



Mental Health Services
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23 December 2009

Dear Colleague

Many thanks for attending the Patient Experience workshop on Monday 14 December 2009. Your input was invaluable and very much appreciated.

As promised, please find enclosed the feedback from the half-day.

The small group discussion is typed up as bullet points from each of the four groups and is appended in full in Appendix 1 (pages 1-4). Participants were asked to consider a good and bad experience in terms of a service they had received (did not have to be a health service), and consider what aspects of the service made it 'good' or 'bad'. The summarised feedback from the discussions can be viewed below:-

Most common features of bad experiences:-

- Not being listened to
- Believing “professionals must know best” (particularly older people)
- Rude staff
- Lack of compassion/understanding from staff
- Not feeling confident in staff skills and knowledge
- Poor communication
- Not knowing rights
- Uncertain about how/where to complain

Most common features of good experiences:-

- People skills are important and, especially in a clinical situation, and should not be neglected. This is different from professional skills, and involves understanding individuals, and the ability to deal sympathetically with people.
- Honesty from staff, being treated as an equal.
- Friendly, approachable staff.
- Knowledgeable staff.



- Good information given/signposting.
- Staff going 'above and beyond'.
- Good facilities.
- Dealing with an issue quickly and efficiently.

The session following this asked participants what they valued most in a mental health service. These can be viewed in full in the attached feedback (Appendix 1, page 5). Some consensus was gained to prioritise these aspects of care as the most important to service users/carers. The aspects below were seen to be the top priorities:-

- Being able to access the service, quickly and easily, and being seen at a local venue.
- Having good quality care, ensuring there is continuity of care.
- Having support relevant to our needs and working in partnership with us to achieve this.
- Being seen by staff who have good interpersonal skills (caring, pleasant, sense of humour, good communicator).
- Being seen by staff who have the skills and knowledge to deal with our conditions/issues.

Participants were then asked how they would like to be asked about their experience of using Mental Health Services. A range of techniques were mentioned ranging from online surveys to a suitably trained peer group carrying out short, face-to-face interviews. The full list can be viewed in full in Appendix 1, page 5.

In addition to this, participants were then asked what they valued most in an inpatient setting. These aspects of care can be seen below:-

- Good quality interaction with staff.
- Feeling safe.
- Having a structured day.
- A lot of reassurance at initial stage of admission.
- Privacy.
- Environment fit for purpose.
- Respect.
- Innovative and forward thinking staff.



- Dynamic and proactive leadership.
- Carers involved in discharge planning.
- Access to technology – emails, etc.

Some initial, very draft questions, to collect patient experience information, have been listed in Appendix 2. These have been drafted up following the workshop to reflect the aspects of care which you told us mattered most to you.

We are aware that there was broad representation from service users and carers on the half-day, but acknowledge that perhaps not all services were represented. The next stage involves consulting with young people who use the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service to ensure their needs are reflected in any questionnaire or interview format developed.

We will keep you informed as to the progress of this work and would welcome any further ideas/suggestions, either by emailing angela.rowe@aapct.scot.nhs.uk or by telephoning the number at the top of this letter.

This information will go to the Mental Health Executive, the Governance & Development Group and the Acute Inpatient Forum for their consideration.

Once again, many thanks for taking time out at a busy time of year, to participate in the workshop.

Best wishes for a happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Angela Rowe

Angela Rowe
On behalf of the Patient Experience Working Group
(Stuart McGregor, Geoff Coleman, Anna Laval).