

# The Patient Encounter Leadership Programme

## About us:

- **Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust** was created on 1st October 2014 by the acquisition of Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust by Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, the first ever merger of two Foundation Trusts. It runs Heatherwood Hospital in Ascot, Wexham Park Hospital near Slough, Berkshire, England, and Frimley Park Hospital in Frimley, Surrey. It has 4948 full time equivalent staff.
- **The Patient Trust** was launched in 2014 by Howard Kennedy with the purpose of supporting a consistent, quality experience for patients facing serious illness by raising awareness, providing practical support and working in partnership with doctors and patients. The launch of the Trust followed Howard's diagnosis with terminal cancer in June 2013.

## The doctor/patient encounter

“(It is) perhaps unique in that the exchange and processing of emotionally laden information must often occur rapidly and between two people who may be near strangers to one another.” (Burcher, 2011)

## The impact of empathy in the encounter

“Physician empathy seems to improve physical and psychosocial health outcomes.”

Derksen, Bensing and Lagro-Janssen (2012)

“General empathy in a meaningful patient-clinician relationship appears to improve patient’s well-being, both emotionally, and physically.” Kelley, Kraft-Todd, Schapira, Kassowsky and Riess’s (2014)

**About the programme:**

- Inspired by the experiences of Howard Kennedy, both as a patient as a leading figure in educational reform. Howard developed a close working partnership with Claire Marshall, Head of Patient Experience, to engage with clinicians and launch the programme
- The programme is jointly sponsored by Frimley Health Foundation Trust and The Patient Trust and was designed and delivered by the consultancy, the decision point
- The initial pilot programme in 2014/5 ran with consultants at Wexham and Heatherwood Foundation Trust
- Following the success of the pilot, the programme has been commissioned by Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust which acquired Wexham and Heatherwood Foundation Trust in 2015

## Outline of the programme:

- Four day residential programme with a focus on experiential learning
- Extensive feedback on performance generated from colleagues and patients
- Participant psychometric assessments
- On-going coaching support
- Action Learning Sets

### *All focused on supporting:*

The ability for the clinician to effectively lead the patient encounter, balancing empathy and objective reasoning in the doctor-patient relationship

the patient trust

Frimley Health   
NHS Foundation Trust



### Stop and Reflect Exercise:

What accomplishment has given you the greatest professional **pride** in the past 12 months?

Take yourself back to that achievement. How did it **feel**?

Now consider, what were the **biggest** factors behind your success? You might like to jot these down...

Reviewing that list, is there **one** thing you'd like to do more of? That would enable you to have more moments of success?

**Share** your thoughts with a colleague

**Hold** that one thought – consider it on the way home, reflect on it overnight and tomorrow write down what you intend to do to 'tune it up'

*(This exercise provides a flavour of the PEL Programme)*

## Participant Feedback:

- “The off-site gave me the opportunity to reflect on my work and attitudes towards my patients in comparison to what my colleagues do. I learnt from their experiences of patients care and management. I was able to draw inspirations from my colleagues on how best to improve the doctor patient encounter considering our very different specialities.”
- “Following the PEL programme I have been able to take a greater understanding of alternative drivers and behaviours to my interactions with patients and colleagues.”
- “Believing in my own capabilities gives me the power to focus more positively on the challenges that present with very sick angry patients and relatives - who have just been diagnosed - and the challenges from non-co-operating colleagues and cultural differences. I am now more able to control my initial responses and give a more balanced reflection which allows for sustained communication channels which in turn is more likely to impact positively on my working day”
- “I will concentrate on making the patient feel at ease and including the patient in the decision process and wrap up at the end. I will be more open with colleagues to gain their confidence.”

## Participant Feedback

- “I was enlightened by all that we learnt and aim to put it into daily practice.”
- “I felt privileged to have been given the opportunity to join the group and gained invaluable experience. Programmes such as this provide dramatic insights into everybody's working practices and provide a fantastic opportunity to tackle difficult cultural changes that are required within an organisation to allow it to flourish. I do hope that other colleagues of mine are given this opportunity in the future.”
- “Since the sessions I have already seen a vast change in my working and personal life. as the 2 are inter-dependant - I feel empowered to make sensible and positive changes which impact widely - like the ripples on a pond”
- “This programme lifted my mood and made me realise that I am working at suboptimal performance. Gave me an insight into behaviours which I had not noticed. Howard Kennedy's very sincere efforts of making a difference through this programme made the experience very special. Thanks for a great programme.”

**Find out more:**

Visit the Patient Trust website: [www.thepatienttrust.co.uk](http://www.thepatienttrust.co.uk)

Visit the Hospital website: <https://www.fhft.nhs.uk>

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