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Developing a care committee for Dementia patients in a rehabilitation setting

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Introduction: The traditional patient profile in Clontarf Hospital is changing. There is an increase in geriatric rehabilitation patients and therefore an increase in co morbidities associated with older age, cognitive impairment. These patients have specific needs and it is imperative that these needs are addressed from a hospital wide perspective.

Methodology: A Dementia Care Committee has been established in order to improve the care of patients with cognitive impairment through; staff education, development of care pathways and service improvement. An invite to attend the group was extended to all staff and disciplines. The committee has monthly meetings to provide guidance on the care of the patient with cognitive impairment and to increase awareness at an organisational level of cognitive impairment and its' impact on function.

Results: Areas of intervention/ improvement have been identified and sub groups have been formed in order to address same. These include- Staff Education -development of a Dementia Awareness Training Programme. There is poor awareness of the types of dementia and its' impact on functional abilities and rehabilitation potential in the hospital.

Improving the Physical Environment. The hospital was not designed for this patient population and would benefit from becoming more "dementia friendly". Signposting- sourcing information regarding dementia supports in the locality and directing patients to same. Developing a memory rehabilitation group in conjunction with the OT department.

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