# Press Release | 26 January 2024

**Joint replacement patients get home quicker thanks to fast-track service and great teamwork**

Selected patients who have had elective hip and knee replacement surgery are giving top ratings to a service that gets them home from hospital within 24 hours.

So far more than 150 people have benefitted from the fast-track procedure at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King’s Lynn which get patients moving their new joints quicker and enables a supported discharge to allow people recover in the comfort of their own home.

Typically, hip and knee surgery patients spend between three to five days in hospital.

Now at The QEH, if they are assessed as suitable candidates, these patients receive additional outpatient support prior to their operation in the physio ‘joint schools’. This helps to ensure that they are fully prepared and aid a smooth recovery.

Patient feedback has been excellent - with an average 9/10 score. Comments include: “fantastic service”, “wonderful to be at home so soon” and “couldn’t have done anything better”.

This new scheme is not only aiding patient recovery but importantly frees up bed space for more patients as well as more staff time to focus on delivering care.

This improvement programme is thanks to several teams across the Trust pulling together and changing traditional working practices.

Anaesthetics Consultant, Daniel Stolady, Orthopaedic Specialist Nurse, Sally Boswell and Orthopaedic Specialist Physiotherapist, Lydia Byrne has been instrumental in implementing this improvement for elective patients. Daniel said: “We know patients recover better at home, and for many who have undergone this surgery being able to move around early helps their recovery.

“We carefully select patients who are suitable for the new programme to ensure families are ready for them to return home and that they know what to do if they are at all concerned about their recovery. Our team is in regular contact to check on their progress and wellbeing.

“The response from patients and their families has been fantastic, which is just what we wanted to hear and has really pushed the team to drive this project forward.

“This is a real multi-team success and has been part of a meticulous planning process across lots of different hospital departments; from our anaesthetists, surgeons and theatre team, to our radiographers, physiotherapists and ward staff.

“We have all had to embrace new ways of working together after the operation, changing shift patterns to ensure we can support patients to get out of bed on the same day of their operation, as well as ensuring all our paperwork and medication is ready to collect so we send people home prepared and comfortable to move forward with their recovery.”

As a result of this new programme The QEH has seen an impressive drop in the average length of stay for these elective patients - down to 1.2 days for knee replacements and 2.1 for hip replacements in October.

Now half of patients in for elective surgery are discharged within 24 hours so they can recover at home, with a team making regular checks on their progress post operation.

Dr Rebecca Martin, Medical Director, commented: “This is a fantastic example of our dedicated teams pulling together to make improvements for our patients. We’re receiving excellent feedback from those undergoing this surgery, so I’d like to say a big thank you to everyone involved for working so hard to make this positive change.”

**Ends**

**Notes to editors**

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