Nursing and Midwifery Strategy
2014 and beyond

Countess of Chester Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust
INTRODUCTION

In March 2013 I was delighted to be appointed as the Director of Nursing & Quality at the Countess. I feel I am in a very privileged position to be leading the nursing and midwifery profession in such times where there is greater opportunity than ever to influence the standards of care we deliver to our patients.

Nursing and midwifery care remains a critical measure of quality for most patients and their families in regard to the services they receive from us. The image of nursing and midwifery has undoubtedly been very publicly criticised in recent years. I have no doubt the answer to how we improve this poor perception lies with the care that we as nurses and midwives deliver.

Recent reports from Robert Francis QC, Sir Bruce Keogh and Prof Don Berwick have focussed the whole care delivery system to really examine the patient experience. Providing care for an ageing population remains a real challenge in the 21st Century. The time and skills needed to care well for a person with complex needs, such as dementia, are significant and the nursing contribution to this is fundamental. This strategy has been developed by the nurses and midwives within the Trust. It articulates our intentions in a framework that supports our vision for nursing and midwifery at the Countess.

Our nurses and midwives believe this strategy will help them to deliver the changes required to further improve patient care. It will also ensure staff are supported with effective leadership to facilitate and empower the delivery of these changes and ensure that staff are adequately trained and competent to undertake the challenges of the future.

I believe it is our responsibility as nurses and midwives to design and promote services that meet the needs of people in the best possible way and in the most appropriate setting. By working with our partners we will explore ways of promoting the delivery of care at home when appropriate to do so, allowing patients to be in the comfort of their own home whilst undergoing treatments. Our strategy for our nurses and midwives will I believe build on the existing good work that has taken place here at the Countess of Chester Hospital and going forward take us from ‘Good to Great’.

Alison Kelly, Director of Nursing & Quality
ABOUT THE STRATEGY

As a result of the nursing and midwifery contribution, our ambition is for the care we deliver to show a positive impact on outcomes for our patients. We will strive to deliver an effective, efficient service and we will seek to find out patients’ views to continually improve quality of care. This strategy is underpinned by what we believe are the 3 main principles of our patients’ journey: Quality, Safety and Patient Experience. These principles will be enabled through realisation of our ‘Intentions’ and underpinned by the national nursing strategy of the 6Cs: Care, Compassion, Competence, Communication, Courage and Commitment.

We will ensure that we as nurses and midwives continue to embrace the Trust Values. The underpinning values of nursing and midwifery, such as professionalism and care ethics are principles and beliefs that guide our daily practice in all care settings and will be at the heart of our practice and will support person centred care. These principles are embodied within the Nursing and Midwifery Council Code: Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics for Nurses and Midwives (2008) and should reflect the manner in which we work.

Three key principles of the patient journey, Quality, Safety and Patient Experience will be articulated at organisational and individual level so that every nurse and midwife in the Trust is acknowledged as a role player in this strategy and has an understanding of its importance in ensuring excellence in care. Our nurses and midwives will demonstrate professional behaviour to reaffirm their role as advocates and guardians of quality care; treating people with dignity and respect, with care and compassion and with impartiality. We acknowledge a personal and professional responsibility to demonstrate these values in the way we interact with our patients, clients and each other. We will ensure that they underpin every professional decision we make.

Going forward we will identify key staff who will have clear responsibility to lead on the implementation of each aspect of the strategy and provide regular feedback to the Director of Nursing and Quality. A clear plan of action driven by the strategy will enhance our leadership skills to maintain and improve the high quality of patient care we deliver. As one of our nurse specialists said:

“There are some amazing people within the profession whose vision and enthusiasm has taken the nursing profession forward. We are well respected by other healthcare professionals and the opportunities open to us are far greater now than ever before.”
QUALITY

Quality is about improving the outcome for the patient in order to optimise health and well-being at all stages of illness. It is our aim to ensure we deliver compassionate and high quality care.

Our Intentions:

• To ensure that clinical care meets and exceeds the essential required standards of quality and safety
• Ensure that the service provides a safe, life enhancing experience for the whole family unit for the duration of the interaction with maternity services
• To optimise and improve the health outcomes of all patients helping them to remain independent
• To deliver a nursing and midwifery workforce fit for the 21st Century, ensuring we have the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place
• Delivering high quality, safe, effective and compassionate care, measuring its impact and where required ensuring improvement
• Delivering high quality care and measuring the impact
• Advance practice and care by participating in clinical research and audits with a particular emphasis on nursing and midwifery outcomes
• Using agreed national quality indicators to drive the process of change
• Agree a set of nursing and midwifery performance measures specific to each area that will become our “nursing dashboard” in a constant drive to improve the nursing and midwifery care we deliver.
COMPASSION

“We believe and expect that everybody deserves dignity and that compassion is crucial.” — Ward Manager

This is why we joined our profession – to help make a difference to those who need us most, often at their most vulnerable time.

We will:
- Review the recruitment process in the Trust to ensure we recruit staff with the right ethos and attitudes
- Work with our local Universities to ensure we recruit the right students for the nursing and midwifery profession
- Continuously review and feedback to our Universities when student nurses and midwives are not up to our standards
- Support and mentor our new nurses and midwives
- Set out clear expectations to all our new nurses and midwives
- Use our performance dashboard to report and drive improvements in the care we deliver
- Simply not tolerate care that is not delivered in a compassionate way.
The nursing and midwifery team is fully committed to really deliver the challenges ahead to ensure we give great care to patients.

We will:
• Be committed to our patients and will always take the opportunity to improve the experience they have
• Work with other disciplines and the public to drive up standards of care by being involved in service developments
• Use all feedback obtained from our patients and clients to inform improvements in care
• Always take action when we observe behaviours or practice that we believe are unacceptable and detrimental to the well-being of our patients and carers
• Support this strategy, making it real for all and therefore enabling us to meet the health, care and support challenges ahead.
SAFETY

This is about improving and increasing the safety of any care or service we provide. It is our aim to deliver safe and effective nursing and midwifery care.

Our Intentions:
• Aim to eradicate all aspects of harm to our patients, using national tools that will allow us to benchmark with our peers such as the National Safety Thermometer to measure our performance and reduce harm
• Maintain high standards of infection prevention and control by continuously monitoring our performance and our results and challenging poor practice
• Continue to drive improvements in safety and quality of care through continuous learning from incidents, errors and complaints
• As nurses and midwives we will speak out when we believe something is wrong and has the potential to compromise patient safety
• We will embrace the delivery of effective and efficient services through enhancing skills and knowledge and the use of technology to ensure we have a competent workforce
• As nurses we will always use national annual benchmarking with regard to our performance in a drive to improve patient safety and outcomes
• We will continue to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults underpinned by education
• We will in 2014 agree an acuity/dependency tool that will inform the Trust Board of Directors that our patients are being cared for by the right number of nurses and midwives
• Join the National Transparency Programme which will allow us to benchmark with our peers any harms such as falls and pressure sores
• It is our intention to introduce a “Nurses & Midwives Forum” to ensure we are engaged with our staff who deliver care and are able to and encouraged to raise concerns.
Nurses and midwives will practice in an environment of continual learning and development, demonstrating their commitment to continuous quality improvement and an ability to learn from experiences and accredited sources of evidence.

**To embed a culture of lifelong learning we will:**

- Make sure our staff have the knowledge and skills to do their jobs and the capability to deliver the highest standards of care through annual appraisal
- Identify areas of risk and take appropriate actions to ensure a safe environment for pregnancy through utilisation of robust risk management processes and Supervision of Midwifery
- Have clear expectations of what our staff need to achieve
- Set out our leadership vision and ensure our staff are equipped to lead by using the Trust's leadership training programme
- Give new staff a positive induction and outline clear expectations
- Maintain and encourage excellent learning environments
- Review and refresh programmes of learning and training so that we retain and develop newly qualified nurses and health care support workers
- Reviewing opportunities to encompass new ways of working
- Continually support staff to further their professional education
- Continue to support the revalidation of nurses
- Listen to our nurses to help them be productive and innovative
- Respond to national guidance to support the future development of our non-registered nursing work force.
**COURAGE**

“...we will be ready for anything and step up to the mark.”

Senior Nurse

Courage enables us to do the right thing for the people we care for, to speak up when we have concerns and to have the personal strength and vision to innovate and to embrace new ways of working.

**We will:**

- Safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by using robust policies, processes and practice
- Continuously explore improvements in patient care, being empowered to implement them
- Embrace new ways of working, being confident in our ability to innovate the care we give
- Use the diversity of nursing roles to support and compliment other health care professions and support the needs of people with mental health problems
- Speak out as individuals when we see or believe something is wrong.
PATIENT EXPERIENCE

This is about improving the experience, as described by our patients, when using the service for any reason.

Our Intention is to:
- Listen and act upon the feedback we receive from our patients, their families and carers to improve the care we give
- Be open, transparent and professional at all times
- Treat all patients and clients with humanity, dignity, kindness and compassion
- Work in partnership by developing a unique supportive relationship with pregnant women and their partners to achieve a positive transition to parenthood

We will use all manner of feedback from our patients to improve care and caring experiences. Including for example:

- Friends & Family Test
- National surveys
- Real time patient feedback
- Health watch
- Support National Action Days such as ‘Dignity Awareness Day’
- Dementia Friends
- Senior Nurse ward rounds
- Executive visits
- Commissioner visits
- Council of Governors visits

We will put into action any learning from the feedback given and monitor the improvements needed.
Direct patient care is what determines the quality of service our nurses and midwives provide to our patients and will be the one aspect of their experience that will live long in their memory.

We will always:

- Put patients first
- Treat patients with dignity and respect and deliver care in a kind, compassionate and respectful way and be sensitive to people’s choices
- Develop relationships with our patients that involve better listening and decision-making – “no decision about me without me”
- Continue to support the National Dementia Strategy to improve care to this growing group of patients
- Deliver care which meets the individual needs of all our patients, including: single-sex accommodation; adequate food and drink; effective pain management; always considering inclusivity and personalisation
- Encourage our inpatients to use the real time patient feedback tools available to them to enable us to respond to any of their worries and fears immediately.
Engaging with our patients and their friends, family and carers is essential to ensure we understand their experience throughout their patient journey. Listening to experiences will help us maintain high quality patient care and also help us to learn where improvements can be made.

**We will:**
- Use our patient stories and feedback to monitor and improve what we do
- Use a range of methods and sources proactively to capture our patient feedback, which includes diverse and hard to reach groups
- Embed the cycle of feedback, action and audit so that change happens and improvements are delivered
- Look at the whole patient journey and use models of feedback to explore patient pathways and overall experience
- Develop a carers strategy to ensure carers are involved in the delivery of care to their loved ones.