

Read HSMC's latest policy paper on poor nursing care

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[Time to care? Responding to concerns about poor nursing care \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/social-policy/departments/health-services-management-centre/news/2011/12/nursing-reform-hsmc-policy-paper.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/social-policy/departments/health-services-management-centre/news/2011/12/nursing-reform-hsmc-policy-paper.aspx) by Yvonne Sawbridge and Alistair Hewiston

Ward sisters/Charge nurses need to be given a more prominent leadership role in hospitals if standards of acute nursing care are to be improved according to a new paper from the University of Birmingham's leading health policy unit the Health Services Management Centre.

This paper makes a series of recommendations to support nurses working in acute hospital care to deliver a better service for patients. As well as recommendations focussed on leadership the paper also identifies the need for a systematic approach to supporting nurses with the emotional stress of caring work and a recognised training programme for healthcare support workers.

The seven core recommendations are:

Environment of care

1. Ward sisters/Charge nurses need to be given a more prominent leadership role in hospitals if standards of acute nursing care are to be improved according to a new paper from the University of Birmingham's leading health policy unit the Health Services Management Centre
2. Senior Nurse leaders need to be freed from the competing demands placed upon their time to enable them to fulfil the prime role of leading clinical nursing
3. Where new ward designs limit the visibility of nurses, systems of 'intentional rounding' should be introduced to ensure organisational processes enable nurse patient contact to be maintained.
4. Clinical dashboards that measure nursing care indicators, which can then be reported to the Board, are an important tool which should be introduced into every acute hospital trust

Education and development

5. Student nurses need to feel a greater sense of belonging to the nursing profession rather than being identified primarily as a university student.
6. Healthcare support workers would benefit from a recognised training programme in every organisation, underpinned by a probationary period for all new starters.

Emotional Labour of Nursing

7. Boards should recognise the emotional labour of nursing and establish a systematic approach to supporting nurses. This should be evaluated to assess its impact on nurses as carers and the subsequent outcome for patients.