

Carers Toolkit – involving and supporting carers in secure mental health services

- Research and development project
 - Literature review
 - Survey questionnaires – services and carers
 - Interviews with family carers
- Toolkit
 - To aid commissioners
 - To assist carers in navigating the system
 - Highlight best practice

Progress to date

- 98 completed services' questionnaires
- 107 completed carers' questionnaires
- 26 interviews with carers
- Draft toolkit
- Two short films

Findings: carers

- Being a carer is stressful, and some of this stress results from engagement with the system. Differences noted between supportive and unsupportive staff
- Carers see themselves as substantial potential resource to services but face certain barriers to fulfilling this
- Carers need personal and practical resources to deal with stigma in communities
- Not all experiences are negative
- Majority welcome information, but want more relational time with staff
- Designated workers are really appreciated
- Involvement in care/case review is not uncommon, but not all carers can take this up
- More sophisticated therapeutic support is thin on the ground

What carers say

I would say it is a mixed blessing. Lots of stress and tears at times but also I get a lot out of being able to provide support. I also learn a lot about mental health and myself, my capabilities. I think I am a better person for it

The distance from the hospital and my work make visiting difficult. Then I feel bad about not coming enough

It is reassuring to meet staff who appear able to help him and then to see him make progress. The main thing that carers want to know about is that the person they care for is well looked after. Everything else comes second to this

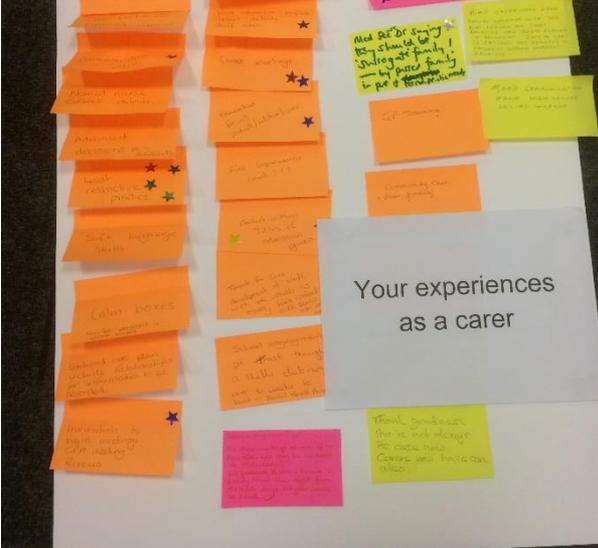
Implications

- Acknowledge existing good practice
- Designated staff with responsibility for carers
- Comprehensive and accessible information packs
- Information, advice & support planning around transitions

Thinking points

- What's new?
- Direction of travel:
 - Triangle of Care
 - Recovery ethos
- Confidentiality – a red herring?
- Choice to be involved

Travelogue



Films

[Carers film 1 Final](#)

[Carers film 2 Final](#)