

**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. 10 of us were at the September meeting along with senior staff including the Clinical Director, and the Service Director. Here is our September summary:

### ***People's experience of ward rounds***

So far, we have asked around 75 people using Lewisham Triage ward about their experience of a ward round. The feedback will be analysed when we have reached our target figure of 100 responses.

### ***Being brought to a 'Place of Safety'***

We have started to listen to people about their experience of being brought to hospital with input from the police. Staff are happy that people have an opportunity to give feedback. There are some practical difficulties such as being at the ward at the right time. We will try and come up with solutions so that more people can give their feedback.

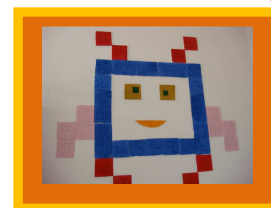
### ***Improving people's experience on triage wards.***

Triage wards are short-stay assessment wards. Members of our group visit them every few months and work with managers to improve patient experience. We remain disappointed that some important issues we highlighted have not improved. We raised this with the service director who was present at our meeting. Some members of our group are 'linkworkers' (trained people with experience of using services) and visit Triage wards every week. One noted that there needed to be more interaction between staff and patients and that if the activities co-ordinator was not present, activities did not happen. We hope that our next round of formal visits to these wards will show some improvements.



### ***Visit to the Mother & Baby Unit***

2 of us spent some time on the mother & baby unit, observing and speaking to staff and patients. We were really impressed with the quality of the service and noticed how recommendations that we made at our last visit had been implemented. For example, last time, mums told us that there was not much to do at the weekends and now there is a wide range of activities available. We liked the way that staff interacted sensitively and helpfully with the mums. Staff are keen to offer more support to partners and carers, and hope to find a way that the support group they provide can be better attended. We wondered if there could be more support for mums who want to breastfeed and one mum told us that she thinks there should be more information available in antenatal classes about how mental health can be affected after childbirth. Our findings will be fed back to the service, and to senior managers so that the service can continue to improve. We heard that 'linkworkers' (trained people with experience of using services) will soon be going to the ward for a couple of hours every week to listen to patients experience & feed it back to staff.



### ***Carers and family members***

Our carer's representatives have helped to plan the Trust-wide Family & Carers Listening event. They have also been involved in developing some guidance for staff about confidentiality. Sometimes, staff members don't share information with carers because they are concerned about breaching the confidentiality of the person using services. These leaflets will help staff consider the needs of the carers as well as the service users. They will also remind staff to think about the confidentiality of the carer or family member as well as that of the service user.



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