A case study

As part of the NHS Midlands & East ambition to revolutionalise patient experience, we have asked a series of organisations across the patch to share their stories with us to see how they have approached revolutionising patient experience. Here is one example from Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust;

Changing your experience for the better

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust is an integrated health organisation, providing community health, mental health and learning disability services for the people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The Trust employs approximately 6,000 members of staff and supports around 85,000 people each year. This can make understanding patient and carer experience challenging, particularly at a time when nationally, the health and social care sector is going through significant change. During the summer of 2010, the Trust carried out an extensive review of the approach taken in relation to capturing and acting on patient experience and this identified a number of areas which required strengthening. In December 2010, the Trust Board committed to creating a ‘patient experience revolution’ which we call ‘Changing Your Experience for the Better’.

Initially piloted in Learning Disability and Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the programme involves people who use our services, their families, carers, front line staff and Trust Members in leading the services through a significant listening exercise called ‘In Your Shoes’. We invite every complainant from the previous 12 months to the ‘In Your Shoes’ sessions, which has seen a high take up. Understanding, in depth, the experience of these groups of the services they access or work in, enables front line staff to develop a clear set of behaviours, which we call ‘commitments’ or ‘promises’; things that people want to see more of and indeed less of in order to have a better experience. These are cascaded through interactive sessions to every member of the multi-professional team including administrative staff. The promises have been woven into our HR processes, for example how we develop job descriptions, interview processes and annual objectives. We have also instigated a process where the response we send following a complaint is read by a panel of people who use our services and their carers so that we may ensure we are responding in a way that is accessible, honest and transparent.

The voice of people using our services, their carers and families resulting from the programme has influenced and helped define quality through our Quality Strategy and both how and what we report to the Trust Board on performance through the Integrated Quality performance Report. The Board commitment to ensuring the voice is heard at all levels of the Trust has resulted in a programme of announced and unannounced visits by Board members to every clinical service. The visits are to assure the Board that what the service has heard through the ‘In Your Shoes’ session is being acted upon. A person meets the Board every month to discuss their experience and these sessions last approximately 45 minutes. Undoubtedly, this has had a significant impact on the quality of care we provide and a deeper understanding from our staff.

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