

L2AU

A University Teaching Trust

The Agnes Unit
400 Anstey Lane
Leicester
LE7 7GL

Tel: 0116 295 4007
www.leicspart.nhs.uk

Dear Carer

I would like to welcome you to The Agnes Unit.

As a carer of someone with a learning disability, you will be acutely aware of the impact any additional illness that affects behaviour has not only on the life of the person you care for, but your own.

The work you do as a carer is greatly appreciated and valued. By working together, we can maximise opportunities to benefit the person we are caring for.

I would like to take this opportunity to explain what the unit does and how we aim to involve you as much as we can.

The Agnes Unit is an inpatient service for adults with learning disabilities providing care for individuals whose mental health, behaviour and risk cannot be supported in the community. The unit is made up of four individual areas (pods), each with four en-suite bedrooms, two bathrooms, a lounge, dining room, kitchen and office as well as a courtyard and access to a very large garden. Each pod offers maximum opportunities for single sex areas. The unit has a therapy suite offering daily activities from 08:00- 20:00 and at the weekend is led by a dedicated team including O.T and therapeutic link workers.

We provide a person-centred approach to enable and empower our patients, offering a multidisciplinary team within one building.

We have eight beds for patients who need shorter-term admission for assessment and treatment which can either be planned or in response to emergency situations that may arise in the community. We also have eight longer stay beds. The aim of the longer stay beds is to support patients who require a step down approach to their care, following admissions from secure units or prison or who have very complex challenging behaviours requiring longer term treatment.

Patients will be allocated a named nurse who will work with them to complete a full assessment of their needs and develop care plans to support this, which will be regularly reviewed and evaluated.

Patients and carers will be invited to meetings in line with the Care Programme Approach (CPA) process as will all the members of their care team both inpatient and in the community. To ensure continuity, the role of the CPA co-ordinator will continue to be carried out by the patient's community professional. Patients will be given regular feedback from meetings and given the opportunity for advocacy services, tribunals, second opinion doctors and their rights to appeal.

There is an identified 'shift leader' on every shift who will act as the carer link person. You will find out who this is on the staff status board outside reception.

We value the work you do as a carer and appreciate the challenges this can make on your time, independence and emotional wellbeing. We appreciate your need for information and would like to make you aware of the steps we are taking to enhance your opportunities to be involved.

As part of our work to support and involve the primary (main) carer, we promise to:

- Make contact with you within 72 hours of admission.
- Give you a carers pack/ welcome pack about the unit and practical advice about the patient's stay/admission.
- Work with you to make sure the communication passport for is up-to-date for the person you care for
- Provide information via our carers board which can be viewed during your visits to the unit. This will carry information about:
 - our carers lead – please speak to the matron (or their deputy in their absence) if you have any questions or concerns or wish to make us aware of anything about the person you care for
 - the carers forum which meets twice a year
 - a range of relevant support services/agencies including advocacy

To strengthen our commitment to support carers we will:

- provide further training for our staff to make them more 'carer aware'
- Introduce an easy read consent form which allows patients who have capacity to specify exactly what information (if any) we can disclose to their named carer. A sample of this form is included in the carers information pack. We hope that by implementing this form, it will be easier for the patient to decide if and what information we can disclose to you to help you in your caring role. Please note that we are still bound by our legal duty to respect patient confidentiality unless the patient expressly gives us permission to disclose information to you.

Hopefully, the carers pack, together with the carers board will provide you with most of the information you need, but please don't hesitate to contact me if you are unsure of anything or need any further information.

Rebecca Mitchell and Judith Pither

Ward Matron