

Nomination for Teenagers learning / common room, Nightingale Ward, Royal Hospital, Calow.

When we think of poorly children who face an extended stay in hospital, we tend to think of babies and young children. We often seem to forget that adolescents and teenagers may also face such an extended stay.

If adolescents or teenagers do find themselves hospitalised it is important that they continue their education, some have even taken exams in hospital. It is also important to have a space that they can “escape” to as, being more aware of their surroundings and the reasons for being in hospital, it is important for them to be able to have time away from the bedside environment.

On the Nightingale Ward the staff care for children from a few hours old to the age of 17 years. Following the refurbishment of the children’s play / waiting area, the facilities for the younger children, both patients and visitors, are quite simply amazing. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the facilities provided for the older children. The room available for both learning and relaxing is woefully inadequate and needs bringing into the 21st century.

The next project being considered on the ward is the refurbishment of this room. This would involve totally gutting the room, redecorating and refitting with more suitable décor, furniture and equipment. The project, due to strict guidelines surrounding materials to be used, will run into many thousands of pounds and I feel confident that we, as a group, can make a sizeable contribution towards this if not enough to cover the total cost.

The room is currently “split” into two halves; one being for educational purposes and the other for relaxing. The plan is to maintain this “split” with the educational half being refitted with book shelves and work stations and the relaxing half being kitted out with comfortable seating, a television and possibly a games console. The room would be primarily used for learning in the mornings and relaxing in the afternoons and evenings. As mentioned, this will give the older children the chance to have time away from the wards, socialising with each other or somewhere different for them to spend time with their visitors. If you’ve ever had, or know of, an adolescent / teenage child who has had an extended stay in hospital I am sure you will understand the positive effect that something like this will have.

I feel that a facility like this, available to adolescents and teenagers, will make an invaluable contribution to their wellbeing, continued education and recovery and, if successful, this is how the monies raised from the Louise Smalley Walk 2019 would be spent.

Thank-you for taking the time to read this and I hope it gives you an insight in to my nomination in order for you to make an informed decision.

Kind regards,

Trev Smalley.