

National Cleanliness and Food Standards in Hospitals

Demonstrating good standards

“Good hospital care depends on getting the basics right: making sure that the food is good, the care is there and the wards are clean. Patients should feel welcome, safe and at ease. Patients expect to receive care in clean, tidy and comfortable surroundings, and when they do not, they may lose confidence in the whole system. A quality care environment is not a luxury – it is a fundamental part of good care and needs to be underpinned with the appropriate standards.

Too often in the past the fundamentals of care have been allowed to slip. Standards of cleanliness have been poor in too many hospitals. That has to change. For the first time the NHS is introducing National Standards”.

Secretary of State for Health

Patients expect wards to be clean and furnishings to be tidy. They have a right to expect a welcoming environment, particularly at a time when they might be in pain and feel threatened by unfamiliar surroundings.

Healthcare buildings are the ‘shop window’ of the NHS. Rightly or wrongly, people will judge the quality of the service by the way it presents itself at first glance. A hospital that appears dirty, untidy and uncared for may lead patients to believe that the care it offers is also poor. Staff, too, may feel demoralised and may not give their best.

Against this background Patient Environment Action Teams (PEAT) made unannounced inspections and assessed the overall environment against set national criteria which

included the quality of hospital food being served to patients.

The PEAT assessment process formulates an overall view of each hospital which is then rated as green, yellow or red.

- **Green** hospitals provide high standards throughout, which meet the expectations of patients and visitors.
- **Yellow** hospitals are an indication that standards provided are reasonable and acceptable, but could be further improved.
- **Red** hospitals are those where the patient environment is considered to be poor and in the worst instances, unacceptable with standards to be raised as a matter of priority.



Cleanliness	April 2001	September 2001	2002	2003	Food	2002	2003
	Freeman Hospital	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●		●→●→●→●	Freeman Hospital
Newcastle General Hospital	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	Newcastle General Hospital	●→●	●→●
Newcastle General Hospital (Mental Health Services)	○	○	○	●	Newcastle General Hospital (Mental Health Services)	○	●
Royal Victoria Infirmary	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	Royal Victoria Infirmary	●→●	●→●
Walkergate Hospital	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	●→●→●→●	Walkergate Hospital	●→●	●→●