

Update following publication of the external report into how we involve families in investigations following a death

June 2017

We are pleased to report continuing contact with families, and service users through meetings and attending groups and activities, and increasing the ways in which people are involved in trust services and decisions. Personal stories have been shared at meetings and have made impact bringing people's experiences to the fore. At the Caring Group a service user explained her experience of mental illness and what services did that helped. A group of Consultant doctors who are new to the Trust heard three stories of people very close to the narrator and why it was important to involve the family. Two family members' joined the most recent Serious Incident conference attended by Trust staff, service commissioners and representatives from other organisations to tell their stories of involvement in investigations, one positive and one not so positive.

We recently published the Trust strategy for Experience, Involvement and Partnership, which sets out our commitment to, and standards for, work with patients, service users, families, carers and the public. In addition you will also find the action plan for Family Involvement on the Trust website. This action plan sets out detailed actions, in response to the recommendations made in the report into the involvement of families following a death. The best practice guide 'The Triangle of Care'* has six key standards that provide a framework for our work to improve the way that families are involved in a patient's care from the first contact. We have started with confidentiality and information sharing as this has been raised repeatedly as an issue for improvement by families.

In May we held a workshop 'Commonsense approach to information sharing and confidentiality' which involved service users, family members and staff. The discussions highlighted the differing perspectives of service users and families, that it can be challenging to combine them, but also with careful discussion it was possible to work with both. Participants reviewed leaflets on 'information sharing and confidentiality' and their comments and feedback are being used to draft a revised Trust leaflet which will be shared with families for comment in July. The workshop also gave its support to the Guiding Principles for involving families, friends and carers, which has been developed directly with families and carers*.

A quarterly survey of families who have been involved in an investigation into a serious incident is taken. The first survey showed that families were more involved in investigations. It highlighted the need to improve the way that the report of the investigation was shared with families. A half day 'masterclass'



has been developed using the families' experiences, and will be run with staff in July.

Finally for this update, a review of the role of the Investigating Officer has been started which looks at the capacity, training and support needs of the people in this role. We will be using the findings to guide further improvements.

* Both of these documents are available on the Patient and Family Involvement page of the Trust website: <http://www.southernhealth.nhs.uk/get-involved/help-us-to-improve/patient-and-family-involvement/>

