



HEALTH QUALITY & SAFETY
COMMISSION NEW ZEALAND



Filling in the Gaps

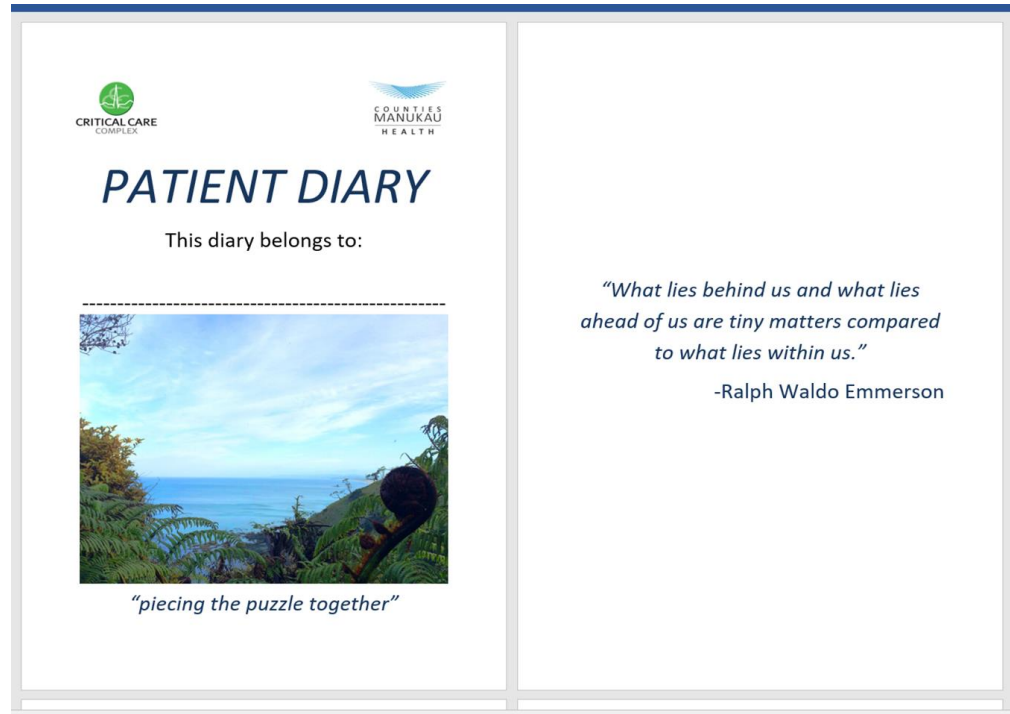
Kayleigh Shaw and Steve Kirby

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The Patient Journey



Patient diary



About patient diaries

What is a patient diary?

Patients often have little or no memory of their time in the Critical Care Complex (CCC). Their memory can be affected by their illness or by the medications we give to keep them comfortable. Sometimes patients may recall nightmares or hallucinations from this time, which can be frightening. Although the doctors and the nurses explain to patients why they are admitted, patients often forget what we have told them. Research suggests that this can cause patients to become stressed and anxious.

To help patients understand more about their illness and the time they have been unwell, we have introduced patient diaries—a written and/or photographic record of your loved one's time when they were unwell.

How does it work?

The nursing staff will start to keep a diary for your loved one, writing down what has been happening during each day. Other healthcare professionals, including doctors and physiotherapists may also contribute. We also encourage family members to write in the diary, to pass on your messages or to relay information from home.

Sometimes photographs will be taken; these will be kept separately and will only be included in the diary if your loved one consents to this.

What is written here?

The diary should include information that you think your loved one would like to know when they are recovering from their illness in the future.

Sometimes it can be difficult to know what to write to your loved ones. We have made a list of some suggested topics to help you get started.

- ~ What you did with your loved one when you visited today
- ~ Progress you have seen your loved one make
- ~ An achievement your loved one has made e.g. sitting on the edge of the bed
- ~ Messages from family and friends that can't be here
- ~ Family news
- ~ Current events e.g. weather, sports news, what's happening in the garden etc.

Some example entries:

Hi Kayleigh, its Friday the 24th October. You've been here for 10 days now, it's so great seeing you today. I can't believe how well you are doing now. When I came last week you were still being kept asleep, so great to see you awake and writing on the white board. I've

been out in the garden this week planting the veges. Fingers crossed this cold weather doesn't ruin them. We've had some terrible weather recently wind, rain, hail and ice-cold temperatures! I've gotta say whilst it's crap that you're in here, at least you can stay warm in here. Our power bill was massive this month! Right chick, I better get going. Lots of love Nikki xxx

Hey Ben, Bill here, just a quick message to say me and the boys missed you at the rugby this week, don't worry we scored a few tries for you. The AB's played Ozzie this weekend, great game and the All Blacks won. I'm off to the Mount this weekend for a family wedding. The kids are looking forward to seeing their quizzles - should be a great weekend, wish you were coming! I'll bring photos when I next visit. Anyways it sounds like you're making great progress and you'll be out of here in no time! I'll try pop in again next week. Stay strong. Love Bill and Paula.

Contact details:

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Respect peoples feeling.

**Even if it doesn't mean
anything to you, it could mean
everything to them.....**

Questions

