

## Reducing Restrictive Practice

Introducing VR headsets to offer more activities on the ward

Afton Ward, St Marys Hospital, Isle of Wight is a 10 bedded Older Persons functional Mental Health ward. We have low levels of restrictive practice.

We spent time talking to the patients, families and team on the ward to understand what they saw as the important priority for the ward. There were 2 clear areas to focus on: Active Participants in Care and Person Centred Care.

Together we generated lots of ideas about how we could increase activities on the ward and began to think about technology and how this could be used.



### Change ideas we have tested include:

We met with the Technology Enabled Care Team to understand more about the VR headsets and how these might be used to support increased activity on the ward.

We had 2 sets which we tested with people on the ward to see if they were an enjoyable activity.

We had some issues with the Wifi, staff confidence in using this technology and some training was required.

We have used different free programmes including viewing nature such as the Borneo Forest or Ice Flows in Greenland as well as activities such as sky diving.

### What our patients, staff and carers say

'I had loads of help from Tony. I was in the sky, in one of them funny suits, looking down. I could see houses, trees the streets, everything! It was incredible, like being a bird! You say 'oh! Look at that! It's beautiful!' It feels really good!'

'First class entertainment and mental stimulation.'

'It was a good experience. Would like to do it again. The angel falls and animal videos make you feel like your there'

'As for my mental health it was truly an absorbing experience.'

### Changes we have seen on the ward

Use of the VR headsets has lots of benefits including

- **Increasing Physical Activity**
- **Reminiscence**
- **Relieving boredom**
- **Cognitive Stimulation**
- **Distraction**
- **Reducing anxiety**
- **Curbing Anhedonia**
- **Starting conversations**

The feedback from the patients has been positive.

### Looking to the future

- The ward will be upskilling more staff in using the headsets so the availability of VR as an activities option of the ward is not always reliant on the ward activities coordinator. The ward are also linking with the inpatient matron around how to share the learning from VR across the inpatient unit.
- The ward have tried to embed the use of VR by routinely offering it as part of the ward activities schedule but also having the flexibility for this to be available for people to use as and when they would like to (but currently this is restricted by staff availability).
- The ward aims to continue to gather patient and carer feedback about the use of the headsets at the ward community meetings, these are currently chaired by the service user engagement coordinator.