

# Explore Diversity

## Reporter

Lesley Wilson at [St Andrew's Healthcare](#) on 6 February 2015.

## What did you do\*?

Staff told us that some patients were expressing racist views and other prejudices, and this was evident in our regular trend analysis of incidents. In response, we have developed Diversity Learning Sets in which patients and staff jointly explore the importance of diversity and respect.

## What is excellent about it?

After piloting on a medium secure unit for young men, the Learning Set was finalised as four one-hour sessions, run weekly for the same group. This has now been delivered in six of our units. As a result, patients have a better understanding of diversity and both patients and staff report an improvement in relationships.

In some settings, a few frontline staff and first line managers have previously felt unable to challenge poor conduct or have tolerated rather than challenged these behaviours. As a result of the Learning Set, we have seen an improvement in staff skills and their willingness to take positive action rather than condone negative attitudes and behaviours.

This has added to the therapeutic environment as reported by the multidisciplinary team, and there have been a number of occasions when patients have started to challenge unacceptable behaviour from their peers. Our work in equality and diversity has been recognised by [Stonewall](#).

## Even better next time?

We hope to conduct an analysis of incidents and complaints to find out what impact these Diversity Learning Sets have had, both on the awareness and need to report, and the frequency and severity of reported incidents.

Not all services have had an opportunity to benefit from the Learning Set to date and we hope to roll it out to all.

## Stories of Striving for Excellence in Locked Rehabilitation Services

As the awareness gradually becomes embedded in the organisation, we will be able to think through further how to ensure that diversity is fully respected in many other activities of the charity, from weekly community meetings on the wards through staff recruitment processes, quality assurance and so on. In this way, the awareness held by patients on this important issue continues to challenge and safeguard the organisation as a whole.

The awareness of, and ability to promote respect for diversity, is a key feature of civil society. We hope to build an awareness of diversity in the service and use it to help people link into equalities campaigns in the wider community.

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*\* [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.*