

Regular care checks

The Trust has introduced a system of regular care checks. These were originally designed to improve care of the elderly, and are now being rolled out across the Trust so that all patients can benefit.

These care checks, sometimes called hourly care rounds, have been introduced to ensure every patient has the help they need and regular assistance from the nursing staff. They can reduce the risk of patients falling while trying to get something out of their reach, or suffering unnecessary pain or anxiety.

The care checks are performed by the nurse or health care assistant making rounds. After they have completed any scheduled tasks, such as changing a dressing or giving medications, they ask each patient about any help they may need, such as:

- Is the buzzer in the right place for you?
- Can you reach your drink?
- Do you need any help with eating or drinking?
- Do you need help to go to the toilet?
- Do you need any pain relief?
- Are you comfortable?
- Do you have any questions you would like to ask?

At the start of the shift, the nurse discusses with each patient the purpose of these care checks and agrees the frequency of the round either hourly or two hourly for that day. They also agree whether the patient will be woken if asleep. This is then recorded. If the patient is unable to make a decision the frequency is ALWAYS hourly.

This more formal approach to ward rounds enables the Trust to document any responses from patients and any care they have received. Patients know they can expect this regular contact from staff and staff can be reassured that patients' needs are being met.

