

PAPER
To be Tabled.

**Report to the Meeting of the
Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Board of Directors**

**30th March 2011
Eliminating Mixed Sex Accommodation**

1) Introduction

Eliminating mixed sex accommodation has been a high priority within the NHS based on feedback from patients . NHS providers are required to make an annual declaration of compliance with Department of Health national guidance this was revised again in November 2010.

2) Declaration

The Board is asked to consider and approve the annual declaration of compliance for eliminating mixed sex accommodation in our Mental Health wards as outlined in the operating framework 2011. The declaration follows a national template as advised by the Department of Health. The declaration is required to be published on the Trust website by the 1st April 2011.

The same sex guidelines were considerably strengthened by the CNO letter in November 2010

The main changes include:

- Financial penalties for sleeping breaches from April 2011
- Men and Women should not have to pass alongside the bedrooms/bays of the opposite gender to reach a bathroom or toilet

Lack of women only day rooms

This system for reporting breaches applies to the majority of healthcare settings including acute care, intermediate and continuing care and mental health

inpatient environments. Clear criteria have to be applied for any exceptions.

OBMH declared full compliance in its declaration in 2010. 24 out of our 26 wards remain fully compliant with the revised standards.

Two wards at the John Hamden Unit are currently non compliant. It is envisaged they will achieve full compliance following a small works programme to improve signage and zoning of bedrooms into single gender areas. This is expected to be in place by Q2.

3) The Board is requested to approve the declaration set out in Appendix 1

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1. *A risk assessment has been undertaken around the legal issues that this paper presents and there are no issues that need to be referred to the Trust Solicitors.*
2. *This paper provides assurance and evidence against the Care Quality Commission Outcome: 4 and 7*

Declaration on Eliminating Mixed Sex Accommodation

We are pleased to confirm that we have virtually eliminated mixed sex accommodation in Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

Compliance Statement

Every patient has the right to receive high quality care that is safe, effective and respects their privacy and dignity. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust is committed to providing every patient with same sex accommodation, because it helps to safeguard their privacy and dignity when they are often at their most vulnerable.

We are pleased to confirm that mixed sex accommodation has been virtually eliminated in our trust. The majority of patients who are admitted to our hospitals will be accommodated in single occupancy rooms. The few patients who are accommodated in rooms with more than one occupant will only share the room where they sleep with members of the same sex, and same sex toilets and bathrooms will be close to their bed area.

Oxford Health is currently unable to confirm full compliance with the Government's requirement to eliminate mixed-sex accommodation in relation to bathroom access.

We have same-sex toilets and bathrooms close to bed areas in all of our wards. 24 of our 26 wards are fully compliant, however there are two wards for older people in Buckinghamshire based at the John Hampden Unit, Stoke Mandeville which have designated bathroom and day rooms however the zoning of bedrooms into single gender areas requires some further minor works and clearer signage to become compliant.

We expect to be able to confirm full compliance by June 2011.

Sharing with members of the opposite sex will only happen when patients actively choose to share for example in the case of a married couple in an older adult service, in this case it would also need to be deemed as clinically appropriate for the couple to share.

If our care should fall short of the required standard, we will report it. We will also set up an audit mechanism to make sure that we do not misclassify any of our reports. We will publish the results of that audit on an annual basis and the results will be available on the Trust website.

Supporting detail:

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

We will be starting a major rebuild of the Highfield Adolescent Unit, which will have 18 beds and be fully disability and same sex accommodation compliant. This is due for completion in October 2011. In the meantime, the existing building has segregated boys and girls bedrooms and separate bathing facilities. There is scope to offer separate living areas if necessary. Our Adolescent unit in Swindon is subject to

building works and application of the national standards for compliance in this unit has been agreed with the commissioners.

Eating Disorders

We have two eating disorder units; in Oxford and Marlborough (Wilts). Cotswold House Marlborough has 12 en-suite rooms and is DSSA compliant. Cotswold House Oxford has 14 single bedrooms but common bathing facilities. As 85% of the patients are female, single sex compliance is not normally a problem. However, if a male needs admission for an eating disorder they will be treated in Cotswold House Marlborough.

Adult and Older Adult Oxfordshire

All Adult Acute wards and two of the three older adult wards are single sex. The remaining older adult ward serves the North of the country and for logistical reasons to deliver care closer to home it remains mixed sex. The North Unit is fully compliant with the criteria for same sex accommodation.

Adult and Older Adult Buckinghamshire

The Adult Acute wards are single sex. The Adult Rehabilitation ward achieves single sex compliance through gender specific corridors, and en suite rooms. Older adult wards are required to re-designate corridors and clearly label bathrooms and toilets as single sex in order to achieve compliance.

Forensic

All forensic units are fully compliant with the criteria for same sex accommodation, either as single sex units or through provision of gender specific bedrooms and bathrooms.

What does this mean for patients?

Other than in the circumstances set out above, patients admitted to Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust can expect to find the following:

Same sex accommodation means:

- The room where your bed is will usually be a single room. If you are in a shared room, it will only have patients of the same sex as you.
- Your toilet and bathroom will be just for your gender, and will be close to your bed area.

It is possible that there will be both men and women patients on the ward, but they will not share your sleeping area. You may have to cross a ward corridor to reach your bathroom, but you will not have to walk through opposite-sex areas.

You may share some communal space, such as day rooms or dining rooms, and it is very likely that you will see both men and women patients as you move around the hospital.

It is probable that visitors of the opposite gender will come into the room where your bed is, and this may include patients visiting each other.

It is almost certain that both male and female nurses, doctors and other staff will come into your bed area.

If you need help to use the toilet or take a bath (e.g. you need a hoist or special bath) then you may be taken into a “unisex” bathroom used by both men and women, but a member of staff will be with you, and other patients will not be in the bathroom at the same time.

The NHS will not turn patients away just because a “right-sex” bed is not immediately available.

What are our plans for the future?

We have an ambitious programme to modernise and develop all of our in-patient accommodation across the Trust. Progress is already underway to deliver new wards for Buckinghamshire and also the regional adolescent unit sited in Oxford.

How will we measure Success?

We are employing a patient questionnaire for all in-patient areas to gather views from patients on the quality of their in-patient experience which will include how well we are delivering single sex accommodation. We will audit our provision on an annual basis and publish the results on our website.

What do I do if I think I am in mixed sex accommodation?

We want to know about your experiences. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Tel: 01865 738563 (Oxfordshire Services)
01296 565529 (Buckinghamshire Services)

27 March 2011