

Implementing a Seven Day Service within Acute Paediatric Occupational Therapy

A review of the benefits and challenges

Kimberley Rosher, Sadie Greenway, Bethan Evans
Paediatric Occupational Therapy, Southampton Children's Hospital

Introduction

University Hospital Southampton is a Level 2a tertiary centre which provides high quality specialist trauma care and rehabilitation across the region. It is a designated major trauma centre, and is one of only two places in the south of England to offer major trauma care provision.

In September 2015 the Paediatric Occupational Therapy (OT) team at Southampton Children's hospital made the transition to deliver a consistent, high quality service, seven days a week.

This change happened following the publication of *NHS services open seven days a week: Every day counts (NHS Improving Quality, 2013)* and with the contribution of *NHS Services, Open Seven Days a Week Forum: Summary of initial findings (2013)*. There is a strong body of evidence linking reduced level of service provision at the weekend and poor outcomes for patients.

Current Weekend Service Provision

The weekend service provides interventions to both orthopaedic and neuro-rehabilitation patients. The service operates Saturday 9am -1pm and Sunday 9am-12.30pm.

Weekend competencies are completed prior to starting on the weekend rota and staff are encouraged to complete time working in both areas prior to the weekend. A competency review is undertaken yearly.

Aims: To review the effectiveness of the seven day service across Orthopaedics and Neuro-rehabilitation and consider the benefits and challenges that impact the trust, the patients and the Occupational Therapists.

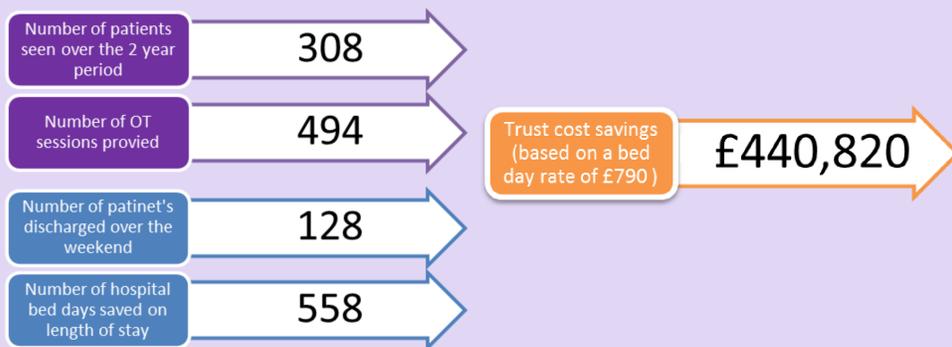
Orthopaedics

Method

Anonymised data was obtained and analysed over a period of 2 years between April 2016 to April 2018, to identify the impact of the seven day service with a focus on weekend discharges and the influence on reducing length of stay.

Results

Weekend data (April 2016– April 2018)



Benefits

- Facilitates safe weekend discharges
- Length of stay decreased
- OT specific interventions at weekends
- Optimising surgery regardless of operation day
- Cost savings relating to reduced length of stay
- Reduced risk of patients developing infections

Challenges

- Variable skill mix of OT staff
- Decreased staffing levels during weekdays
- Unable to provide full day OT weekend service
- Increased weekend workload of other professionals due to discharges
- Increased demand for hospital transport over weekends

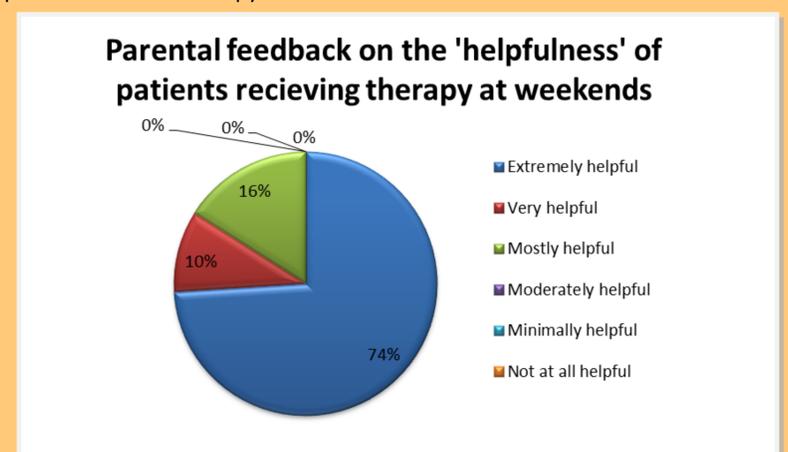
Neuro-rehabilitation

Method

Discharge questionnaires were given to all parents/ guardians of patients that had an admission and discharge date between April 2016 to April 2018. Anonymised qualitative data was obtained.

Results

- 100% of patients received therapy at weekends



Benefits

- Timely response to new referrals
- Supports families accessing weekend leave
- Continuity of rehabilitation
- Daily OT advice and support available
- Access to quieter environment at weekends
- Less interruptions to OT sessions at weekends

Challenges

- Variable skill mix of OT staff
- Decreased staff levels during weekdays
- Unable to provide full day OT weekend service
- Sessions can interfere with family time
- Patients can be treated by unfamiliar OT's

"We noticed a difference when weekend rehab stopped in terms of less speedy recovery" -Parent feedback

Occupational Therapy Staff

Method

Questionnaires were provided to all Paediatric Occupational Therapy staff to capture individual views on the benefits and challenges of working within a seven day service, with a focus on weekend working.

Results

- 100% of staff completed weekend competencies
- On average staff felt 65% confident working over a weekend
- Confidence of staff ranged from 36% to 95%
- 50% of staff had been involved in discharges over weekends
- 100% of staff felt they made a positive impact on patient experiences
- 100% of staff felt supported by other professionals over the weekend

Benefits

- Maintains competency level in both areas
- Provides opportunities to work with different professionals with mix of skills
- Provides skills to cross cover when required
- Reduces stress and concerns of high risk patients and deterioration
- Reduces caseload demands on Monday's and Friday's
- Pay enhancement
- Provides opportunity to build strong rapport with patients and relatives

Challenges

- Time constraints to maintain competencies
- Time constraints over weekends covering both orthopaedics and neuro-rehabilitation
- Demand is above capacity
- Increased anxieties of staff working in alternative areas
- Difficulties to prioritise weekend caseload due to differences in orthopaedic and neuro-rehabilitation services

Achievements

- A consistent high quality service being maintained across 7 days
 - Increased clinical time/productivity
- Early co-ordinated orthopaedic discharges and reduced length of stay
 - Evidence which demonstrates achievements in service delivery

Recommendations for service development

- To further explore options to provide a separate CAMH's OT weekend service
- To undertake an audit to determine whether working additional hours over the weekend would be of benefit to the Trust
 - To revise current weekend competency documents in line with national consensus