

Improving the treatment pathway of Pleural effusion patients at East and North Hertfordshire NHS trust

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Introduction

Problem:

Radiographers are unsure whether or not to send patients to ED or home if they have a pleural effusion. ED do not want patients going directly to them but as radiographers are not medically trained the same as nurses, it does not feel safe to send someone home if they are symptomatic. If the patient is sent home before having the image checked. A report can take up to 1 week to get back to the GP.

Rationale:

If a patient can be seen on the same day and have all the necessary scans (CT etc) or a chest drain then it will also help to identify lung cancers quicker which will then mean that a patients treatment plan can be put into place. Therefore a process where they can be assessed by the respiratory team would ensuring that patients have the fastest and most effective care which can save time not only for them but for staff. Enhancing patient experience and efficiency of the service.

AIM

To improve the pathway for Pleural effusion GP patients at East and North Hertfordshire NHS trust for patient experience and to improve outcomes.

Planned Measures

Outcome measure:

- The total number of PE patients seen by the respiratory team,

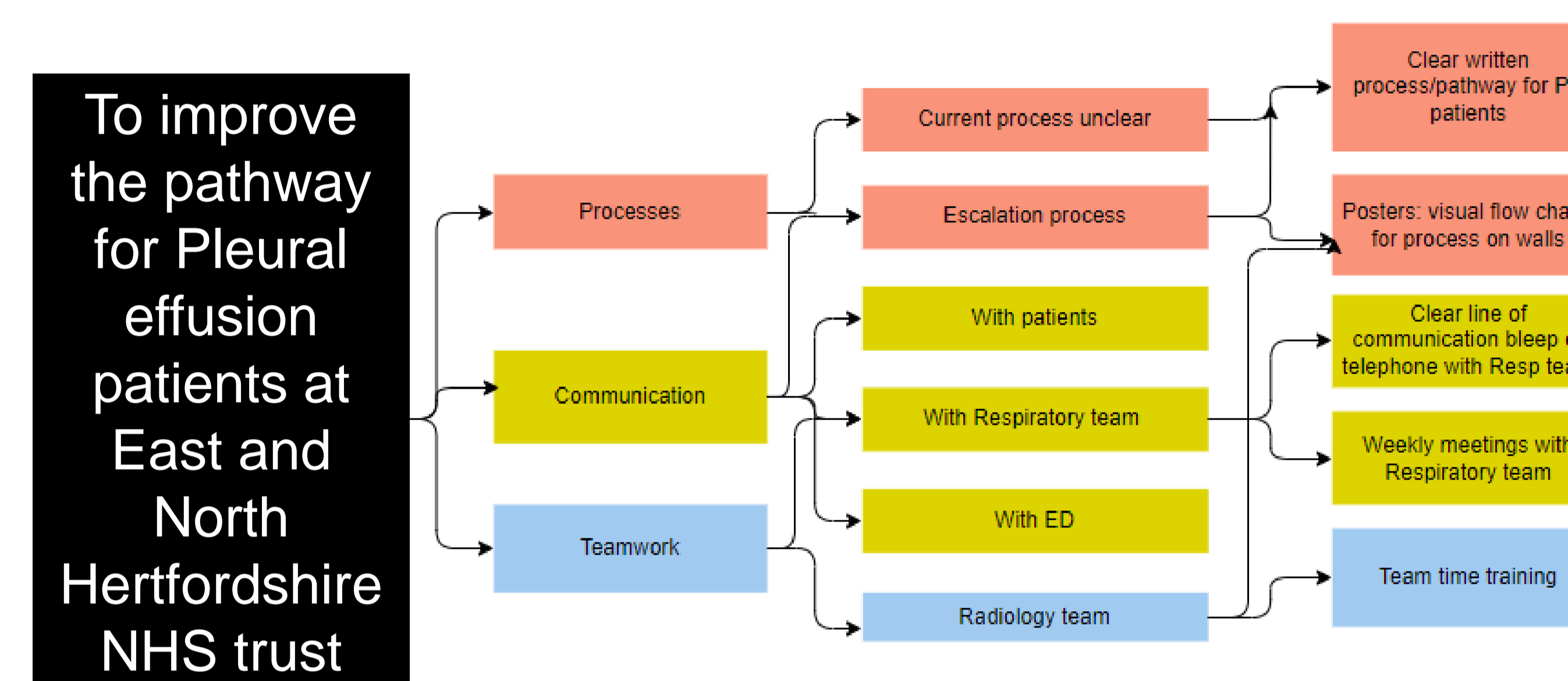
Process measure:

- The total number of GP referred patients seen in radiology
- The total number of Pleural effusion patients seen
- The time taken for referral to respiratory team/ to be seen

Balancing measure:

- The time it takes for patients to be seen

Driver Diagram/ Change ideas



Leadership Learning

Throughout the leadership course I have become more confident within myself, and I have grown to understand what is important and 'What matters to me'. Starting the course, I felt that I already had some of the traits that attribute to being a leader. I believe the course has taught me the importance of listening to others and helping to guide them and not tell them the direction that they should be going. It has also made me realise that you should always be mindful that everyone has their own personal issues outside of work so to check in when possible and that every leadership journey has its ups and downs to get to the place that they are meant to be. I would recommend this leadership course to fellow colleagues even if they do not want to go into management, as I believe it teaches a lot of life lessons that can be used every day.



Next steps

- The plan is to record how long it would take from the patient attending radiology to then be seen by the respiratory team – this is where they will either have a chest drain inserted, have a CT scan or they will be able to go home and attend a follow up appointment.
- A survey can then be given to the patient once they have finished within the respiratory department to state if they found their experience to be efficient.
- Build a relationship with the respiratory team – a meeting is being arranged with myself, consultant radiologist and Respiratory consultant to look at plans for a pathway.
- Other hospitals have already created this pathway for patients as a 1 stop pleural clinic.

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References: Radiology protocols