

Caring for Carers

Theme: Inclusive Space

Acknowledgement:

Springbank is a specialist ward for patients struggling with severe personality disorder. Under the new management of Jane Poppitt, staff began inviting families and carers onto the ward in October 2014. The ward had previously not allowed visitors onto the main ward area.

Feedback:

- I'm so grateful to be able to be a part of ***** care
- Its such an inviting ward and I love to visit
- Its given me confidence in the staff

Objectives:

- To make the ward feel like a friendly and relaxed space
- To reduce the fear about what went on behind closed doors
- To get to know the carers and families and give them support
- To normalise the hospital environment
- To encourage positive social interactions

Concept:

Being in hospital is a difficult and frightening experience for patients. It can be equally frightening for relatives and carers. If your loved one is in a hospital ward and you are not allowed, you will imagine all sorts of horrors going on behind closed doors.

Wouldn't you rather be on the ward seeing first hand what goes on even if, on the odd occasions you witness something distressing?

Wouldn't you want to see where you loved one is spending their time?

Would the children feel less scared after having a whistle-stop tour to see where Mum was sleeping?

Would you like to eat a meal with your loved one or just sit and comfort them?

Pragmatics:

An easy thing to implement but hugely beneficial. Open the doors and reduce the fear. Make relatives and carers feel welcome and involved. Improve relationships and communication with them. Invite them to eat a meal or join a group.



Time:

Cost:

Training:

Staff:

Quick Win:

Top Tip:

Just do it and see the benefits

Benefits:

- Improved communication
- Better relationships
- Additional support for patients
- Cutting down fear and stigma
- Normalising

Examples:

Relatives come onto the ward for cups of tea and sit in communal areas.

All the patients enjoy seeing different faces and interact socially

Visitors staff and patients enjoy a meal together.