

Who are we? We are a group of around 15 people with a special interest in emergency mental health services (eg A&E psychiatric liaison or home treatment), and mental health services where there are links with physical health (eg eating disorders, chronic fatigue, brain injury). We are interested because we have direct experience of using these types of services or of supporting someone who does. We meet monthly and work with managers and clinicians to keep the views of service users & carers at the heart of all service developments and improvements. Here is our July summary:

Who was at the July meeting?

10 of us were at the meeting. Staff present included: The Patient & Public Involvement Lead, a Peer Led Recovery Manager, the Ward Manager for the Mother & Baby Unit and the Senior Manager for the services with a physical health aspect.

Complaints

At our last meeting, we raised concerns with the Head of Complaints that people on the wards may not know how to complain or have trust in the process. As a result the Head of Complaints has invited 3 of us to join a small working group with ward staff to see how inpatients can be better informed and supported in the complaints process.



Carers

Our carer's representatives are involved in planning the next Trust-wide Family & Carers Listening event. We are keen to make sure that there is time to listen to carers views as well as information giving and presentations.



People's experience of ward rounds



3 members of our group are asking patients on Lewisham Triage ward about their experience of a ward round. They are using a pre-set questionnaire and the work is a follow up from a similar exercise undertaken a few years ago. The aim is to see if people's experience of ward rounds has improved.

Changes to community mental health services

Money is being invested in community mental health services with the aim of reducing the need for hospital admissions. A member of our group will be part of a working group overseeing the evaluation of this work. We have asked for a more detailed update on how these changes are progressing.

Working with police

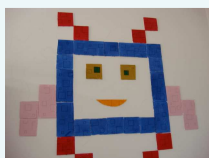
We are helping with the development of the pilot 'street triage' project where mental health staff support police in their work with people with mental health needs. We attended a launch event with NHS England, the Metropolitan Police and SLaM.



To complement this work, some of us will be asking people about their experience of being brought into hospital by the police. A questionnaire has been agreed and this work will take place over the next 6 months.

Mother & Baby services

We heard about some 'behind the scenes' changes to the community mother & baby services and considered whether these would have an impact on particular groups of people. We stressed the importance of considering the information and support needs of fathers where the mother is in touch with services. We also heard about the inpatient mother & baby service. This service will be organising a 'linkworking role' where trained service user consultants visit the ward on a weekly basis to get feedback from patients. 2 members of our group who have visited the ward before, will return to see how things are going and feedback through the management systems.



Improving peoples experience on triage wards.

Triage wards are short-stay assessment wards. Members of our group have been visiting them and working with managers to improve patient experience. Whilst there has been some progress, we were disappointed to hear that some important issues we highlighted have not improved. We will contact the Head of Pathway to raise our concerns and to seek reassurance that future visits will result in real and timely improvements for patients. We were pleased to hear from the new 'linkworker' on Lambeth Triage who was recruited as a result of our visits.

We would love to hear from you if you have views or ideas about any of this.