

THE 'ED ASSEMBLY'

SUPPORTING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND TEAMWORK AT ASHFORD AND ST PETER'S NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

THE ED ASSEMBLY

The Emergency Department (ED) Assembly is a simple method of bringing staff together to facilitate improvement and better team working. It is a platform for effective communication, in which there is no hierarchy and everyone is encouraged to contribute.

The Assembly facilitates time and space for whole team (Doctors, nurses, porters, reception staff and managers, junior and senior staff) to come together. Everyone is invited, not just from the Emergency Department, but from anywhere in the organisation.



The assembly runs to a routine. Every other Wednesday at 11:00am the team come together for just half an hour. The agenda is set by the team in advance and everyone is encouraged to contribute their ideas and items they wish to communicate to others.

Dr Asim Nayeem (left), created the ED Assembly and describes them as a "fantastic communication platform for the whole team".

INCLUSIVE IMPROVEMENT

The ED Assembly provides a unique opportunity for clinical and non-clinical team members to come together and work to improve their daily working practices. For example, through the ED Assembly, our porters and nursing teams were able to discuss the frequent problems they faced with communication and availability at busy times.

A small improvement team was formed to identify ways to improve communication between clinical staff and porters. The team created a porters' station in the main department and introduced an electronic system to request jobs; improving communication and team working in the ED.



The ED Assembly harnesses diversity of roles to deliver inclusive improvement.

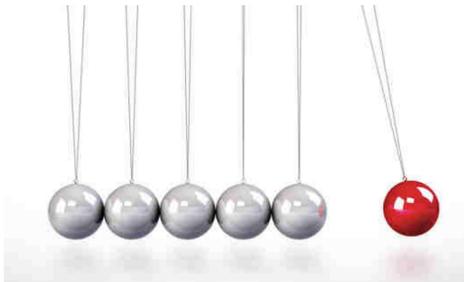


LISTENING INTO ACTION

The ED Assembly has supported many small but effective quality improvement initiatives and the regular communication supports timely feedback on progress.

For example:

- Improving the consistency and attendance at **ED board rounds**; now in place four times a day and attended by the whole team
- Improving the capturing and recording of vital **coding information** in patient notes
- Implementation of an **overdose proforma** to provide essential guidance on the management of patients attending ED with an overdose
- Improving the **prioritisation and timely management** of patients attending ED by simplifying and standardising the allocation of patients to be seen



- Acting on concerns raised by nursing staff, improvements were made to ensure initial **patient investigations** (ECGs/VBGs) completed on arrival **are checked and signed** by doctors immediately post-triage
- Increasing the availability and access to **fracture clinic appointments** for patients during the winter period
- Improving communication and the use of identification cards for patients who are **Nil-by-Mouth**

PATIENT SAFETY AND SEPSIS

Sepsis is recognised as a significant cause of mortality and morbidity in the NHS, with around 32,000 deaths in England attributed to sepsis annually. Of these some estimates suggest 11,000 could have been prevented.

The team worked to embed the use of a patient screening and treatment tool and on the appropriate and timely delivery of the 'Sepsis Six' care bundle.



Through the ED Assembly, Dr Nayeem has worked with the team to achieve improved screening and treatment of patients for sepsis attending the ED; a key quality improvement objective of the organisation.



Over a year the team in ED improved the screening of patients for Sepsis to over 95% and, over the same period, increased the percentage of patients receiving antibiotics within one hour of arriving at ED to 89%.

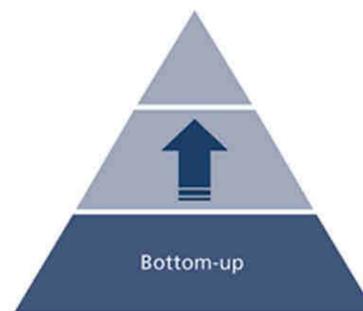
THE BENEFITS OF THE ED ASSEMBLY

At ASPH we aim to empower all staff to identify quality improvement opportunities in their own areas and to empower people to make improvements themselves.

As well as making improvements to individual processes and pathways, the ED Assembly aims to improve the environment for staff and patients alike.

The ED Assembly not only enables staff to come forward with ideas, but also actively encourages staff to work together to make improvements and to develop new skills in doing so.

There is a well-established relationship between staff experience and patient experience. The ED Assembly is one way that the team are improving the teamwork and culture in the department.



Facilitating teamwork, improvement and respect means staff are more likely to raise concerns or ask questions which helps to improve safety.



SAFETY HUDDLES

The Emergency Department is a busy and complex environment so, as part of a drive to improve patient safety and improve communication, the team have introduced 'Safety Huddles' within the Clinical Decision Unit (CDU) and Urgent Care Centre (UCC).



Safety huddles take place at a regular time each day for just a few minutes and they aim to provide a no-fear, safe environment in the daily work of staff. The team members use the huddles to discuss any issues of the day that may affect patient safety, as well as an opportunity to speak up and act on any safety concerns they may have.

GET INVOLVED

If you are interested in getting involved in the ED Assembly, or if you have a topic for discussion, please get in touch with Dr Asim Nayeem.

Alternatively, if you are interested in implementing an Assembly meeting, or safety huddles, for your own team or department and you would like some advice on getting started – just get in touch with anyone in the team using the contact methods here...

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A CULTURE OF CURIOSITY AND CREATIVITY

At Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (ASPH) we are aiming to have a culture of 'curiosity and creativity' that is fair, open and supportive.

One of the ways we are creating this culture is to adopt an approach to quality improvement (QI) that develops capacity and capability for individuals and

ASPH is a caring and compassionate organisation and our approach to QI reflects these strengths and harnesses these by encouraging experimentation and innovation in the pursuit of delivering better care for patients.



SUZANNE RANKIN
Chief Executive

"We are embracing QI, not only because it is the right thing to do, but because it will help us achieve the culture of curiosity and creativity where we all feel empowered and confident in looking for improvements for the benefit of our patients."