

Get a paid job in the service

Reporter

Verity at [Cambian](#), 10 November 2014.

What did you do^{*}?

A resident who lived in our step-down service wanted to work in our kitchen. We arranged for him to obtain unpaid work experience in our kitchen for a while and then a vacancy arose for a part time worker and he was offered the job.

What was excellent about it?

Before he moved to our step-down facilities he was studying for NVQ level 2 and was able to complete it while in our unit. He then achieved his ambition for paid work in a kitchen. We were able to offer support to him in this role, blending the demands of the paid role with reasonable adjustments to support him in his rehabilitation. The unpaid work experience enabled him to build good relationships with the kitchen staff.

He was paid at the same rate as other kitchen staff, but only worked a few hours a week at first, to fit in with [permitted work](#) regulations, as checked out with his occupational therapist. Once he was discharged from the step-down unit, he was able to increase his hours to around 12 hours a week. Most of the kitchen work happened at the weekend, as he had filled so much of his week with other worthwhile activities.

Even better next time?

The arrangement we created enabled the gentleman to receive support over time from familiar staff, both within and outside his kitchen duties. We had a clear expectation that he must fulfil his kitchen duties in the same way as any other employee. We made sure he was included in all the benefits of being a staff member, including social occasions.

Stories of Striving for Excellence in Locked Rehabilitation Services

By working in this situation, he learnt some personal information about other residents, but he was a quiet personality and so did not disclose any of this to other residents. As an employee, he signed the usual confidentiality and other mandatory and induction training processes.

Whilst we had no difficulties on this occasion, in the future, if a resident joins the care team, we will think through in more detail how to ensure that confidential information is kept safe and how to balance the need to create positive opportunities for our residents with equal opportunities obligations in recruitment.

* [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.