

Team around the person

Reporter

Hellena Kambadza at [Eden Futures](#) on 17 October 2014

What do you do*?

The staff team of more than 50 support workers who work in the locked rehabilitation hospital is grouped into individual teams – one around each individual. This means that each resident builds strong relationships with their personal support team, enhancing security and the therapeutic environment.

Each team meets regularly for training that relates directly to the person they support and they also spend team time on problem solving and agreeing how to work together and share news about what has worked well.

These meetings prioritise the voice of those who have spent the most time with the person, rather than the person who is paid the most. Within the team, each person has nominated duties and responsibilities on each shift.

What is excellent about it?

Each resident has a small team of staff that they get to know well. Each worker has three levels of responsibility:

- They are part of the team around one person, work with them and attend all meetings of the team around the person. Regular team development sessions enable staff to harness tacit knowledge, pool ideas and quickly identify new solutions. Qualified nurses are part of this team and help the meetings to hold on to positive values. The team around each person is separate from the multidisciplinary team (MDT) that supports that individual and the team will send a representative to MDT meetings. This core team become the experts in planning and informing others about what works in supporting the person and managing risk.
- That team also provides support for a second service user, so that they have some variety in their working day, which is especially valuable on the occasions when the person is taxing to be with. They do not routinely attend the meetings of the team around the person for this second service user, although they are kept well informed and attend occasional updates and discussions.

Stories of Striving for Excellence in Locked Rehabilitation Services

- In addition, all care staff may occasionally provide support to someone else in the hospital if that person's needs exceed the capacity of their regular support staff.

This constitutes a much stronger focus on the individual compared to traditional keyworker arrangements and enhances relationship security rather than perimeter security. The work with the second service user brings some variety, which brings fresh inspiration to relationships.

Even better next time?

It was not easy to convert the concept into a shiftwork pattern that everyone understands, especially where workers had previously worked in a more traditional team or keyworker role. We are willing to share the shiftwork pattern with interested colleagues.

The final arrangement blends competing agendas by providing consistency for the resident with variety, a predictable role for staff with responsiveness to unexpected challenges and the needs of the resident with support for staff who sometimes find the work emotionally taxing. Discussions in meetings of the team around the person are sometimes augmented with advice from visiting professionals, such as a clinical psychologist or occupational therapist.

* [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.