Staff handovers at bedside allow more time for patient care

Staff in an emergency assessment unit at an NHS hospital have introduced bedside nurse handovers to promote interaction with patients.

The team from Cumberland Infirmary in Carlisle took part in a workshop in which they discussed obstacles faced in their day-to-day roles, how these could be overcome, and how to allow more time for face-to-face patient care.

The team, including nursing, medical and allied health professional staff, and a patient representative, devised and implemented five improvements:

> Handovers between nurses at the bedside to give patients the chance to be involved and boost interaction.
> A computer on wheels in every bay, so nurses can do paperwork but still be available to patients.
> A reduction in unnecessary paperwork.
> Having discharge documentation and medications ready within an hour of the patient being ready for discharge.
> Discharging before midday a third of patients who are ready to go home.

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