

Frailty and Parkinson's – Talk Summary (07/10/26)

(Amiel Celocia – Frailty Team-A&E-RBH)

Amiel, a physiotherapist and Parkinson's champion from the Royal Berkshire Hospital Emergency Department (ED), detailed the operations of the Frailty Team. The talk focused on the clinical definition of frailty, the application of the Clinical Frailty Scale (CFS), and critical advocacy strategies for Parkinson's patients in acute settings.

The Frailty Framework

Frailty is defined as a clinical syndrome characterized by a decrease in physiological reserve and increased vulnerability to stressors, such as minor infections. Unlike long-term disabilities, frailty is often reversible through timely intervention, medication review, and physical rehabilitation.

- **Triage Criteria:** The team typically intervenes for patients aged 75 and over, or those with a CFS score of 6 or higher (indicating a requirement for assistance with domestic tasks or personal care).
- **The Team:** A multi-disciplinary unit comprising physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers, paramedics, and nurses.
- **Admission Avoidance:** The primary objective is to facilitate recovery at home, which reduces the risk of delirium and hospital-acquired decline.

Parkinson's Advocacy in A&E

Amiel highlighted a systemic risk: Parkinson's patients often experience a significant decline in their baseline condition simply due to missed medication doses during the three to four-hour wait in A&E.

- **Medication Priority:** Patients and carers must flag Parkinson's status and specific medication timings to nursing staff immediately upon arrival. Doctors can prescribe these medications before a full clinical review is completed.
- **The "Red Bag" System:** Utilizing a prepared grab bag containing a current medication list and a supply of tablets is recommended to prevent dosage gaps.
- **Specialist Liaison:** The Frailty Team acts as a bridge to Parkinson's nurses and consultants if a patient has been missed by community services or requires an urgent specialist review.