

NHS Ayrshire & Arran



Meeting:	Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Meeting date:	Monday 2 December 2024
Title:	Patient Experience: Gillian's Story – End of Life Care
Responsible Director:	Tim Eltringham, Director, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Report Author:	Laura Harvey, QI Lead, Patient Experience

1. Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- Discussion

This paper relates to:

- Government policy/directive
- Local policy

This aligns to the following NHSScotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

2. Report summary

2.1 Situation

Gillian is a member of staff, who works in public protection.

Gillian reached out to the Patient Experience Team via telephone to share her experience of the care provided to her mum by the staff in the McMillan Ward, Biggart Hospital. Gillian's mum was an in patient there from August 2023 until she died in February this year.

Gillian's story demonstrates the significant difference our staff can make for families whilst they are caring for their loved ones during their last months, weeks or days.

All feedback is important to us and we would like to highlight the compassionate and respectful care provided to Gillian's mum by the staff in the McMillan Ward, which is truly reflective of our Organisational values of Safe, Caring and Respectful.

2.2 Background

Gillian's mum suffered a stroke in 2023, which left her unable to care for herself.

Gillian's mum spent time in the Acute Stroke Ward at University Hospital Crosshouse before being transferred to Buchanan Ward within the Biggart Hospital for rehabilitation. Gillian's mum's had a difficult journey until she was transferred to the McMillan Ward, Biggart Hospital.

However, Gillian would like to focus on the exceptional care that was provided to her beloved mum following her transfer to the McMillan Ward.

All of the staff were fantastic in every way, from the housekeeping staff and porters through to the nurses and doctors. They could not do enough for Gillian, her family, and most importantly her mum.

2.3 Assessment

It is an extremely difficult time when we face the prospect of losing a loved one, and NHS Ayrshire and Arran is committed to ensuring that patients who spend their last days in hospital are provided with respectful and compassionate care.

We recognise that it is equally important to ensure that the needs of our patient's families are met as well in these difficult circumstances and that appropriate support is provided to the families as they come to terms with the deterioration of a loved one.

Gillian's mum was cared for in the McMillan Ward for six months and Gillian's recollection of that time was that;

“Each and every member of staff treated and cared for my mum with care, compassion, dignity and respect, like they would their own mum. They supported my family through very difficult times with humility and friendship. They made us coffee, they held our hands, but most importantly they showed they cared. They allowed us to be together as a family as our mum neared end of life and supported us through our darkest days”.

It's often the small things which can have the greatest impact such as holding a hand, taking time to listen to concerns or even providing emotional support when needed.

We must strive to get this right for every patient who is nearing the end of their life in hospital and also for the patient's family – we don't get a second chance.

2.3.1 Quality/patient care

Gillian's story highlights the importance of not only our approach to patient care, but also how we support patient's families when they are faced with difficult news or facing the death of a loved one.

In this case, Gillian, her family and her mum received excellent person centred care and Gillian is very grateful to all the ward staff and everyone who supported them during this difficult time.

2.3.2 Workforce

This story highlights that every part of our workforce plays a role in the patient and their family's experience

2.3.3 Financial

No financial impact

2.3.4 Risk assessment/management

No identified risk

2.3.5 Equality and diversity, including health inequalities

An impact assessment is not required as the individual sharing the story has given consent and any impact on others will be individual

2.3.6 Other impact

- **Best value**

Demonstrates the importance of staff interactions with patients and their families in helping to ensure the best possible patient experience

- **Safe, Caring & Respectful**

Gillian's story fully complies with our corporate objectives and highlights the importance of applying them to every patient throughout their care journey

2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

This patient story has been shared with the service involved and is available to be shared wider across inpatient services to highlight this family's positive experience.

2.3.8 Route to the meeting

This story has not been heard at any other meetings but has been shared with the Service involved.

2.4 Recommendation

Members are asked to view and discuss this patient story.