

Volunteer onsite

Reporters

Adam Robinson, Josie Tate and Wayne Morris at [Cambian](#) 10 November 2014.

What did you do^{*}?

A recently discharged resident returns to the unit twice a week to volunteer with current residents.

What was excellent about it?

This man likes routine, and it helps him to stay well. He had a positive experience of the unit and is keen to help others make progress. Having stayed in the local area after discharge, he often shows current informal residents who are living in the nearby step-down facility around the local community and also works with residents in the onsite gym.

He sometimes acts as guide to cycle rides, as he knows the local area so well, while staff provide whatever escort duties are required. He also leads cooking groups alongside paid staff.

He prefers to be unpaid at present. He provides a very positive role model for current residents, both in providing real-life evidence that residents can make progress, and in making constructive use of his time after discharge.

Even better next time?

He has regular update sessions with the hospital manager to track his progress and contribution. In principle, we would like to create a pathway from volunteering to paid work that links into our bank staff system. He is planning to train as a gym instructor at the local college. We don't make much use of volunteers from the community, but some of our residents go out to volunteer in the local community. We hope to examine guidance materials from the volunteering sector to help us shape our practice in the future.

Stories of Striving for Excellence in Locked Rehabilitation Services

* [NDTi](#) was commissioned to deliver a staff development programme promoting a more personalised and inclusive approach for those living and working in locked rehabilitation services in the English East Midlands. While the current inspection routine has a focus on risk prevention, our job is to focus on sharing positive practice and innovation. Peter Bates led the programme and wrote up these stories.

The Excellence Programme is for independent and voluntary sector providers of locked residential rehabilitation services for people with mental health issues or learning disabilities living in the East Midlands. It has delivered:

- A series of seminars for key staff and people using services to promote a more personalised and inclusive approach
- A shared sense of what excellent services look like, captured in an [Excellence Framework](#) document.
- Learning exchange visits between members which lead to individual action plans for each service
- Excellence stories that capture and share ideas for service improvement.

These case studies have arisen from members of the Excellence programme and NDTi has not independently verified what we have been told. Some are radical and ambitious approaches that transform the whole service, while others consist of small steps that may not seem especially exciting to other readers, but make a difference to one person. Some readers might even question whether progress is being made at all! The overall purpose is to stimulate reflection and celebration for every step forward, whether large or small.