**Llandough Hospital**

**Mental Health Services for Older People (MHSOP)**

This service is for people of any age suffering from dementia, or for older people who develop other forms of mental health conditions late in life (normally 65 years of age upwards). MHSOP teams also support the needs of carers. The majority of clients that you meet on elderly wards will be suffering from Dementia. Dementia is a progressive disease of the brain in which there is a decline in functioning including memory, thinking, orientation, comprehension, calculation, language and judgment. Sufferers can present with behaviours which are difficult to manage, such as hallucinations/delusions, wandering, aggression, depression/agitation, and disinhibition.

For an overview of dementia visit [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk).

The MHSOP unit is comprised of 82 beds over 5 Acute Assessment Wards all based in Llandough Hospital. They offer 8-12 week in-patient assessment and treatment for people with acute mental health needs who cannot be supported in the community due to the severity of their behavioural and psychiatric symptoms. Admissions are prioritised for those in greatest assessed need by a bed management process. Supported discharge to appropriate placements with follow-up is a key aim of in-patient services.

**Facilities across the wards**

* Single bedrooms (apart from one double in each ward), with features such as discreet observation panels in bedroom doors to avoid staff having to enter rooms to check on patients and the wake them, boxed windows which eliminate risk of falling/jumping from windows. Additionally each room have fall sensors to alert staff to patients out of bed. A majority of the rooms have en suite bathrooms. **You will not and should not go into patients’ bedrooms.**
* Large day rooms overlooking the Vale, with a separate quite sitting room and therapy room accessible to each ward.
* Therapy space throughout the unit, with each ward having access to a dedicated therapy room which opens onto the roof terrace overlooking the garden. Out of hours these rooms may be used for visiting – you may be in one of these rooms for your session.
* Separate to these there are also innovative multisensory therapy rooms, sun rooms, creative therapy room and other therapeutic spaces e.g. reminiscence pods situated throughout the unit which all patients can access.

**Organic Dementia Wards**

**East 10 Male and East 12 Female**

* 2 single sex wards of 16 beds for severe behaviour and psychiatric symptoms of dementia ‘organic’.
* Organic mental health conditions are caused by anatomical changes in the brain. This is either acute or chronic. Acute changes are reversible problems caused by drug or alcohol poisoning. Infections can cause acute confusion and delirium. Chronic changes to the brain on the other hand are permanent. This can be caused by brain damage or dementia.

**Functional Dementia Wards**

**East 14 Male and East 16 Female**

* 2 single sex ward of 16 beds for late onset severe ‘functional’ mental health conditions.
* Functional mental health conditions means there is no anatomical change in the brain and covers most of the well-known mental health conditions. This includes schizophrenia, manic depression (bipolar effective disorders), depression and anxiety.
* The assessment of patients can take numerous weeks depending on individual needs. The purpose of the assessment is to enable patients to receive an individualised, comprehensive care plan and treatment.
* Patients on these wards can be challenging and aggressive as a result of their health conditions. They can become frustrated and confused by not being able to communicate what they want to say.

**East 18 Mixed gender**

(Younger Onset Dementia (YOD), React Team, and Care Home Liaison)

* This is an 18 bed mixed ward for patients with severe Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD).
* The ward has been described by staff as challenging at times. Patients can be on a 1:1 due to their unpredictable behaviour.

**All Wards**

As the wards are assessment wards patients length of stay is approximately 3 months. However, this may vary due to individual care plans.

You should be aware that some of the patients have a lack of inhibition and may try and remove their clothing. If this happens you should try and distract the patient and remind them that it isn’t time to get changed. If this doesn’t work seek a member of staff.

There can be challenging behaviours both verbal and physical on all wards and this is due to the patients’ conditions. It is best to expect different kinds of challenging behaviours like swearing, insulting phrases. This doesn’t always happen but it is best to prepare yourself just encase. If this were to happen then you should remove yourself from the situation by making an excuse like you need the toilet or a drink of water, and tell a member of staff so they’re aware.

Wards can vary in business as it depends on patients and their day to day behaviours. On arrival you will have to be let onto the ward by a staff member. You should always introduce yourself to staff and ask who can or can’t join your activity. Staff may want to check the resources you are bringing onto the ward. The staff member will also tell you where you can place your bag.

It is unlikely that this will happen due to the physicality of the patients but please don’t be alarmed if you see someone being restrained on any of the wards as this is ok and the staff do this in the most humane way. If this were to happen you should remove yourselves from situation and area and let the staff do their job. You can continue doing whatever you were doing with patients and try to reassure other patients if they’re worried. Staff are always around on every ward and will be able to help you with any problems. If you did have any problems you should always tell staff, the lead volunteers and your project coordinator at SVC (Charlotte Watson).