

PRESS RELEASE – June 26TH, 2018

Recognition for South Tyneside Hospital's support for dementia campaign



South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust has signed up to a national campaign to ensure families and carers are involved more in the care of loved ones with dementia.

Two elderly care wards at South Tyneside District Hospital which are piloting extended visiting have received John's Campaign certificates. John's Campaign is dedicated to promoting the right of carers to stay with people with dementia when they are in hospital. South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's partner, City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, is also a John's Campaign supporter.

As part of the extended visiting times pilot, carers of patients on wards 2 and 19 at South Tyneside Hospital are being encouraged to speak to staff about arranging to visit at times which suit them to sit with their loved ones and help them with all-important tasks such as eating and drinking. In some cases, they can stay overnight if they wish. Feedback from carers and staff is being monitored with a view to introducing more relaxed visiting on South Tyneside and Sunderland hospital wards.

Deputy Director of Nursing Julie McDonald said: “Our Trusts are very proud to be John’s Campaign supporters, which demonstrates our commitment to caring and supporting people with dementia in every way we can.

“A stay in hospital can be a confusing, even frightening, experience, particularly for dementia patients who rely heavily on the carers around them - including family members, friends and neighbours - whom they trust, and who help them to live their lives. Without them, they can feel abandoned. Our staff are experts in healthcare but it is the carers who are experts in the individual, personal needs of their loved ones. Making it easier for them to have as much access as possible to support the patient’s personal wellbeing throughout a hospital stay can make medical treatment more effective, leading to improved outcomes.

“There is already positive evidence from the extended visiting pilot at South Tyneside in relation to improving patients’ nutrition and hydration and patients engaging more with nursing and medical staff. We are also very interested to see if it makes a difference in terms of reducing falls of which people with dementia are at greater risk.”

Ends

Notes to editors

- John’s Campaign applies to all hospital settings; acute, community and mental health. It was founded in 2014 in the belief that carers should not just be allowed but should be welcomed and that a collaboration between the patients and all

connected with them is crucial to their health and wellbeing. Over 1,000 organisations have pledged support.

Photo caption: Deputy Director of Nursing Julie McDonald, left, presenting John's Campaign certificates to senior housekeeper Denise Lincoln, left, and ward manager Faye Wright from wards 19 and 2 at South Tyneside District Hospital

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