Ward Manager leads the way at Patient Safety Awards

Introduction
The philosophy of management on the Midland Centre for Spinal Injuries (MCSI) is based on the needs and safety of the patients generated by the effects of the spinal cord injury (SCI).

Our team of staff are motivated to treat and care for our patients. Motivation is the key enabler to make the difference to the lives of a spinal cord injury patient. Our values and standards are focused on patient safety, compassion and loyalty.

The Centre is renowned nationally and internationally for its outstanding care and service to Spinal Cord Injured (SCI) patients. Staff are proud of the Centre for its reputation. There is outstanding team working within and across disciplines, staff groups recognize and understand the importance of each other’s roles.

Method
The Ward manager roles in both the NHS and the army have complemented each other and allowed her to develop strong leadership skills, unwavering determination and teamwork.

Leadership
- Lead by Example
- Encourage Thinking
- Apply Reward and Discipline
- Demand High Performance
- Encourage Confidence in the Team
- Recognise Individual Strengths and Weaknesses
- Strive for Team Goals

This is the army leadership code that has been applied. This code has been developed from the concept known as Values Based Leadership. At the heart of the Army Leadership Code are seven leadership behaviours developed from the principles of Transformational (also known as Inspirational) and Transactional (also known as Directive) leadership theory.

My role within the army and my role as ward manager counterbalance each other and have been instrumental in the development of my leadership style. These two roles have provided me with transferable skills, knowledge and experiences. Following this Code we have developed our leaders, junior and senior, so that they can get it right all the time. It has helped us towards being a member of an outstanding team that has succeeded.

My Leadership Style
Firstly I adopted a heroic leadership style. Someone needed to take command and control to ensure patient safety and improve staff morale. Immediately after I took control I knew I needed the staff on my side to ensure they would follow me as a leader. This was hard because the culture was very much: “we did not do this 30 years ago so why are we changing it?”

I needed to educate the staff and ensure they understood the need for change. In the first instance I often would use the word ‘improve’ rather than ‘change’. This was very tiring and draining but I persevered as I felt confident staff would understand a new way of working. I managed my staff individually. I had regular ward meetings and one to one staff meetings.

I was honest, fair and consistent and demonstrated how passionate I was. I showed dedication by the amount of my time and passion I gave to both the staff and patients. My leadership style of embracing, encouraging and supporting my colleagues to develop their skills has established me as an effective leader.

What matters the most to our patients on the ward?
- Safe environment
- Time to Care
- Right Place at the Right Time
- Nurses visible
- Knowledgeable staff
- Caring compassionate staff
- Enthusiastic staff
- They want to be listen to
- Improved Working environment for staff

Outcomes
Patient Safety Award – Clinical Leadership
Judges said that the wards were an “excellent demonstration of good leadership” and hailed Rebecca Warren as a leader who had “built sustainable systems and processes, creating a team ethos which improves patient care and staff experience.”

Winning the patient safety award in clinical leadership, not only demonstrates the personal elements of the reward but also the positive exposure it has given the Trust.

European Board for Physical & Rehabilitation Medicine
Recognised as a European Training Centre
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CQC report
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Impact From Change
- Improved safer ward environment for Patients
- Values and Standards
- Staff Bond - Based on Trust Values
- Effective communication
- Quality of care
- Motivated work force
- Changes are in place

Conclusion
The Centre is renowned nationally and internationally for its outstanding care and service to Spinal Cord Injured (SCI) patients. Staff are proud of the Centre for its reputation. There is an outstanding team working within and across disciplines, staff groups recognize and understand the importance of each other’s roles. We have demonstrated strong leadership skills and staff are now delivering high standards of care in an ever changing and challenging NHS.

Future
- Continue to ask patients about their experience
- Continue to act on patients comments
- Culture - Positive working environment
- Review of the current call bell system
- Providing extra activities for patients
- Maintain our specialist reputation