

Information Governance Department
West Wing
St. Pancras Hospital
4. St. Pancras Way
London NW1 0PE
Freedom.Information@Candi.nhs.uk

28 January 2014

Reference: 2013-295

Dear Mr Syed,

Re: Information Request – Freedom of Information Act 2000

Following your request for information we received on the 19 November 2013, we are providing you with access to the recorded information held by Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust in answer to your enquiry.

Please be advised that, the Trust have grouped the points of your request, in our response.

You requested the following information:

- 1. Trust Bed Management policy is to admit acutely ill patients to Sapphire Ward at Highgate Centre for up to 14 days for assessment. This is a mixed ward and does not have an accessible adapted room on the female protected side. The ward staff and manager have previously confirmed this**
- 2. Please comment on how safe it is considered for women with physical disability to be placed in rooms that are not within the female only protected area and indeed may be located within the male area of a ward in some circumstances**

According to the Trust bed management policy, patients known to services and with active treatment plans can be admitted directly to the treatment wards at the Huntley and Highgate Mental Health Units. Patients, for a range of reasons, are admitted to Sapphire ward. Sapphire (like all wards with the exception of Rosewood) is a mixed ward with male and female areas and between 1 and 3 bedrooms that are designated as either male or female. With the exception of the disabled access bed on Rosewood, all disabled access beds are designated as either male or female and located near the nursing offices. The room on Sapphire is located near to the nursing office in an male/female bedroom.

The Matron who covers Sapphire notes that the either/or beds although not in the female only area are near the nursing office and can be safely managed from that area.

3. **It appears that within the Trust that there is only 1 fully accessible room designated for women with physical disability and that this is within Rosewood Unit at St Pancras.**

However there is not one room within the separated female side outside of Rosewood Unit that is accessible for female patients with physical disability. The only disabled accessible rooms appear to be either within the male side of the ward or at least outside the female protected area albeit next to the nurses' station.

This is correct, the only designated room for women with disabilities that is located on Rosewood.

As noted, all Other disabled access rooms within the Trust are located in male/female rooms located in male/female areas that, whilst not controlled through a door system are also near to the nursing offices and distinct from the male areas.

The male/female beds on Laffan (which include the disabled access beds are between the nursing office and the female only area) and not in the male corridor. This makes management of these areas easier and there have not been issues regarding the use of these beds, providing the ward manages which patients access the beds in the area appropriately.

4. **Therefore how does the Trust provide for the needs of women with physical disability if there are no accessible adapted rooms within the female protected area? Please explain how the Trust considers that this is compliant with disability legislation. Please also give information of the alternative options available for women in acute mental distress needing hospitalisation (do not include Crisis houses in this response) who have physical disability and need adapted accommodation and possibly have additional care needs.**

The male/female beds are separate from the exclusively male areas and are usually adjacent to the female areas. Staff assess patients prior to placing them in these beds to ensure that male patients who are a risk to females (or a female patients who are a risk to males or at risk from males) are not placed in these areas. In cases where female patients are either at risk from males or who request a female only environment, then they can be transferred to Rosewood.

In the case of patients whose physical care needs are of such complexity that they could not be met in a treatment ward (including the two acute wards for frail adults), we would negotiate for them to be admitted to a more appropriate environment. The Trust has never been in a position of refusing treatment to an individual who requires mental health care and has physical disabilities. We have, occasionally, transferred patients from mental health services to acute services for physical care when the

risks posed by the physical health problem outweighed those posed by the patient's mental health problems.

The Matron at the Huntley Centre agrees with the previous point and noted that:

If a patient needed to be admitted with complex physical health needs, staff involved in the admission would need to consider where the patient's mental and physical health needs are best met. Also if there was a significant level of physical care needed we can always allocate additional staff on a ward to meet these needs. Finally we have access to specialist skilled staff - physiotherapy, Tissue Viability, continence service as well as access to acute advice and support via Whittington and UCH hospital.

Regarding alternative options for women with disabilities who require admission for acute mental distress, other than the Trust's contract for female only Psychiatric Intensive Care, there are no other options than either admission to Rosewood or admission to an either/or bed on either the assessment ward or a treatment ward.

In order to comply with clinical governance legislation, the Trust are currently undertaking large scale disability audit on all sites. We also have women only facilities, at Rosewood and Drayton Park Women's Crisis House.

5. How often in the past 3 years has the Trust accessed private sector hospital beds in order to provide for physical disability needs? If Trust policy is to not access private beds and not to place women in male sides of wards then how is this group protected?

The Trust has been accessing private sector beds, in the last 3 years, for this specific purpose of meeting patients' physical disability needs. As noted, female patients with physical disabilities would normally be placed in the either/or beds or on Rosewood.

6. Please comment on how safe it is considered for women with physical disability to be placed in rooms that are not within the female only protected area and indeed may be located within the male area of a ward in some circumstances

Verbal interaction with the matron for the assessment and treatment wards at HMHC established that they consider the present arrangement enables patient safety to be managed by the disability access rooms in their wards.

Providing risk assessments are undertaken to ensure risks between patients are managed and are not placed in either/or areas then these beds can be managed safely. In cases where there are female patients with disabilities requiring female only areas then these individuals can be referred to Rosewood or, if this is not possible or appropriate, then other care management systems can be implemented (for example the use of enhanced observations).

7. Finally is there an Equalities Group within the Trust and if so can they please comment on this situation

Yes, the trust has an equality group which meets regularly. The issues related to inequalities are also raised across most of the nursing groups which include procurement, nursing executive and training. The Trust through its Estates & Facilities Department has commissioned and received a disability access survey in respect of its main site at St Pancras Hospital. The Trust is also in the process of procuring a further survey of its other buildings and sites within Camden and Islington. Progress on these matters is reported to the Equalities Group. In addition, based on the recommendations of the surveys, Estates & Facilities will submit bids to the Trust's Capital Planning Group for funds in order to undertake disability access improvements as appropriate.

I do hope you are satisfied with the way in which your response was handled, if not you may request an internal review at the above email address. When contacting the Trust please use the above reference that is unique to your request.

Further information about your rights, is available from the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF and on the Information Centre's website. www.ico.gov.uk/

Yours Sincerely

Wayne Elliott
Information Governance Officer