

GP Bulletin – May 2019

Enhancing the continuity of maternity care

Our Bradford Homebirth Team is now live – and our Continuity of Carer pathways are now being developed. Our Homebirth Team consists of six midwives along with two named Consultant Obstetricians.

Our aim is to provide a dedicated homebirth service to the families of Bradford and provide continuity of care during the antenatal, labour, delivery and postnatal period. We have offered home births before but thanks to this new dedicated team, all women who choose a home birth will not only have a named midwife but a buddy midwife too.

The benefit of our Home Birth team is that there is a high chance that throughout her care and at the birth, mum will have a midwife she has already met before and with whom she – and her family – has already built a relationship which is really important. There are many advantages of home births, namely that mum and the whole family find the experience more relaxing than being in hospital. Partners and siblings feel more involved.

Any mum-to-be can choose to have a home birth and they still have a range of birth options available as they would in hospital – for example a water birth. To be referred to the team, mums-to-be just need to advise their community midwife that they plan to have their babies at home and their details are then forwarded to the team. They can also self-refer.

Midwifery Matron Alison Powell said: “This is a new approach for Bradford and I am very proud of the Homebirth Team for the motivation, inspiration and commitment to offering women real choice around place of birth. Bradford has long had a low homebirth rate but we are positive this will change as midwives work hard to facilitate choice for women, with commitment to support new ways of working anything is possible.”

Our Specialist Midwife for Continuity of Carer is Abbie Wild, whose role is supporting, developing and overseeing the various Continuity of Carer pathways. This involves liaising with the LMS (Local Maternity System) providing them with feedback regarding our successes – and barriers – to implementing Continuity of Carer. Abbie added: “I believe all women should have the opportunity to have such wonderful care with a team they feel familiar with”. Abbie explained that we currently have four continuity models in progress:

- Clover team (our Better Start Bradford-funded pilot)
- The Home Birth Team
- The Previous Caesarean pathway
- The Gold Star pathway for HIV positive women

The target set by the LMS was for 20% of all women to be booked onto a Continuity of Carer pathway by March 2019 and thanks to everyone's hard work and commitment, Bradford Hospitals achieved 22%. "There are many more pathways under development, including working with women who are expected to have a poor birth outcome, and we are trialling different models of implementation to suit all patterns of working. Some will suit shift working, some will include on-calls. "Continuity of Carer is a national government agenda and all maternity staff will have a role in making it work."

Our diabetes patients benefit from NHS technology 'first' (Let's Talk)

We would like to share with you news about some ground-breaking technology now being used by our diabetes ward, which has changed patients' lives. Some 50 of our diabetes patients are among the first in the NHS to receive a new glucose reader which uses artificial intelligence to monitor, predict, and record their blood sugars and help ensure they remain within normal range. The pioneering technology, which is available to selected patients with type one diabetes only, stops them from having to carry out finger-prick blood tests several times a day.

Patient Sharon Searle said the technology had improved the way she assesses her glucose levels. She said: "Although I have only used the system for a week now, I have found it very useful. I was accepted on to the programme partly due to dexterity problems (I have spina bifida and syringomyelia), so as you can imagine doing finger-prick blood tests throughout the day is not easy. I can only ever do a finger-prick blood test into my left thumb as my fingers don't move independently, so being able to test my glucose levels just by scanning a sensor is fantastic for me. I also like the idea of being able to see exactly what my glucose levels are doing by looking at the graph on the reader and checking the arrow symbols to see whether they are rising or falling gradually or too quickly."

Our Diabetes Specialist Nurses Christine Kelly and Sandra Dudding run a two-hour introduction to the system for new patients. Christine said: "Since January this year, myself and two of my diabetes specialist nurse colleagues, plus two diabetes specialist dieticians have held additional education sessions and invited eligible patients who have been assessed for funding by the NHS to use this new life-changing technology. It is available to people with type one diabetes only, and is another form of blood glucose monitoring which does not involve individuals pricking their fingers quite so often. It allows individuals to view, via a hand-held reader, what their blood glucose levels are like. The patient wears a small sensor on their arm and they simply hold the reader near the sensor to record and read their blood glucose levels.

This is an extremely exciting time for our patients and the use of this new technology allows them to monitor their diabetes more closely, make necessary changes to treatment and will help them to identify potential low and high blood sugars. This new technology can be offered to those who may require an insulin pump too, at a huge potential cost saving of up to £6,000 a year." Sandra added:

“The technology will also help prevent admissions requiring treatment for high or low blood glucose levels, as well as help to reduce the risk of complications related to unstable diabetes. It allows patients to know what’s happening to their glucose levels and make changes if they are becoming hypoglycaemic. It can also produce graphs, predict trends and will help patients manage their diabetes better too.”

Cardiac Rehabilitation team secure national award for outstanding service

We’re delighted to announce that our Cardiac Rehabilitation team has achieved national accreditation for the outstanding service it delivers to patients. The team, based at St Luke’s Hospital and Queensbury Health Centre, provides a vital service in the community to get people back on their feet when they leave hospital after a heart attack, heart surgery or coronary intervention procedure.

[Read more...](#)

Nurse-led ENT micro-suction team continues to grow

Developing our staff and giving them greater autonomy in their work is just one of the areas where colleagues can gain greater job satisfaction here at our hospitals. With this in mind, we are delighted to tell you about a nurse-led service which our ENT department has pioneered. Instead of doctors, six nurses have been trained by Consultant Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) Surgeons, Ian Smith and Dave Strachan, to perform micro-suction on patients who have had mastoid surgery.

This type of surgery is carried out to treat certain diseases of the middle ear and as part of their routine, follow-up care here at Bradford Royal Infirmary, patients have to have their ears micro-suctioned. Micro suction is the removal of wax, infection or debris using a small suction tube and a fine suction end. The six-strong team is led by Senior Sister Janet Noonan and includes Sister Anne O’Connor, along with Staff Nurses Sabrina Salim, Rehana Kausar and Ann Conway. The nurses also provide treatments for impacted wax and otitis external (ear infection). Dave stated: “Providing a nurse-led, micro-suction service greatly improves patients’ access to a procedure that is generally not available in primary care. It is difficult for the medical team to provide such a regular service, so having a nurse-led team ensures that our patients are able to be seen more often and, if necessary, at short notice which is very important when treating certain types of ear conditions.”

Clinics are run every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday with a walk-in service for patients – who also are referred here from Airedale Hospital too – every Tuesday and Thursday. The growth of nurse-led clinics in ENT is having huge benefits on the department, as well as our patients. And for the nurses, it is widening their skills and creating greater job satisfaction, as well as forging enhanced collaboration with medical and allied health professionals.