

Trust Board Meeting in Public: Wednesday 18 January 2017
TB2017.04

Title	Patient Perspective
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Status	For Information
History	Patient perspectives are regularly presented to Trust Board and to Quality Committee

Board Lead(s)	Ms Catherine Stoddart, Chief Nurse and Deputy CEO			
Key purpose	Strategy	Assurance	Policy	Performance

Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this paper is to relay the recent story of a Muslim family whose mother (Mrs N) died in the John Radcliffe Hospital. It outlines how different staff worked together to ensure that the burial was able to take place quickly and in a dignified manner. The story is told by Mrs N's son, Mr N.

2. This story provides an important opportunity to:

- highlight the importance of a burial [within 24 hours] in order to fulfil Islamic tradition and the new Standard Operating Procedure that is being developed
- give details of the various members of Trust staff, departments and community organisations that came together, and communicated effectively, to ensure the burial took place quickly;
- demonstrate the importance of breaking bad news in a sensitive way;
- demonstrate the comforting impact of delivering practical and compassionate care for people who are dealing with sudden loss and grief in a hospital setting;
- thank the staff who worked 'over and above' in this case to enable burial within 24 hours and the family for participating in the story.

3. Recommendation

The Trust Board is asked to reflect on the patient perspective and the learning.

Patient Perspective – Mrs N

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to tell the recent story of a Muslim family whose mother (Mrs N) died in the John Radcliffe Hospital a few months ago. It outlines how various members of staff, departments and community organisations worked together to ensure that a burial took place quickly and in a dignified manner.
- 1.2. The paper accompanies a film which is publicly available and will be used for staff learning in end of life care and supporting bereaved relatives. The film can be viewed via this link: <https://youtu.be/iYW3G5i0JjA>
- 1.3. The main purpose of the film is to help staff understand what is required to ensure appropriate support is given to bereaved Muslim families, in particular. It also offers insight into how to deliver bad news sensitively to relatives. Finally, it highlights the positive impact on families when staff members “go the extra mile” and demonstrate compassionate excellence.

2. Background

- 2.1. This story was produced by the Patient Experience Team in partnership with Mr N, the Muslim Chaplain and the Emergency Department doctor involved in Mrs N’s treatment. An independent filmmaker produced the film.
- 2.2. It is the religious requirement in the Islamic tradition that the Muslim deceased be provided with a quick and dignified burial. Towards the end of life, Muslim family and friends will want to be present when a loved one is dying and they will also want to be present at the funeral.
- 2.3. Everyone involved in the story is keen that the film is used to improve the care of bereaved relatives and has agreed for it to be publically available on the Trust’s YouTube channel.
- 2.4. The Trust is indebted to everyone who participated in the film, at extremely short notice, particularly Mr N who generously gave his time in order that the support his family was given could be recognised and other families could be supported in a similar way.

3. Mr N’s story

- 3.1. In August 2016, an elderly Muslim lady died in the evening in the Emergency Department after having had a stroke earlier that day.
- 3.2. The family were shocked and deeply distressed by the sudden death of their mother. The doctor in the Emergency Department did everything she could to break the news gently and to support the family.
- 3.3. It was important to the family that they take Mrs N home, so that they could spend the night with her, and have the opportunity to recite the Qur’an and offer prayers and that the burial took place within 24 hours as per the Muslim tradition.
- 3.4. However, as the death was within 24 hours of admission to hospital a Coroner referral needed to take place which could potentially cause delay. This meant that, in order for the funeral to be held the following day, a number of things would need to take place quickly to ensure the family’s wishes were met.

- 3.5. The Muslim Chaplain supported the family throughout the process, both practically and emotionally. He was contacted as he was leaving work at 5pm and spent the evening with the family until 10pm. Although it was not possible to take Mrs N home, family and friends were able to come to her bedside in the hospital and offer prayers.
- 3.6. The first thing the Muslim Chaplain did that evening was to call the Coroner's Office and to confirm that a response from them could be provided first thing the next morning.
- 3.7. One of the nurses involved in Mrs N's care took the initiative to take the Muslim Chaplain to meet the doctor who had seen her in the Emergency Department. The Muslim Chaplain explained to the doctor the importance of a speedy burial and that she would need to speak with the Coroner first thing in the morning to clarify whether or not a post mortem was required.
- 3.8. In order to speak with the Coroner as soon as possible, the doctor came into the hospital three hours prior to her shift the next morning and was able to issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD).
- 3.9. The Coroner's Office liaised with the Bereavement Team who immediately processed the necessary paper work (MCCD) and were then able to secure an appointment with the Registrar for the same morning. The Registrar registered the death and issued the green form required by the Mortuary to release the body to the Funeral Director.
- 3.10. In the meantime, the Muslim Chaplain liaised with the Mortuary to ensure that Mrs N's body was released and contacted the Secretary at the Central Oxford Mosque to arrange for the family to use the washing facilities for the deceased, in preparation for the funeral prayer and burial.
- 3.11. The local Muslim Bereavement Society had secured a burial slot at the Oxford Cemetery for that afternoon and organised the refreshments for family and friends travelling from within and outside Oxford.
- 3.12. In summary, the following people or organisations played a key role in ensuring that the burial took place within the appropriate timeframe and displayed practical compassion which was critical to the family – the Emergency Department doctor, the nurse, the Muslim Chaplain, the Coroner's Office, the Bereavement Office, the local community Bereavement Society, the Funeral Director, the Secretary at the Central Oxford Mosque, the Oxford Cemetery, and the hospital Mortuary.
- 3.13. The family spoke of their gratitude for all of the various staff and departments who came together to make this difficult process as seamless as possible to ensure that their wishes were met and feel they had done their duty.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. This story provides an important opportunity to:
 - understand the importance of a quick burial in order to fulfil Islamic tradition;
 - highlight the many members of Trust staff, departments, partner and community organisations, that came together to ensure the burial took place quickly;
 - show that the Trust has developed new Standard Operating Procedure for the early release of Muslim deceased and that once finalised over the coming weeks, this will further streamline the process for early out of hours release of the Muslim deceased;

- demonstrate the importance of breaking bad news in a sensitive way;
- highlight the comforting impact of demonstrating practical and compassionate care for people who are dealing with sudden loss and grief in the hospital setting;
- provide learning that can also apply to other faith groups e.g. those who are of orthodox Jewish faith.

5. Recommendations

5.1. The Trust Board is asked to:

- Note the report and reflect on the story and the learning.

Catherine Stoddart

Chief Nurse and Deputy CEO

January 2017

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