HTAS Webinar Series—Responding to COVID 19

TEAM WORKING

• Put measures in place to ensure effective team working and safety for staff:
  • use a large room for meetings to comply with social distancing and use technology (e.g. Microsoft Teams) to allow others to join remotely.
  • Ensure staff who are not techy ‘savvy’ are supported by hosting in-house training sessions.
  • Home working.
  • Some teams are having staff work longer shifts to reduce the time they’re in the office and supports with childcare.
• Set up a working group teleconference to trouble-shoot and discuss best practice/changes in practice as the COVID-19 situation is rapidly changing.
• Ensure staff receive scrubs and PPE for going onto wards, and limit access to wards where possible.
• Use video calling to consult patients.
• Screen patients if they have symptoms prior to home visits. Make use of PPE for patient contacts.
• MDT’s and staff meetings continuing with the use of Microsoft teams as well as using larger rooms for face-to-face meetings in an attempt to maintain social distancing,
• Weekly STP teleconference to discuss updates regarding clinical working guidelines.
• Support staff and patients from the impact of COVID 19 pandemic

RISK MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

• Continue to undertake home treatment with similar frequency to normal circumstances remotely. Emphasis should remain on building relationships with patients and carers.
• Undertake face-to-face assessment when unable to do this remotely and make a clinical judgement on the suitability of this.
• Senior clinicians should engage in MDT’s, as they help us understand different perspectives and depth of decision making.
• Share guidance being distributed locally and nationally within your teams to inform decision making.

KEY MESSAGES

• Ensure people continue to have access to crisis resolution and home treatment services.
• Work as a team to make challenging decisions.
• Support and protect patients and staff from COVID19 infection.
• Prioritise the needs of patients individually.
• Make use of digital technology to advise and support patients where possible.
• As a priority ensure safer staffing in crisis home treatment services.
• Make use of national and local NHS trusts guidance to support decisions.

MEDICOLEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

• Only use approved platforms to do video consultations with patients as there are concerns about patient confidentiality.
• Practical tips to ensure patient confidentiality:
  • check identity of patient; don’t be in a public place (yourself or patient);
  • assess who is in the room during consultation.
• Have a discussion with patients and carers to decide what form of consultation would be appropriate.
• Document all decisions, the rationale for decisions and key considerations. If these are judged at a later date, this is the evidence that will be considered.
• Be prepared to justify your decisions.