

Recent Study Reveals UK Patients Treated in Non-Clinical Areas

The trade journal Nursing Times surveyed over 900 nurses within the UK National Health System (NHS) after being approached about the issue. The survey not only has highlighted this insufficient care throughout the NHS, but also has demonstrated that it is a fairly widespread practice.

With 63 percent of the nurses attesting to patients being treated in areas not designed for clinical care, 60 percent said it has happened more than once a week, from 12 hours to days at a time. The majority is also in agreement that the practice has been taking place in their respective trusts for over a year.

With specific reports of patients being placed in mop cupboards and storerooms, these risks to patient privacy, dignity and safety have been blamed on overcapacity in the trusts. Nurses said that extra beds placed in wards put the patients at risk with not enough room for mobility for services such as a crash trolley. Other patients placed in rooms not designated for care were without call bells, water and emergency equipment.

The survey further shows that 83 percent of the nurses have reported such concerns to their supervisors, but only four percent of those seeing change in practice. The Department of Health has encouraged nurses to place such concerns in writing if needed.

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