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With Special Thanks to all involved in the WCT

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Background

During the Covid-19 pandemic limitations on patient visitation have had a detrimental impact on staff, family, and patients. Nurses report greater difficulty contacting family due to feeling overwhelmed by the volume and condition of patients and face moral distress through visiting restrictions.

Asking what matters to patients and involving them in shared decision making is key to patient centred care. Homerton Hospital developed a "Ward Communications Team" (WCT) to meet the communication and care needs of patients, their loved-ones and hospital staff.

Aim

"To provide every Homerton Hospital patient on COVID wards an opportunity for a "What Matters To You?" conversation and support to connect with loved ones 7 days per week from March 2020 - April 2021"

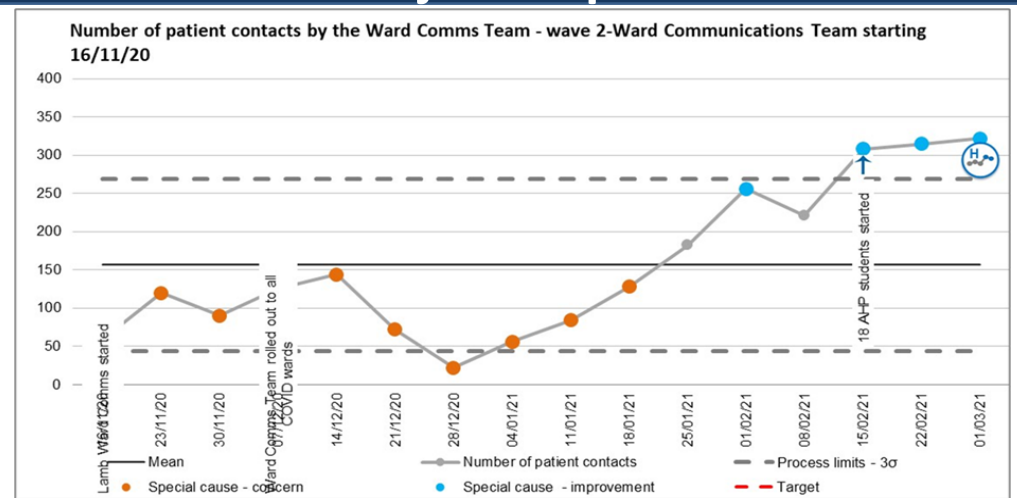
Method

- WCT employed a WMTY approach to physically and psychologically support patients, families and staff on all COVID wards during wave 2.
- Data was collected daily to test changes, learn and improve in real time based on patient, family and staff feedback.
- Powerful synergies between patient, family and staff experience reflect the vital need to continue this work to provide best care possible.

PDSA cycles

PDSA Cycle	Learning
Staffing	Utilise all staff and students to the full
Shift rostering	Give staff autonomy over shifts
Induction	Plan robust induction and develop a clear shared purpose
Resourcing the team	Act on regular feedback to address needs and threats in real time
Holding WMTY conversations	Robust training and role play for effective conversations and building staff confidence
Debrief sessions	Vital for wellbeing and team sense of belonging
Data collection	Vital from beginning to enable agile model and responsiveness to needs in real time

Project Impact



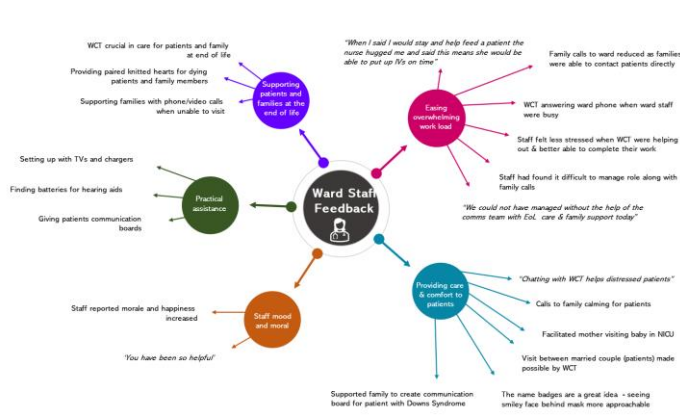
Patient and Family Feedback



WCT Feedback



Ward Staff Feedback



"This service wasn't available when I was in hospital last year and I felt very lost and lonely, and I didn't have things that I needed like my phone charger and toiletries. I think this service is so valuable to patients and has made me feel safer."

"I trained to be a nurse to care for patients, I want to care for them and do what matters every day, but in my normal role I have no extra capacity to allow me to show the kindness and care that I want to, in this role I finally feel the way I expected to feel when I trained as a nurse 20 years ago"

"We have been asking for weeks for help as we can't manage to do all the work and help patients and families speak to each other, this team is a big help and relief."

Lessons Learnt

- This team is **dynamic and responsive** to the changing needs of patients, families and staff
- Asking and doing what matters** to patients each day is vital
- Using **qualitative data for real time learning** enhances experience of all
- Invaluable to have a service that **meaningfully connects** all parties
- Develop teams with a **clear shared purpose and sense of belonging and safety** for innovation and joy in work

Next Steps

- Investigate ongoing roles for volunteer or support staff to continue this work
- Use WCT as a blueprint for improving experience and upskilling staff in WMTY approach