

Using Red to Green to reduce delays in our hospitals and improve patient flow

As an organisation, we have struggled with continuing operational pressures that have seen our hospitals in and out of level three and four escalation status and used escalation beds for many months. Therefore, we have committed to introduce a new way of working called Red to Green to provide safe, quality care that improves the patient's experience and identifies where we can work better.

What is Red to Green?

Red to Green helps to reduce overall bed occupancy and improve patient flow within our hospitals. A red day is when a patient waits for more than 14 hours for an intervention, such as a diagnostic test, therapy or senior clinical review- when, for whatever reason, nothing happens to progress a patient's discharge from hospital. If these delays are avoided, it's a green day.

The launch at Lincoln

Back in February, we launched Red to Green across all wards at Lincoln County Hospital. During the launch week, the Red to Green team worked closely with colleagues from LCHS, LPFT and adult social care to help identify and unblock the things that prevent staff from discharging patients as soon as it is safe to do so.

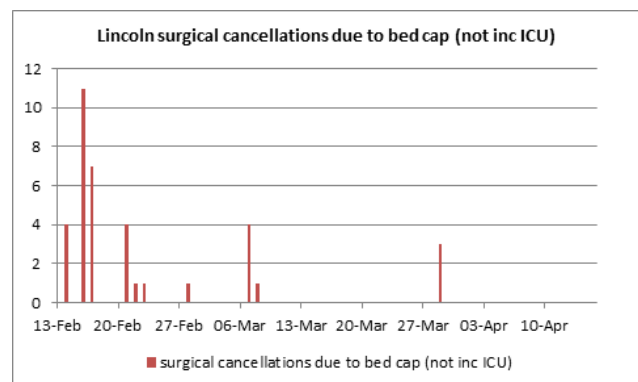
The results

Highlights from the launch week at Lincoln included:

- On Friday 24 February, only 11 patients waited longer than four hours in A&E. Performance was at 93.61%.
- On Friday and across the weekend we did not use the surgical admissions lounge for escalation beds. This meant that we did not cancel any patients waiting for an elective bed due to bed pressures for the first time since before Christmas.
- On Saturday 25 February Lincoln had 76 free beds.
- Following the weekend we had 13 empty beds, with a further six ringfenced, which meant we didn't cancel any elective operations on Monday 27 February.

Since the launch in February, there has been a reduction in bed occupancy and a slight improvement in the A&E performance. There has also been a significant reduction in the number of medical outliers - patients who are placed on wards not best suited to their needs due to a lack of beds (e.g. a medical patient on a surgical ward).

There has also been a significant decrease in the number of elective cancellations due to bed capacity. This is mainly due to the fact we have not needed to open extra beds for some time.



The next steps

This is a new innovation and ULHT is still learning about how to sustain improvements and roll out across the Trust. Learning and building on roll out at Lincoln, Red to Green was launched at Pilgrim on Monday 24 May. This has been embedded within the existing Pride and Joy approach which has been running at the hospital since last year. Grantham is also rolling out Red to Green from the beginning of May.