



Stories of What Matters to You

Rose's Story

Rose was a lady with advanced dementia, she had very little communication and had been admitted following a fall at home, and she then had a further fall in hospital and sustained a fractured neck of femur. She was admitted to the orthopaedic ward for rehabilitation. She was extremely distressed and would frequently attempt to get out of bed and try to mobilise on her own. She had numerous falls in the ward and we eventually had to have a 1:1 nurse in place just to keep her safe. There were times when she would be so distressed that she would not allow staff to carry out personal hygiene and would refuse to eat or drink. We asked her next of kin, her nieces, to complete a "What matters to You?" and found out the following;

- She had never been married
- Her religion was very important to her
- They had never seen her without her rosary beads

When we looked around her bed space we noticed that the nurses would tidy her bed space and put her rosary beads away in her drawer for safe keeping. After we displayed "What's Matters to You" above her bed", the nurses always made sure she had her rosary beads with her at all times. When she was particularly distressed one of the support workers with sit with her and say the Rosary with her. We noticed that she gradually stopped trying to mobilise on her own and we were able to reduce her 1:1 nursing.

Davey's Story.

Davey was admitted with pneumonia and he was able to complete a "What Matters to You" which was placed above his bed. His condition deteriorated and medical staff placed him on an end of life pathway. His family asked the nurse manager if he they could add to his "What Matters to You". All of the family added their memories of him, his son, daughter and even his 10 year old granddaughter. As they were sitting with him they would talk with him and amongst themselves about what they had written and it brought them comfort in his final days. Following his death the family asked if they could have the poster. At his funeral the minister used the What Matters to You as his eulogy.

Barbara's Story

Barbara was a 78 year old lady who had been admitted falling a fall at home. Staff knew a lot about her; she lived alone, had carers come to her home 4 times a day, mobilised with a zimmer frame, required therapy staff to carry out a home visit prior to discharge. She had become very withdrawn and was not complying with therapy. She told staff she had a good life but “was done”. Her Consultant was considering commence a small dose of an antidepressant and staff were beginning to think she would not be able to return home and were considering nursing home care. The nurse manager asked her if she would like to take part in “What Matters to You” and what we found out about her really blew us away.

- She had lived in Rio de Janeiro for 42 years
- She spoke fluent Portuguese
- She had been in the women’s air force
- She had an MBE

With this information displayed above her bed everyone who came into the room, doctors, nurses, cleaners began to talk to her about her life. She would light up when she was talking about it and started to work with the therapists and told staff she wanted to go home. She was eventually discharged to her own home.

Agnes’s Story

Agnes is an 82 year old lady with Dementia. She was diagnosed 2 years ago and went to live with one of her 4 daughters. She has a large extended family of grand children, great grandchildren nieces and nephews. Following her diagnosis of dementia, she had made her daughters promise not to put her in a nursing home. In November 2014, she was coming downstairs when she missed the last step and fell. She suffered a fractured tibia and fibula and had a below knee cast put on and as she was to be non bearing was admitted to orthopaedics. Following admission she was very distressed. This was the first time she had been in hospital since her diagnosis. She would try and mobilise and climb out of bed, and in order to manage her distress the staff would give her PRN sedation. They recognised she was becoming more distressed after her visitors left, so started to administer her night sedation at 5 pm in the hope that she would be asleep when her visitors left. We were asked by one of her nieces to admit her to our specialist Dementia ward. We worked with the family to do a “What Matters to You” and we were able to work out that she was more distressed when Helen visited in the evening. So we were able to request that Helen came early in the day and other members of the family visited in the evening. When she was very distressed the nurses were able to talk to her about her family and growing up and how the area had changed. Agnes was discharged home in February 2015.