

Design the therapeutic programme

Reporters

Janice Woodliffe and Mike Chendambuya at [Alpha Hospital](#) on 21 October 2014.

What did you do*?

We worked together to develop a programme of pre-planned activities for residents, both in the ward and out in the community.

What was excellent about it?

Our senior occupational therapist started by finding out what activities are available in the community and on the ward and then converted this into a checklist of possible activities. The Activities Support Worker and the OT Assistant sat with each resident and supported them to complete the checklist of activities to show what they were interested in and to suggest other activities.

Most residents were able to explain what they were interested in, but some lacked mental capacity and one or two declined to participate. In this case, we built upon our observations of what they enjoy, past interests and what helps them, to assign them to suitable activities. Preferences and access to leave are then worked into a weekly programme customised for each individual, which is frequently amended in response to changing needs.

The organisation's regular quality monitoring and internal report system ([Quality Accounts](#)) tracks patient feedback on whether people feel that they have had a say in designing the therapeutic programme.

Even better next time?

People take ownership of the resultant programme, and it is changed in response to the preferences of residents. We pay attention to people's preferences expressed through behaviour as well as through speech.

Stories of Striving for Excellence in Locked Rehabilitation Services

Our fortnightly ward rounds include a discussion about the activity programme as part of the recovery agenda and this gives the patient a chance to bring up any issues they have about the programme.

The activities programme is discussed in the monthly resident's forum facilitated by an independent advocacy worker and messages can be fed back to the team. The independent advocate also visits twice a week and will see residents individually and feedback to the clinical team and governance as required.

When people leave our unit, we always tell the next support team about the activities that the person has been undertaking and recommend beneficial activities for the future.

Some residents arrive from facilities that lack a structured programme, such as some acute psychiatric wards or psychiatric intensive care units. At other times our attempts to obtain information about the newcomers previous programme are unsuccessful. We always provide an opportunity for new arrivals to complete an interests checklist. We try very hard on admission to maintain the activities and level of opportunity that the person enjoyed in their previous setting, rather than cutting this back.

** [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.