
**Redbridge Concern for Mental Health
consultation response**

NELFT Patient Experience
Strategy

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Redbridge Concern for Mental Health welcomes the opportunity to comment on the NELFT Draft Patient Experience Strategy, June 2012. Redbridge Concern is committed to working in partnership with NELFT to improve services, through the on-going involvement of Service Users, Carers and staff in the development and delivery of services within North East London NHS Foundation Trust.

We support the overall vision and the importance of including the perspective of service users and carers in the provision of services. Involvement of service users and carers in the design and monitoring of service delivery, and in the definitions of service quality and outcomes, is essential.

We have made a number of suggestions and recommendations, which we believe, will strengthen the draft strategy.

1. Independent gathering of feedback - Conflict of Interests

We strongly recommend that the collection of data is contracted out to independent organisations.

NELFT recognises the challenges of ensuring that feedback is independent and unbiased. We are concerned, therefore, that NELFT is proposing to recruit, train and support a group of Patient/Service Users and Carers from across the Trust to carry out this work. We are unclear as to how NELFT will ensure that an 'in-house' team will remain independent and unbiased.

Indeed, in other areas of work NELFT employs independent external auditors to ensure unbiased and independent reports, audits and surveys.

2. Community Stakeholder

We are concerned that there is very little narrative in the strategy about the role of local grassroots (service user led) organisations and how NELFT will work with such organisations at a strategic and operational level.

3. Treating people with dignity, respect and understanding

We are encouraged by the Trust's recognition that the development of an organisational culture to ensure all members of staff take responsibility for ensuring patients receive a good patient experience is priority.

This chimes with our own research. Service users repeatedly tell us that being treated with dignity, respect and understanding is paramount. Health professionals and other staff who come into contact with people experiencing a mental health problem must have appropriate communication skills. A skilled workforce with a good understanding of the wider determinants of mental health (housing, crime, work, poverty and education) is essential.

About Redbridge Concern for Mental Health

Redbridge Concern for Mental Health - established over 15 years ago – is a service user led organisation based in the London Borough of Redbridge dedicated to promoting, improving and protecting the mental health and emotional well being of the wider community.

We offer high quality services to local residents seeking mental health support. We also provide information and signposting as well as challenging the stigma and discrimination that people experience in their everyday lives.

Our Aims

- To develop high quality, culturally appropriate, accessible services for people recovering from and experiencing mental health problems.
- Work in partnership to influence mental health policy and to promote best practice in all aspects of service planning and delivery.
- Develop new ways of promoting service user involvement and helping service users to improve their lives.
- To improve people's health, care and well-being by promoting positive mental health.
- To challenge the stigma and discrimination that people experiencing and recovering from mental health problems encounter in their everyday life.

Voice – Nothing about us without us A key role of RUN-UP is to influence the design, delivery and management of local mental health services. In particular: to contribute experience and expertise to policy development as a „critical friend“ as well as to promote and monitor the effectiveness of user involvement in the planning, commissioning, managing and monitoring of services to ensure service users have a full say in policies and practices which affect their lives. Articulating views and experiences of our members by attending meetings, seminars, workshops and debating issues

Campaigning for full inclusion in society We all want to live in communities where we can participate fully and equally. Many indicators show us that for people with mental health conditions this hasn't yet happened and there remains considerable work to be done to get to this point. People with mental illness commonly describe the stigma and discrimination they face as being worse than their main condition. Discrimination, stigma and prejudice can pervade every part of their daily life - their personal life, working life, sense of citizenship, their ability to maintain even a basic standard of living