LINK is pleased to hear that no complaints were upheld by the ombudsman

during 2009/10. However the LINK would like more information on practical experience and ease of use for people using the complaints system as well as patient understanding of the function and knowledge of the ombudsman. The LINK would also like to see how other comments, compliments and suggestions are recorded and used to inform and improve services.

The LINK would like to encourage the Foundation Trust to engage and communicate its patient experience data with the Stockport LINK and for the LINK to report feedback gathered by them to the Trust in a meaningful way that will assist the Trust and residents of Stockport.

As an organisation we routinely collect feedback about patient experience regarding the health and social care system and our records show that we received 38 written feedback forms and recorded 11 telephone conversations with regard to quality of care at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust. 12 of these were positive experiences and concerned mainly routine appointments and operations. However 35 of these were negative experiences ranging from discharge procedures, dealing with complaints, communication and quality of care. We had 2 pieces of feedback that were both a mixture of positive and negative experiences depending on which part of the service they used.

As a result of the patient feedback the LINK has set up a member led Discharge Task and Finish Group to further look into patient experience of discharge from hospital back into the community. They are also in the process of setting up a small group to look into complaints systems across the statutory sector.

#### Other Comments/Suggestions:

The Stockport LINK would also like to see a further commitment to hold open and transparent Public Board Meetings. There is no specific requirement for the Trust to have them but the LINK is of the understanding that when Foundation Trusts were set up they were accountable to their local communities. Good practice issued from the Department of Health when holding public board meetings states that unless decisions are seen to be discussed and debated openly, perception about public involvement and understanding will be severely undermined.

The LINK would like to see a more welcoming of public questioning at the Annual General Meeting as it has been noted some members of the public were disappointed with the way some questions were responded to and others were therefore not confident to ask their questions.

The LINK would like to see more patient groups involved with different departments within the Trust. The Patient Group for Division of Medicine for Older People are the only hospital patient group the LINK has representation and is aware of and the LINK would like to support and be involved in setting up similar type groups.

The LINK would like to receive regular information on the reports that the Trust produces for consideration so that they can keep up to date with Trust developments.

We conclude our statement to offer our continued support to Stockport Foundation Trust and we hope that the developing relationship between the Trust and the LINK will continue to grow to ensure the public and patients receive the best possible care in Stockport.

Kind Regards

John Leach

LINK Chair on behalf of and The Stockport LINK membership

cc: Monitor  
Care Quality Commission  
Robina Shah  
Cllr. John Pantall  
Stockport Health Scrutiny Committee