



Monica Dennis

A Dignified Revolution

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Individuals experience of inappropriate care of their relatives in hospital

“My mother was suffering with C. Diff and the nurse asked “why don’t you ask for a commode? What’s wrong with you?” My mother had replied “I get pain and it just comes from me” the nurse then responded with “you are obnoxious”. This was my mothers named nurse

“I went to visit late one evening and my mother had fallen out of bed and was wedged between the chair and the bed. The staff did not know this had happened and it was unclear how long she had been there but she was very cold. Her weight loss has been phenomenal. If her family did not visit on a regular basis then she would have died from starvation”



A Dignified Revolution

- **Concern that others might find themselves in the same situation**
- **Concern that many of those sharing poor experiences are health professionals**
- **The realisation that the lack of dignity and respect that older people tolerate when in hospital is not a recent phenomenon**



A Positive Response

“We are happy to join this group. We hope this network will not only bring to the surface the issues that older people face in hospitals, but advocate for their rights in hospitals”

“Thank you for all the information that you have sent. I will ensure all the students I teach are aware of it and will take the information into clinical practice with me for the attention of clinical staff”

“Your leaflet has been doing the rounds, if anything it’s a little underplayed, some wards are a disgrace.”

“I was impressed with your campaign and drive towards better standards of care. I would be interested in hearing how your campaign progresses”

“Good luck with your valued work to highlight the issues, and if ever you need anymore help on anything, just let me know”

Your hard work in Wales on challenging poor standards of care is fantastic!

“Congratulations. Very worthwhile”



Individual and Organisational Support

Individuals:

- Website
- Leaflet
- Logo

Organisations:

Help the Aged – Speaking Up for Our Age

Age Concern Cymru – Elder Abuse Project

Age Concerns – older people's forums

National Leadership & Innovation Agency (NLIAH)

Welsh Language Board



Raising Awareness

Chief Nursing Officer for Wales

Older People's Commissioner

Wales Audit Office

Welsh Assembly Government

Dignity in Care National Co-ordinating Group



Less Positive Responses

- *“I was deeply concerned when I read the section in the newsletter regarding issues concerning the pre-registration nursing curriculum. In particular you raise issues such as fundamentals of care, POVA, dignity and respect etc and the ways in which these are taught and assessed in the curriculum. You have also raised serious concerns about the way in which the curriculum is quality assured”*
(Professor of Nursing)
- *“I have noted with interest your recent circulation concerning this movement. I am sure you will know that there are already Community Health Councils in existence, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, expressly to look after the interests of the public in the NHS..... the point that I am making is that we are already in place, funded and working on the same issues, and there may be confusion to the public as well as a dilution of effort if a new body is set up to follow the same path”*
(Chair, Board CHCs Wales)



Less Positive Responses

“This is not a straightforward matter.

- 1. In the first place, some older people are unpleasant and difficult to deal with*
- 2. It is important not further to demoralise a low-paid or unpaid work force who may already be conscious of low esteem, whether or not deserved*
- 3. There is no surplus of applicants for nursing or caring in the gerontological sector, where motivation may not be high*
- 4. In Wales fortunately, we have Community Health Councils and other bodies officially to conduct acceptable surveillance and invite consultation and complaint. Eyes and ears on the ground does not recommend itself as a reliable or dignified course of conduct.”*

(An individual)



A Dignified Revolution

We are calling on the NHS to:

- **Train staff to communicate and listen to older people and act on what they say**
- **Invest in independent advocacy services for older people and their relatives**
- **Provide patient support services in all hospitals and ensure that patients and relatives know how to access them and gain the information that they need**
- **Involve service users in service and practice development so that staff know what the public expects**



The Gandhi Challenge

A patient is the most important person in our hospital. He is not an interruption to our work; he is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our hospital; he is a part of it. We are not doing a favour by serving him; he is doing us a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so

Does your local hospital pass the Gandhi challenge?

