The aim of introducing these measures is to optimise patient's recovery following major elective surgery. We looked at the success of the Enhanced Recovery Programme introduced by the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement. We examined the feasibility of introducing a similar programme for our patients.

The aim is to speed up and improving the recovery of patients following major elective surgery. This ultimately benefits the hospital and staff too as shorter bed occupancy means more patients can be treated. The measureable outcome is usually reflected in the length of hospital stay. Patient satisfaction interviews were also conducted to evaluate the impact of the changes implemented.

We looked at early mobilization, use of non-opiod analgesics to reduce bowel dysmotility and nausea and reducing the pre-op fasting interval. Where possible, minimally invasive surgery was encouraged.

The number of patients going home on fourth post op day or less, increased from 80- 86.2%. There were no significant complaints about the analgesic requirements or that they were discharged home before they were ready.

This exercise shows that we can take measures to improve the patient's recovery following major surgery. The success of this programme is dependant on multidisciplinary team effort and largely in the changing of patients and staff mindset about post-operative care.