



What was our aim?

To reduce the average length of inpatient stay to 25 days before the end of December 2020.

Why is it important to service users and carers?

It is known that patients can deteriorate when in hospital, whether it be due to contraction of infections or their general wellbeing and mental health, from being isolated from their own homes, families and friends.

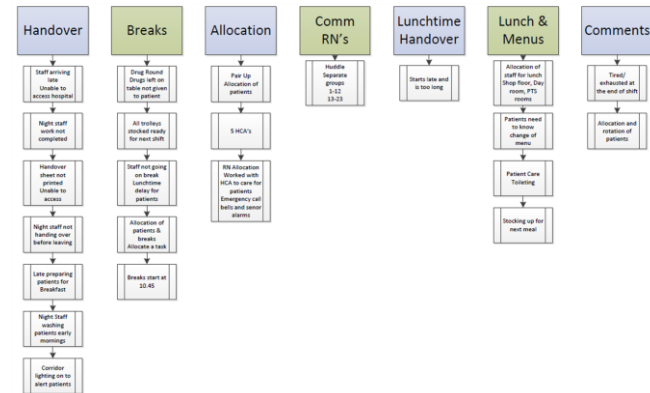
Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) aims to have an average length of stay in community hospitals of 20 days. This target has failed to be reached by Hawkhurst Community Hospital since April 2018. In order to reduce the average length of inpatient stay and move closer to the target, this project has been initiated. The project aims to look at rehabilitation pathways and working together as a multidisciplinary team to understand and drive forward the patients' rehabilitation programme to allow them to be discharged from the hospital quicker.

Ideas and tests of change

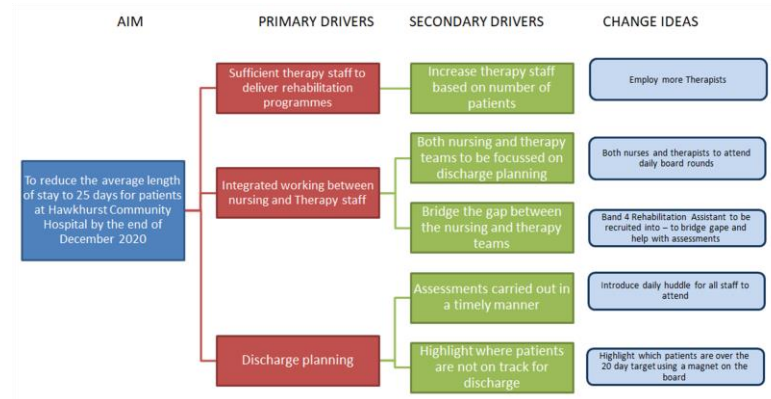
- Staffing levels:**
- review of nursing staffing levels
 - timely assessments from multidisciplinary team members.
- Integrated working:**
- colleagues involved in patient care delivery will have awareness and understanding of the patient's rehabilitation programme and identified goals. Changes include:
 - introduction of new Band 4 rehabilitation assistant role to the therapy team – one-year secondment to bridge the gap between teams- Feb 2020
 - process for identifying therapy staff daily work plan
 - introduction of a healthcare assistant (HCA) to handover/weekly multi-disciplinary team meetings
 - support with board round process – improved structured process.
- Discharge planning:**
- introduction of therapy-based outcome measures
 - introduction of daily team huddles for both nursing and therapy staff to attend Oct 2019
 - review of current working practices on early shift to release time back to staff.

The tools we used

Process Mapping (x3)



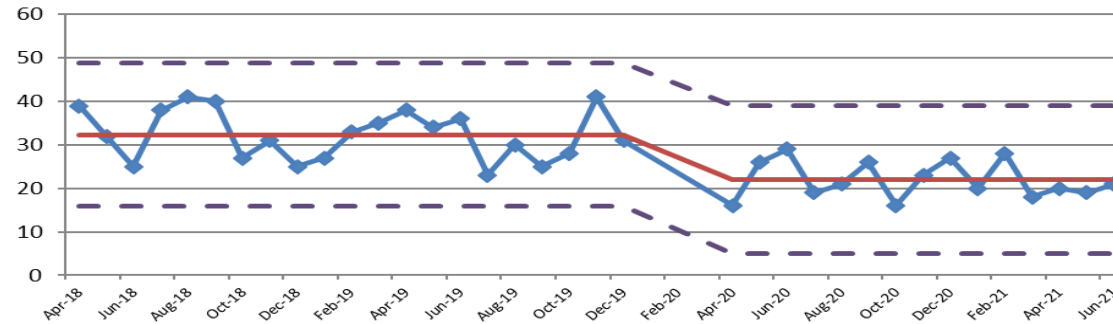
Driver Diagram



Results/How did we do/Anticipated outcome

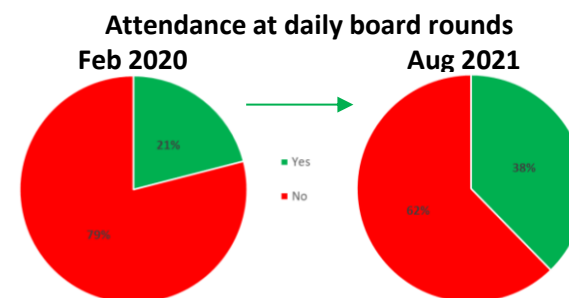
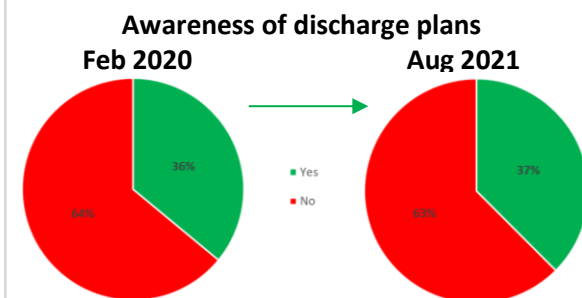
Length of inpatient stay

The below Statistical Process Control (SPC) chart shows the monthly average length of inpatient stay at Hawkhurst Community Hospital. The changes identified to improve inpatient stay were implemented shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic began; therefore, there were extra incentives to be able to reduce inpatient stay. However, many of the changes that were implemented have remained in place and we believe that they have contributed to the efficiency of discharges and therefore average length of inpatient stay, which is still being maintained.



Staff experience

Staff survey results show that prior there has been a small increase in awareness of discharge plans for their patients and an increase in attendance at daily board rounds.



What we learned and what's next

What we learned:

Daily team huddles need to be sustained and include a focus on patient safety and staff well-being.

HCA colleagues should also attend weekly multidisciplinary team meetings and board rounds to share care needs of allocated patients.

Board rounds are now taking a shorter period of time to complete.

More improvements need to be made to further integrate the teams to work cohesively to reduce inpatient stay.

What's next?

Therapy staff to review use of outcome measuring tools and implement accordingly.

Established recruitment to Band 4 rehabilitation assistant role within therapy team to continue with structured work plan, to include delivery of therapy training sessions for both qualified and unqualified colleagues.

Therapy colleagues to focus on working alongside both qualified and unqualified staff to promote the philosophy of delivery of holistic patient care by an integrated multidisciplinary team, resulting in an increased level of understanding of individual patient care management and discharge plans.