

Visit to the Nick Jonas Ward of Winchester Hospital by Frankie Webb, Sam Selwood and Peter Humphreys of the NHS HHFT Cancer Services Partnership- Tuesday 11 April 2017.

1. Introduction and purpose of visit

The purpose of our visit to the Nick Jonas Ward of Winchester Hospital was to place in the waiting room of the day chemo centre a new banner to recruit new members to the Cancer Services Partnership. Also, it was to have a look at the facility itself and compare and contrast with the similar facilities in Basingstoke. Nicolette Blan, the Clinical Matron for the day care chemo centres both in Basingstoke and Winchester kindly accompanied us and showed us around. The Nick Jonas Ward is situated on ground floor of the main hospital building. We weren't able to make any comparisons with how this unit has been historically as this was the first visit of this type.

The ward offers:

- Outpatient clinics, in oncology, haematology and palliative care
- Chemotherapy / systemic anti cancer treatments
- Supportive treatments
- Counselling sessions

2. The visit

2.1 Personnel

The reputation of the staff on the Nick Jonas Ward is the same as that of the Basing Unit, i.e. caring, friendly, compassionate and professional staff. All the staff we meet were friendly and had a ready smile. The chemo 'hotline' remains in service and is available to the ward patients, but operated out of the Wessex Ward, Basingstoke. One excellent feature of the ward staff was a volunteer. It is difficult to describe their role, but as a previous cancer patient themselves, they would chat to patients and their carers. In particular they gave reassurance to those who were recently diagnosed and new to chemo treatment. They had a kind, lived in looking face and a warm, caring personality. They were in attendance in the ward two days a week. This type of service seemed to us excellent and worthy of consideration of extension both in the ward and in the Basing Unit.

2.2 Facilities

General

The overriding factor about the existing facilities is that no great deal of money is going to be spent on them while the new cancer treatment centre is due to be built. This has been in the development stage for some years and even more consultation is now being undertaken with the county clinical commissioning groups, with no end in sight and costs spiralling.

However, today's cancer patients need treating today and 'jam tomorrow' is no good for them. Therefore the nature and quality of today's treatment and facilities and the whole experience of cancer patients, their carers and families today and for the foreseeable future, remains as important as ever.

The ward is very convenient for the front entrance of the hospital. It is through a set of double doors and first on the left and is clearly signposted. It is in a much better position than the Basing Unit that requires finding the lifts at the back of the hospital, finding the right floor and turning the correct way when you come out of the lift. The Nick Jonas ward is in fact in a number of temporary prefabricated buildings though this isn't immediately obvious. This gives rise to the long narrow rectangular shape. Everything is very compartmentalised and in smaller rooms than the two main rooms at Basingstoke. As you turn into the Unit you are faced with an apparently very long narrow corridor, that is somewhat off-putting initially. You start off having to walk down the corridor past a number of individual small rooms, which are used by consultants.

Administration

There were a number of offices for nursing to use, for administration staff, computers, patient records and other files. So facilities for all staff seemed much better than at Basingstoke and there was no evidence of patient space being turned into staff work stations as at Basingstoke.

Waiting Rooms

The main administration contact for patients is within the two waiting rooms. Each had a reception desk with computer and telephones, though the day we were there only one was in operation and the other had a notice sign-posting people to the other one.

One waiting room was for those who had appointments to see a consultant/oncologist. It consisted of blue upright chairs that seemed to do the job and was similar in look to the waiting room in Basingstoke. The other waiting room was for those waiting for chemo treatment. This reminded us of an airport business class lounge and looked very comfortable. The furniture is cloth covered and apparently is to be changed to furniture with wipe able coverings to reduce the risk of infection from contamination for this group of people who have much reduced immunity levels to infection.

Coffee and tea making facilities were available in one of the waiting rooms and small nominal amount was requested to cover the cost of this.

Day Care Room

There was one day chemo room. This had five chemo chairs and some room for associated carers and family. It seemed to us a bit crowded and people who were sensitive might have issues concerning privacy.

However, there was a patient 'quiet room'. This could and was being used for private conversations while we were there. This seemed an excellent facility not available in Basingstoke.

The design and ambiance of these rooms is important in a way that is different from other facilities being used at the hospital by day patients. The main impression we got of the Nick Jonas ward was that the ambiance of the whole ward was relaxed, friendly and warm, in a way that does not exist at all at Basingstoke. Why this should be, we

don't know. Whether it is the layout, the fittings and furniture, the staff, we just have no idea.

In patient cancer ward

There is no in-patient equivalent of the Wessex Ward at Winchester.

Wi-Fi

The Hospital has patient Wi-Fi, Wi-Fi Spark. This is very important. When you are sat for hours having infusions or with someone having infusions, good Wi-Fi can improve the whole experience. We didn't have time to try it out.

Decoration and appearance

There is not the same level artwork around decorating the walls as in Basingstoke. There was much evidence of conversion of parts of the ward from previous use as a traditional hospital ward. However, the place still seemed cheerful and bright.

3. Other items

The Palliative care team had an office within the ward. This seemed very well placed.

There was information readily available on the ward concerning the June Scarth House, the Romsey Cancer Support Centre. This is a walk-in centre offering support to anyone living with cancer or their carers. Their services are available free of charge to those within reach of Romsey and include aromatherapy massage, reflexology, and befriending.

Information was also readily available on the Wessex Cancer Trust Cancer Support Centres. There is one of these centres on St George's Street Winchester and they offer such services as counselling, aromatherapy, reflexology, massage, reiki, yoga, Indian head massage and facials, hand and nail care.

Whilst not an NHS responsibility, it is very good that these services are available to cancer patients in the Winchester area and that it is made known to Nick Jonas ward patients and their carers. It is unfortunate that no equivalent range of services is available in the Basingstoke area, other than the excellent and valued Pink (and Blue) Place.

Patient personal information recording

We didn't have the time or opportunity to look at the system for patient information recording.

Patient information

A patient handbook was introduced in 2015. It is given to the patient at the start of their course of treatment. It is provided by the Wessex Cancer Trust This consists of an attractive small A5 sized ring binder and hence will be easy to update. This contains a lot of very useful information in one place. Included within the binder was a very helpful staff list, plus provision for keeping a record of blood test results, very

useful if admitted to A and E or seeing the emergency doctors service who won't have access to patient records. Also in the handbook is a description of what chemo is and potential side effects.

Further work should be done to develop it and maintain it. Information on young carers and the Cancer Services Partnership should be added as soon as possible. Evidence from other NHS Hospital trusts and their CSP equivalents shows what can be done. The CPS would be happy to help with this.

We have recently asked again for an organisation chart for cancer services. We recommend that the staff list be reproduced in the patient handbook be shown in the form of an organisation chart, with links shown to the wider hospital organisation and also the organisation chart for the cancer doctors/consultants. An explanation in the handbook of the hospital colour coding of uniforms would be helpful, as this was always a mystery to us.

Chemo Hotline

There still exists the chemo hotline. This used to and still does operate 24x7. It is for all Trust patients undergoing chemo who have problems and difficulties that can't wait until their next scheduled appointment. All patients are encourage to use it as a first resort rather than A and E or their own GP or the 111 service.

Parking

There have been many reports of great difficulties of parking at Winchester and that it is much more difficult than Basingstoke. The hospital web site advises people to use the Winchester park and ride service, which we did. We parked at the St Catherine's car park. It cost £3.00 for all day and included a return bus ticket for up to seven people in the same car. The buses ran every 10 minutes and we were dropped you at the front door of the hospital. We thought it was very good. However, we weren't feeling ill and were fit enough to walk. This excellent service would not be suitable for many patients using the Nick Jonas ward and we could see how parking difficulty would be a big cause of stress among some cancer patients and their carers.

4. End note

We are very grateful to Nicolette Blan for hosting this visit to the Nick Jonas Ward. The opinions and judgements expressed in this report are entirely ours and not necessarily representative of the views hospital management, any of its staff or other members of the Cancer Services Partnership. The responsibility for any errors or omissions is entirely ours.

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Sam Selwood -Member
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NHS HHFT Cancer Services Partnership
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