

At the London Hip Fracture Network Meeting on 31st May 2007, Michael Fertleman, Consultant Orthogeriatrician at St Mary's gave a presentation about his experiences of setting up an orthogeriatric trauma unit.

Initially there were little resources and the team was largely about pooling what was already available; this included merging the times that the microbiologist, pharmacist, and dietician all did their ward rounds so that a team approach, under the direction of a physician could occur.

Following this the orthopaedic junior staff volunteered to attend these ward rounds as they felt most supported in their management of patients at this time. Multidisciplinary meetings were overhauled to also become physician led and twice weekly. These were held standing that resulted in a much more business like and efficient process, that has become the focal point of the team during the week.

Later during the year the trust provided more resources in the deployment of a medical house officer, SHO and medical registrar to the trauma ward. This has enabled the orthogeriatric team to also start looking after elective patients, where experience from other trusts has shown, a greater "bang for the buck". Michael was able to show through the development of this team and ward based rehabilitation, that the length of stay in a comparable three month period, dropped from 40 to 19.6 days. The discussion afterwards highlighted the importance of accurate audit data to increase resources to a department.

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