How postcards that asked four simple questions improved patient feedback on safety

A postcard that patients can use to give feedback on their hospital experience is the latest measure adopted by a trust since it signed up to Patient Safety First.

With the aim of keeping patient safety a priority, Scarborough and North East Yorkshire Healthcare Trust has introduced a number of changes. We introduced a simple “patient safety postcard”, which we give to each patient who stays at or attends Scarborough and Bridlington Hospitals. It has four questions that require yes or no answers (Box 1), and space where patients can write about the care they received.

We came up with the idea after receiving positive feedback from patients who completed similar postcards about the levels of privacy and dignity they experienced. There was evidence to suggest that patients were much more likely to fill in a postcard than a lengthy paper questionnaire. Feedback from patients has been extremely positive. We have distributed more than 500 cards and have received around half back so far. Of those who have responded, 86% have answered ‘Yes’ to every question.

**PART OF A BIGGER CAMPAIGN**

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**Changes resulting from the interventions**

The changes made since signing up include:

- Introducing a mortality group: the group meets every week to review all the deaths in the hospital to see if anything could have been done better to improve patient safety;
- Undertaking a staff survey on patient safety: we asked staff for their views on how they thought we could improve. This gave us an insight into how we could help ourselves and others to drive changes forward and to improve on what was already in place;
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**KEYWORDS** PATIENT SAFETY | PATIENT FEEDBACK | PATIENT EXPERIENCE

**BOX 1. PATIENT POSTCARD**

- Did you feel safe in hospital? Yes/no. If no, please give further details.
- Were you given enough information in relation to your hospital stay/treatment? Yes/no. If no, please give further details.
- Was a member of staff readily available when you needed them? Yes/no. If no, please give further details.
- Do you feel the physical environment was safe? Yes/no. If no, please give further details.

If you would like to be contacted by a member of staff please leave your contact details below.

- Please give further details.

We hope to host an event with colleagues from our strategic health authority and the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership to highlight the importance of patient safety. Focusing on clinical audit results and changes to patient safety, it will also allow us to outline progress made so far.

As part of my role as clinical governance manager, I am responsible for auditing our progress. We will reveal where we were, where we are, and where we hope to be. It will be a chance to share the progress made and show staff and patients alike that we are passionate about improving patient safety.

At Scarborough, we are committed to providing patients with the best possible care and ensuring that their safety remains our number one priority.

**SHOWING PROGRESS**

For more information on Patient Safety First, go to [www.patientsafetyfirst.nhs.uk](http://www.patientsafetyfirst.nhs.uk)

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