

Transcript

Interview notes, Oak Ward:

"There were always lots of staff about and you never knew who they were or what their jobs were. By and large they were very good. His wife always checked the charts to see what was happening with his mother. Was her blood pressure up or down? How was her temperature, and so on. But the nurse stopped filling it in, and they wondered because now they had no idea what was going on with his mother. They were 'left at a loss'.

So his wife asked the doctor, who said that it wasn't necessary to keep filling in these charts, but they thought this was an excuse, he was just sticking up for his colleagues. When his mother was first admitted they did lots of checks regularly and recorded them on the charts, but then they stopped checking for blood pressure, temperature and so on, also the eating and drinking chart stopped."

Patient's daughter, Ash Ward:

"Family all arrived, she's in an open ward, it's visiting time. We're just sitting there, you know, not trying to let on to other people, because it's not nice for other people. In the end, went and asked the nurse if we could draw the curtains.

She says, 'Yeah, course you can....' Nobody came to see her after that. Nobody came to see if we was okay... And, and then, my mum died within the hour... we pressed the buzzer for the nurse to come. No one came. So in the end, I went out and I told them."

Observation notes, Oak Ward:

"The patient's wife is sitting quietly beside him, leaning over him. He is covered by a sheet and makes small movements with his legs. The staff nurse pulls the side curtains by the bed, so that the patient and his wife have some privacy. The staff nurse asks, 'Did you get a message to your son?' The patient's wife answers 'Yes', and then the staff nurse offers her a cup of tea or coffee. The wife replies, 'Yes please' to a cup of tea and says that she takes it just with milk. The staff nurse goes away, leaving the patient and his wife in a semblance of personal, private space.

There was nothing particularly unusual in this exchange: a couple of questions and the offer of tea. But I thought the staff nurse drawing the side curtains and then the offer of tea were a way of taking care of this patient's wife."

Observation notes, Oak Ward:

"The nurse goes over to the patient and her family, 'Do you want me to close the curtains so you can get some privacy?' The daughter thinks for a moment and nods, yes. She is sitting still and quiet, with her hands in her lap. The nurse pulls the curtains round the bed, saying 'I'm just out here if you need anything'."