

Lincolnshire hospitals taking positive action to reduce sepsis

Patients with sepsis are being identified and treated earlier than ever before in our hospitals, thanks to ULHT introducing two innovations this year.

We have recently introduced the role of sepsis nurse to our three main hospitals, as well as placing sepsis boxes in departments where patients are most often identified with having sepsis, so that they can be treated quickly.

Sepsis - also referred to as blood poisoning– is a life threatening condition that arises when the body's response to an infection injures its own tissues and organs. This condition leads to shock, multiple organ failure and death, especially if not recognised early and treated promptly.

Patients with possible sepsis symptoms are required to be screened and a range of actions should be taken to diagnose and treat sepsis within one hour of the patient arriving - called the sepsis 6 care bundle. Any patients diagnosed with sepsis should also be given antibiotics within one hour to treat it.

Action we've taken

We have taken a number of actions to improve our performance and make sure that we are doing the best for our patients and we're delighted that things are moving in the right direction.

Sepsis nurses work closely with the emergency assessment units and A&E departments, as that is where patients need to be identified to ensure they get the treatment they need. This is such an important thing, taking the right action literally saves lives.

As part of the work, sepsis boxes have been introduced to areas where patients are most commonly identified as having sepsis. These bright yellow boxes contain everything nursing staff need to urgently diagnose and treat sepsis, including blood culture packs, equipment for cannulation, fluids and antibiotics.

The results

Since the introduction of the new sepsis nurse role and the sepsis boxes at Lincoln County Hospital, performance on all actions in the sepsis 6 care bundle being completed within an hour has increased from 61% in May 2016 to 100% in May 2017 (as at 15 May).

Performance in treating patients with suspected sepsis with antibiotics within one hour has increased from 61% in May 2016 to 100% in May (as at 15 May).

Next steps

A sepsis nurse started at Pilgrim in the last few weeks, so we believe more improvements will be made across the site in the near future.

We are really pleased with the progress we have made in such a short space of time, and that's thanks to all of our staff who have made massive efforts to ensure we get it right with sepsis. There is still a way to go to ensure we perform well across all of our services, but we've proven we can improve rapidly through a clear focus, great leadership and innovation.