**Patient Satisfaction and Staff Awareness of Postoperative Pain Management**

**Background.** A pain free comfortable patient is what we all desire to achieve in our anaesthetic practice and this is closely linked to the staff involved in taking care of the patients after their surgery on the wards. The Department of Health’s Essence of Care guidelines suggest working with patients and carers to seek their views, agree a realistic pain management plan and ensure that the plan is understood by all those involved. Our trust has published guidelines for ‘Perioperative Analgesia for Enhanced Recovery of Patients undergoing Major Gynaecological Surgery’. These guidelines provide a detailed insight in managing pain in the perioperative period on the basis of current evidence.

**Aim and Objectives.** To look into patient’s satisfaction with their postoperative pain management, to survey nurses about their knowledge of Trust’s perioperative analgesia guidelines and to look for any barriers in using these guidelines.

**Methods.** We did a snapshot audit from 16th June to 23rd November 2017 (1 week) by using paper questionnaires for patients and nurses in the gynaecology ward.

**Results.** We audited 22 patients and 17 nurses. 90% patients said they were given information or explanation regarding pain relief before the operation whereas only 12% said that they were given written information. Only 18% patients had a specific preference for pain relief but 81% were completely satisfied with the preoperative discussion with the Anaesthetist. The average score for effectiveness of the postoperative pain relief was 9.0 (out of 10) and 9.6 for overall satisfaction with pain management. 100% of patients felt that the hospital staff did everything they could to control their pain post-surgery. 86% of patients said they were asked about their pain score and 95% said they were offered analgesia when they were in pain. Most importantly, 95% of the patients said they would recommend same pain relief option to other patients undergoing similar surgery.

Nurses’ survey revealed that though 82% of nurses were aware of the Trust’s analgesia guidelines; only 53% had gone through them. 59% of the nurses knew how to access these guidelines and 47% had referred to these guidelines while managing post-operative pain relief. The comfort level with managing postoperative pain was average score of 8.1 (out of 10). 13 nurses have had training on postoperative pain relief in the past but 70% of nurses wanted further training in managing post-operative pain.

**Conclusion.** Most patients were satisfied with their postop pain management and 95% would recommend it to others. We could improve our practise by ensuring that patients receive written information on pain relief prior to the surgery to facilitate patient centred discussion and informed consent.

However, more work needs to be done to make analgesia guidelines easily accessible on the Staff net and wards for the nurses. We need to encourage the staff to go through these guidelines and refer to them when the need arises; which can be facilitated by further training and educational sessions on postoperative pain management on the wards.