The Patient Revolution:
11 journeys from across the Midlands and East
The national drive to make fundamental improvements to the experience a patient receives in the NHS has been inspirational. NHS Midlands and East have welcomed this. Since 2011 we have been active in pursuing our own ambition, through a “patient revolution”, with a clear focus on “creating a revolution in patient and customer service experience”.

This ambition changes how organisations view, capture, listen to and respond to patients as the customer, putting them at the centre of their care.

The Prime Minister has recently endorsed the roll out of the “Friends and Family Test” nationally; offering patients and employees a simple indicator as a catalyst for change, as to where successes lie and where improvements can be made.

Patients staying in hospitals and progressively across other care pathways are asked, “How likely are you to recommend our [ward/A&E department] to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment?”. The measure partly based on Net Promoter (NPS) methodology, is adopted by large successful organisations across the world that put Customer Service at the top of their agenda.

The “Friends and Family Test”, together with a series of other pioneering patient feedback tools, encourages patients and employees to engage in a true healthcare partnership. Now an integral part of the Clusters Board meeting agendas; from ward to Board, to “waiting” room, we are committed to transparency and inclusion.

While use of innovative approaches are a key to success, these tools would be futile without the enthusiasm and commitment from the people involved in the drive for change. From the insights that organisations have worked to share with us, it is evident that central to their success has been the broader cultural shift, which at its heart, values the whole patient as an individual and goes beyond just the (important) aspects of clinical care.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank, along with my colleague Kay Fradley, the Strategic Projects Team, the Nursing Directorate, those organisations who have participated in this ambitious journey to create a customer service culture.

We hope you find this sample of case studies insightful and inspiring and that you continue on your organisations’ own journey to revolutionise patient and customer experience.
The main objective of the ‘Patient Revolution’ is to ensure that the patient and public voice is heard and acted upon, by placing patients in the centre of care, capturing patient experience and making use of the best mechanisms available. The ‘Patient Revolution’ is one of the 5 Ambitions to be rolled out by the NHS Midlands & East Cluster.

There are 3 core elements to this paradigm shift; customer services culture, community and citizen participation, and clinical and patient experience. This hand out serves to support the customer services work stream.

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Prepared by NHS Midlands and East Strategic Projects Team
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The SEPT experience

Driving good customer service through innovation
South Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has a range of measures in place, contributing to the creation and maintenance of a ‘customer services culture’ within the Trust. These are designed to engage staff at all levels, together with patients and carers in the patient revolution agenda.

In addition to the traditional approaches such as patient and carer surveys, the Trust employs more innovative methods for engaging staff and patients in the patient revolution agenda. These methods include the Trust’s ‘Take it to the Top’, Mystery Shopper and Annual Supper with Consultants initiatives.

Take it to the Top
The Trust’s ‘Take it to the Top’ consultation exercises involve members of the executive team and the Trust Chair and Non-Executive Directors within the Trust going out into the community and holding a drop-in question and answer session. This enables the public to meet and engage with senior members of the Trust and to give their feedback directly to the top people.

Mystery shopper programme
SEPT runs a mystery shopper programme as part of its customer service agenda which involves signing up patients or their carers as ‘mystery shoppers’ who then anonymously provide feedback directly to the Chief Executive. They report on each of their encounters with the Trust, from telephone calls and visits and contact with the clinical facilities. SEPT currently has 137 mystery shoppers in Essex, a further 138 in Bedfordshire and Luton, signed up with the Trust. The key incentive for participation in this scheme being the opportunity for patients and carers to share their views completely frankly and confidentially directly with the leader of the Trust. Their feedback helps to improve customer service, and ultimately patient experience, within the Trust.

Mystery shopper feedback is disseminated amongst the Trust through team meetings and, in cases where individual staff members are either positively or negatively mentioned, through staff appraisals.

The Annual Supper
The Trust’s ‘Annual Supper with Consultants’ is an event which is organised by the Trust for a group of 12 patients to have dinner with 12 consultants. The sociable event brings these two groups together to facilitate a ‘power shift’, as patients are able to engage with consultants away from the traditional power dynamic within hospitals and clinical facilities. A scribe is present at each of the dinner tables who takes notes of the key topics discussed which are then fed back to the patient survey group and disseminated within the organisation.

Capturing and understanding patient experience
The Trust’s ‘Annual Supper with Consultants’ is an event which is organised by the Trust for a group of 12 patients to have dinner with 12 consultants. The sociable event brings these two groups together to facilitate a ‘power shift’, as patients are able to engage with consultants away from the traditional power dynamic within hospitals and clinical facilities. A scribe is present at each of the dinner tables who takes notes of the key topics discussed which are then fed back to the patient survey group and disseminated within the organisation.

Empowering and supporting staff
A ‘customer services culture’ was felt to be ‘embedded’ within SEPT, which is cited as a key factor of its successful creation and maintenance. Not only is this culture embedded in the Trust’s Service Standards on customer service which all staff should adhere to but importantly, the issues of customer care and customer service are introduced at the recruitment stage. The Trust’s Service Standards are included as part of the pre-interview questionnaire within the Trust, providing potential new recruits with an understanding of the standards which underpin the organisation’s culture. These standards are also integrated into the Trust’s induction programme and training and are revisited and reinforced on a regular basis. One example is that the Trust holds a dedicated day of learning on customer experience during the customer care training ‘so people are really empowered’. The Trust also uses role play during its training whereby members of staff are given a patient scenario to act out and demonstrate how they would deal with the situation. The staff are observed and given feedback.

Key points from SEPT Case Study:

- Engaging all levels of Trust staff, stakeholders and patients in the patient revolution agenda was seen to enable an embedded customer services culture within the Trust.
- Reinforcing key values and standards on a regular basis, and from an early stage of staff recruitment, is crucial in order to ensure that these become embedded and ‘part of the fabric of the Trust’.
- Letting staff know ‘what’s expected of them’ and why, through clear objectives and outcomes, is central to ensuring that staff are actively engaged with the Patient Revolution agenda.

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Creating a Culture of Involvement

Nottinghamshire Healthcare has adopted a systematic and innovative approach to the development of a culture of involvement. This is now embedded in day-to-day life across the Trust. The culture of involvement is underpinned by a focus on what matters most to service users and carers and working in partnership to change services, culture and lives. The Trust operates a continuous cycle of gathering feedback, implementing changes and publicising the changes that are being made, with the twin goals of enhancing the patient experience and achieving maximum staff satisfaction.

Two unique Involvement Centres offer practical, social and emotional support to service users as well as being a meeting place where carers, service users and volunteers can come together to work in partnership with staff to improve services. One of the Involvement Centres is attached to the Trust HQ and this co-location helps give involvement a high profile as well as building continuous engagement between senior management and service users and carers. This focus on customer service is highly visible throughout all levels in the organisation, fed down through Involvement Leads appointed across each area, who champion the importance of involvement and patient experience and ensure that it becomes part of everyday culture.

Patient Opinion

Patient Opinion, the online feedback site, is used to maximum effect to gather feedback from service users and the Trust endeavours to provide a response to queries within two days of being posted. The Trust has trained a large number of staff in this role, through forums and workshops and is now focusing on developing its responsiveness to online feedback. The Trust has recently been successful in its joint application with Patient Opinion and the East Midlands Leadership Academy to the NHS Patient Feedback Challenge, which was developed to support the most promising approaches to measuring and improving patient experience. The Trust will use the £100,000 of funding it receives to work in partnership with service users/carers and Patient Opinion to support a number of teams in each Division to become beacons of good practice for all aspects of patient feedback in their Division and to spread this to other teams. It will also develop an accessible patient experience area on their website so that feedback is online rapidly, visible and easily usable by staff and the public and to improve accountability and drive change.

Innovative approaches to gathering data

The Trust champions innovation in its approach to the Patient Revolution agenda and uses new methods of engagement alongside more traditionally established methods. ‘Human libraries’ are one method by which the stigma of mental health is challenged through members of the public borrowing a ‘book’ with lived experience of a particular condition such as bi-polar or schizophrenia, breaking down barriers and encouraging mutual understanding.

One of the more traditional methods used to effectively capture both service user and carer giver feedback is the Service User and Carer Experience Survey. Here, equal importance is placed on positive and negative feedback, where positive feedback is used to celebrate success and negative feedback is used to drive improvement. The dissemination of information resulting from the survey is critical to this, and every three months, the results are compiled into reports sent to each team, Directorate and Division. The Trust Board regularly receives these reports too. The Trust continues its theme of using feedback to drive change through the production of ‘Listening to You’ posters which communicate the changes that are being made as a direct result of feedback.
Patients and staff working together

Co-production is embedded into Trust practices and the Head of Involvement sees it as being vital to how the Trust works as an organisation. An example of this is an Advance Statement, which patients are able to complete. It sets out how they wish to be treated when they are in crisis and need others to take responsibility for their care; for example, who their preferred supporters are and where they would like to be cared for. In addition, in response to national survey data that highlighted poor performance in terms of informing patients about their medication, the Trust introduced a postcard, designed with service users, entitled ‘Ask About Your Medication’. This has a tear off portion that patients can use to request further information about their medication from healthcare professionals. A similar postcard entitled ‘Ask About Your Physical Health’ enables patients to request information on managing their physical health whilst experiencing mental health problems.

Key points from Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust:

- Effective leadership is crucial in establishing a culture of involvement that filters throughout the organisation.
- Positive feedback should be used to celebrate success; negative feedback should be used to drive change.
- Information dissemination is crucial, both in facilitating change amongst staff and in demonstrating responsiveness to change to service users.

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Closing the customer feedback loop

Clinical circles take responsibility for their patients

The ‘circle’ approach to improving patient and customer services experience instigated at Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust involves devolving responsibility and therefore the ownership of issues directly to ward level across the hospital.

Hinchingbrooke is now divided into separate business units, also called clinical circles, which has a lead doctor, nurse and administrator. Each unit has the freedom and authority to take all decisions that impact upon patient care in their unit and are responsible for their own balance sheet, collecting customer feedback and learning from this. By creating these clinical units, power is devolved to those who are most visible on a day to day basis. This grassroots approach to customer service means that change is spontaneous and natural, is locally owned and also increases pride in the Trust’s values when members of staff receive positive feedback from patients.

Turning feedback into improvement through the use of the Friends and Family Test

Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust has welcomed the ‘Friends and Family Test’ and its purpose to collect and collate simple and concise responses from patients, asking them if they would recommend the service they had recently received in hospital, to their friends or family. The number of responses obtained has more than doubled in a year and in May 2012 Hinchingbrooke were pleased to come joint top in a comparative table including Trusts across the Midlands and East region.

Hinchingbrooke have opted to capture patient feedback through the use of the Net Promoter Score framework (NPS) in contrast to more lengthy and traditional questionnaires as it facilitates a higher response rate. Two further open ended questions are asked in order to obtain more rich and detailed information. This feedback is then used to watch trends and compare the performance of each ward.

Staff working together towards a common goal

Establishing the clinical circles means that staff, nurses, doctors and admin staff work together towards the same goal. Together they are keen to see what patients are saying about them and respond accordingly. Collecting and disseminating patient feedback using this framework has really engendered buy-in from staff in a relatively short space of time and empowered them to share both good and bad experiences. A little healthy competition across the clinical circles seems to go a long way here in relation to improving the overall patient experience.

Clinical Fridays

Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust has noticed a direct correlation between the strength of clinical leadership and level of patient satisfaction. The Trust has developed a concept called ‘Clinical Fridays’, which looks at an issue that is particularly important for each clinical area and how that impacts on patient experience. Clinical circles have proactively come together on a Friday afternoon at 3pm for more detailed discussion and reflection beginning with a patient story led by the Director of Nursing. Stories given directly to staff, through NHS choices and the PALs league are either positive or negative, both of which are considered important for motivating staff to help improve patient experience. Hinchingbrooke appreciate the importance of utilising this information to make improvements at ward level and are working to ensure that actions arising from meetings are embedded throughout the organisation.

Key points from Hinchingbrooke Case Study:

- The creation of a culture of both customer service and patient safety is seen to be underpinned by staff engagement and effective leadership so leading by example is a must.
- A customer care programme and an induction programme that covers customer care and patient responsiveness is key to putting staff on the right path from the outset.
- Ensure that the Trust creates a positive impression from the beginning which involves contributing to the patient’s positive experience from top down visibly demonstrating a responsiveness to the customer.
- When instigating change, quickly assess the impact of those changes on patients rather than making assumptions that it will end in service improvement.

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Creating a Revolution in customer service culture

Back to basics
In creating a customer focused culture the Trust adopted a ‘back to basics’ approach. 100 individual patient stories were heard in a series of events which were then shared with staff in workshops. These were designed to pin down what really matters to patients and to align the Trust’s focus on what the patient revolution is trying to achieve. The Trust then created a series of promises, standards and commitments and presented them in the form of a staff handbook. This handbook serves to help staff work together in teams and identify positive behaviours and attitudes so that objectives are delivered consistently across the Trust. The handbook also includes a series of checklists and ‘prompts’ for personal development planning, which hopes to inspire excellence in customer service culture.

Connecting the Board with the ward
Within the Trust, Executive Directors are ‘paired up’ with wards, where they make regular visits to their designated areas in order to monitor progress and receive staff and patient feedback.

Findings from these observations/visits are then fed back to the rest of the Executive team. This approach brings the board closer to any issues, gives a sense of realism to decision making and puts the ‘customer’ back at the heart of the organisational strategy.

Being able to measure improvements in both patient and staff satisfaction is also cited by the Trust as being central to the effective delivery of the patient revolution (thus allowing the Trust to demonstrate the success of their strategies in a tangible way).

Using Patient Stories
Patient stories are highlighted by the Chief Executive of Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust as an important way in which the Trust captures and shares patient experience information throughout the organisation.

Patient stories are seen as highly successful, not just in terms of engaging staff but in demonstrating the importance of understanding the customer in providing service excellence. Understanding the impact that staff behaviour and the organisation’s overall ‘culture’ can have on patient experience is therefore identified as a key priority within the Trust and something which underpins their approach towards the Patient Revolution agenda.

Capturing and understanding patient experience
The use of the NPS within this Trust was initiated prior to the introduction of the Midlands and East Friends and Family Test in April 2012, delivered principally on paper surveys which incorporates the direct question “Would you recommend this service to Friends and Family?”. The questionnaire also includes free text boxes which invite patients to comment on areas where the hospital could improve. Results from the NPS question are used to give weekly feedback where staff can see their own ward results as well as those from other wards across the hospital.

Listening to patient stories, revealing incidents of where patient care has not been inspirational, can sometimes be uncomfortable, but it is crucial to listen in order to identify areas for improvement and demonstrate the importance of consistency in customer service. Patients have raised concerns regarding the attention to detail in the emotional aspects of care and so the Trust has now created an inspirational phrase often used across teams, “The small things that can make a big difference”, which together with creating a sound customer service culture, is seen as key to delivering patient satisfaction across the Trust as a whole.

Barriers to success
Any scepticism amongst members of staff is being addressed by persisting with the approach, ensuring that successes are shared, and providing easier access to NPS information. To overcome barriers and lessens future scepticism, the agenda is also emphasised from the initial stages of staff recruitment, with new employees receiving a pocket sized card outlining the Trust’s key priorities and promises in relation to patient experience. This ensures that these values and commitments are clearly stated from the outset of employment with the organisation and members of staff clear of what is expected of them. This card also serves as an accessible, helpful reminder for members of staff to focus on these issues in their day-to-day roles.

Key points from Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust:
- Patient stories are a useful and ‘powerful’ starting point for engaging staff in the Patient Revolution agenda and implementing organisational change.
- Ensuring that the Executive team is actively engaged and involved is seen as an important factor in delivering the Patient Revolution agenda.
- Being clear on the objectives and behaviours and embedding these into recruitment and selection is crucial to ensuring that the approach is reinforced on a day to day basis.
- Measuring improvements in staff and patient satisfaction as a result of organisational changes allows the Trust to demonstrate progress effectively.

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Driving the Patient Revolution agenda through a customer service culture

The Active Caring for Everybody programme

The key action that underpins Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust's approach to the delivery of the Patient Revolution agenda is the introduction of its Active Caring for Everybody programme, which focuses on empowering staff to take responsibility for their own individual approach to customer care. Patient surveys defined the key objective of ACE to be to improve communications and interactions between service users, care givers and other members of Trust staff.

The programme has thus far been rolled out to 2,000 staff, 10% of the Trust's 5,000 members of staff including key service leads and Board Members, who are encouraged to not only change their own behaviour, but also to challenge others who are displaying behaviours that are not in line with the adopted approach. Future training events are fully booked, which demonstrates the commitment of staff to this initiative. The Trust's Director of Nursing and Midwifery Chief Nursing Officer and senior nurses make regular unannounced ward visits and challenges any member of staff not found to be demonstrating the Trust's principles in terms of providing good customer service. This means that staff are aware of what is expected of them in terms of good customer service.

Capturing and understanding patient feedback

The Trust considers the Net Promoter Score (NPS) to be a fundamental element in capturing patient feedback. In addition to asking the “Would you recommend this service to friends and family?” question, patients are also asked to provide the main reason for their response. Data is collated and disseminated at ward level which ensures that feedback is directed to where it can be used most effectively to improve service standards. Whilst the Trust feels that the NPS is a valuable tool for both capturing feedback and facilitating responsiveness to that feedback, it feels that the addition of carer/relative feedback would also add value to the process. Carers and relatives are more able to be objective about standards in care and the Trust is currently investigating the ways through which this feedback can be captured.

Using Patient Stories

Patient stories were highlighted by the Director of Nursing and Midwifery Chief Nursing Officer as being an important tool through which the Trust uses to capture patient feedback and, more importantly, identify key lessons from it and implement associated changes in practice. One key example is a patient who suffered pressure ulcers whilst in the Accident and Emergency department, who was invited to present her experiences to clinical staff. Such a direct method of communication had a profound impact and there have been marked changes to practices in the Accident and Emergency department as a direct result. The Trust feels that the use of such feedback mechanisms ‘reaches out to the values of nursing’ and helps staff to be more committed to the Patient Revolution agenda.

Improving experience through co-production

Engagement with the wider community is a key component of the Trust’s approach towards the Patient Revolution agenda and the Trust has established links with a range of groups with which it consults regarding service changes and proposals. A key example of this is the Trust’s linkages with a local group which represents people with learning disabilities. This has fed into a number of key initiatives introduced under the ethos of co-production, which is valued and encouraged within the Trust. For example, a booklet entitled ‘All About Me’ has been produced, which those with learning disabilities can use to have their own personal needs and wishes taken into account during their care.

Another initiative which the Trust has implemented within the ethos of co-production is the removal of protected mealtimes and the introduction of a policy of open visiting and actively supporting family and carer involvement in patient care. Such initiatives highlight the wider need to personalise care across the Trust, something which the Trust recognises is strongly connected to its approach to delivering a revolution in patient and customer services experience.

Barriers to success

One of the key challenges identified by the Trust is learning how to analyse negative feedback and use it in such a way that positive, visible changes are made to service provision.

The large amount of information gathered through the annual inpatient surveys can make it difficult to collate the information obtained and draw out the key messages that translate into a course of action. The Trust therefore supplements the annual surveys with much shorter surveys carried out on a monthly basis, which enable more ready identification of which aspects of care need to be improved.

Key points from Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust:

- The creation of a customer service culture hinges on effective leadership at all levels which continually re-states the key messages to staff and leads by example.
- Staff need to be empowered to integrate effective customer service practices into their everyday life and to challenge others that do not do so.
- The involvement of all staff in the Patient Revolution is fundamental and patient stories are an effective way in which direct feedback can be given to care givers and support staff that facilitate changes in practices.

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Using Patient Stories to maximum potential

Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust’s approach towards implementing the patient revolution agenda is underpinned by a focus on real patient stories and the use of these to educate staff members and continually improve customer service throughout the Trust.

Patient stories and experiences are presented by DVD during staff training, reinforcing a view of patients as individuals and as at the heart of everything the Trust does. Staff responses to these are also filmed and incorporated into this training, resulting in a cyclical training process.

Chief Executives are incorporating patient stories into regular team briefing reports which are disseminated to all members of staff throughout the Trust, as well as being regularly incorporated into Board and Senior Matrons meetings. This top-down approach highlights both the prioritisation of patient stories at a senior level, and also the importance of sharing these amongst all levels of staff.

Utilising the Friends and Family Test to improve patient experience

Patient experience at the heart of the Trust’s core ethos and values. This is also underpinned by other patient feedback strategies implemented within the Trust, such as the Friends and Family Test. As well as asking whether patients would recommend the Trust to their family or friends, the Trust also asks three additional questions seeking to identify areas that the hospital does well and could do better and about members of staff who delivered care over and above what they would have expected. These additional questions serve to obtain further information in order to improve customer service and patient experience overall.

Such patient feedback is fed into a badge scheme for nurses, in which nursing staff earn and are awarded a distinctive badge indicating the level of commendation and competency they have reached.

Engaging with the community on their turf

Community engagement is also at the centre of the Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust’s approach towards the Patient Revolution agenda, with community events and consultation exercises used to connect with local communities, particularly those with particular needs in terms of the provision of health information or advice.

One principal example of this is the Trust’s regular attendance at a local mosque in order to meet with members of the local community and offer health information and advice, receive patient feedback and serve as a general point of contact on health related matters. This is a significant and innovative initiative for the Trust, particularly as they are the first NHS Trust to be accepted into a mosque to address Friday Prayers sessions. This initiative now takes place every couple of months in similar venues such as local mosques and places of worship.

Encouraging inclusivity and clarity

Those who are vulnerable or have protected characteristics are able to participate in engagement exercises and share their experiences. This is something which the Trust promotes and encourages, ensuring that patients are treated in a way which respects their independence and dignity. The development of a patient feedback survey, designed specifically for those with learning difficulties, is currently being undertaken by the Trust in order to facilitate their participation in providing such feedback.

To summarise....

Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust demonstrates a focus on patients and the value of their experiences and feedback. The use of patient stories, as well as other methods of feedback such as Net Promoter Score (NPS) based surveys and community engagement activities, enables the Trust to collate a wide range of patient experience data. This is then used and disseminated throughout the Trust with a view to continually improving customer service and patient experience.

Key points from Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust Case Study:

- Patient stories are a vital way of making patient feedback ‘real’ and enabling staff to see the individual behind comments and complaints.
- Patient experience ‘underpins everything’ and is a central focus in implementing organisational change.
- Community engagement, particularly through innovative methods such as attendance at a local place of worship, facilitates open communication and dialogue between the Trust and the wider community.

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In its ‘Changing your experience for the better’ document the Partnership Trust laid out its chronology for change and included a number of key patient focused elements to support the commitment by the Trust Board and staff to listen to the experiences and stories of those service users accessing the Trust.

Patient stories, and the associated opportunities to engage and listen to Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) service users, were seen to play an integral role in creating and supporting the Experience Revolution Programme within the organisation. It should also be noted that patient stories help to generate the foundations for a customer focused culture across the PCT – the two elements are far from being mutually exclusive. The key approaches to using patient stories are:

**‘In Your Shoes’**

is an overarching theme that allows staff to engage with service users and their carers to explore their experiences to enable the Trust and staff to gain a clearer understanding of how staff and the Trust can work with service users to generate clear priorities for improving service. The approach involves a range of activities that are undertaken by Trust members from Board level downwards. These include, collecting comments on postcards and graffiti walls:

Further, staff are trained to facilitate ‘In your shoes’ workshops with service users, their carers and staff to build a shared ambition so as to gain an understanding of the impacts of their interactions, both verbal and non-verbal, with service users and their carers.

**‘Complaints and Compliments Analysis’**

– Using patient stories and experiences in one-to-one sessions between staff and patients provides direct listening opportunities ensuring the stories are clearly expressed without influencing the message.

**Board member ‘walkabouts’**  - all board members undertake unannounced walkabouts round the hospital. As well as allowing spontaneous ‘story gathering’ it is often the case that, prior to undertaking a walkabout, a board member will be informed about a specific patient experience/issue that has been raised on a particular ward. The board member will then ask a service user on the ward about the issue to elicit an insight into a true patient experience.

**‘Live patient story’**  – This approach provides the opportunity for the Trust Board to regularly gain a real insight into service users’ experiences of the Trust. Each month an individual service user or a user and their carer is invited to share their stories at the board meeting, via a relaxed ‘chat show’ approach facilitated by the Director of Nursing.

**Video and DVD**  – patient stories are recorded and shared across staff and board members to further enhance first person understanding of service users experiences.

A key element of the overarching ‘In your shoes’ programme is that real patients provide the context for action and that all service users are able to be involved through the range of story gathering approaches used.

**Making Patient feedback a priority**

The hospital is currently collecting feedback through both traditional paper-based surveys, and more technologically advanced methods, for example through the use of ‘i-Pad’ tablet computers on the wards, and is also developing an ‘App’.

The staff recruitment process includes an assessment of attitudes and behaviour of a potential employee, and will only progress through the interview process if successful. Since the introduction of this those staff members that have been in post have not received any negative comments about attitudes and behaviours – highlighting the value of listening to service users to create an improved, patient focused, service.

The Trust’s Patient Experience Lead of LPT recognises that this is a ‘journey’ and that this is ‘just beginning’ at this stage. The ultimate measure of this journey and the success of the patient revolution is recognised in terms of the reduction of patient complaints, with reaching ‘zero’ complaints in this respect identified as indicating a ‘patient revolution.’ This indicates the hospitals’ targets in terms of measuring their success by the absence of patient, or customer, complaints.

**Interview with Jackie Ardley, Chief Nurse/Executive Director of Quality and Innovation, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust**

**Key points from LPT Case Study:**

The programme and cultural change requires:

- fully engaging with patients and their realities of service users
- a programmed approach
- providing staff with time, resources and resources to embed the programme as a long-term process
- leadership at frontline level with support from higher level decision makers
- ensure that the programme is organisation wide with all levels of staff committing to the process.

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Using Net Promoter Score (NPS) to drive change

Open and inclusive patient feedback
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals Trust’s (NNUH) approach towards the Patient Revolution agenda is fundamentally underpinned by patient feedback and experience.

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is one key method of obtaining patient feedback which is used to its maximum potential by incorporating it into all patient surveys and in a number of formats in order to ensure that the question is administered in an open and inclusive manner. The Trust uses two different styles of patient survey both of which start with the NPS/friends and family question. The full version of the survey also includes 10 other questions on a range of aspects of patient experience, whereas the short version just has the NPS/friends and family question with a follow-up question on why the person gave a particular score. This approach ensures that patients have the opportunity to give either brief or more in depth feedback depending on their preference.

Designed to be robust and patient-led from the outset, feedback from more than 2000 patients to identify the most important issues to them, was gathered through a survey by governors and volunteers during one week in Autumn last year and the new survey co-designed with patients was first piloted and then fully introduced in the Spring. The issues that patients had said they would like to see in a patient survey were categorised into nine key areas, plus an additional question included on staff hand-washing.

Inclusivity and transparency are also key focuses of the Trust in terms of the presentation of NPS data. These results are shared throughout the Trust and collated by ward, so that scores are comparable across the Trust. These results are presented in monthly reports which are shared with each ward, as well as being incorporated into ward ‘dashboards’ which provide up-to-date information to frontline staff.

Moreover, NPS scores are published in public areas for patients and visitors to see maintaining transparency as well as providing an opportunity to drive change and instigate improvements across the Trust through healthy competition between wards on scores.

Using patient experience to improve customer service
Patient experience feedback is a clear foundation to NNUH’s approach towards customer service. The commitment to running meaningful patient surveys, demonstrates that patients are being listened to and ensures that the feedback received makes an impact within the organisation. These are fundamental principles of this approach. In particular, ensuring that feedback directly drives changes and improvements in terms of patient experience is a key ethos within the Trust, and one which demonstrates the organisation’s commitment to actively utilising patient feedback to facilitate progress in terms of the broader Patient Revolution agenda.

Meet your Matron
As well as feedback obtained through the patient survey and NPS, the Trust also has other forms of patient and wider community engagement in place in order to facilitate open communication. One key feedback forum the Trust is about to launch is the ‘Meet your Matron’ programme, which involves Ward Matrons spending time with their patients, their families and carers in an informal meeting to talk through any queries or concerns about care over a cup of tea. These sessions aim to provide families an additional opportunity to give feedback, and allows Matrons to act immediately on any comments made, and to instigate any necessary actions to arise as a result of these - a particularly useful aspect of this form of patient feedback within the Trust.

Dedicated to collecting and presenting patient feedback
For Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, patient feedback is central to ongoing developments in relation to patient experience and customer service. Ensuring that feedback is both collected and presented in an open and transparent way are core principles which underpin the Trust’s approach, with the success of this measured in terms of positive changes to services and improvements in patient experience more broadly.

Interview with Fiona Devine, Head of Communications, Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Key points from NNUH Case Study:

- Sharing NPS scores across the organisation, including displaying results in public areas for patients and visitors, enables transparency and encourages improvement.
- Patient feedback is central to improving patient experience and customer service.
- Engagement forums, such as ‘Meet your Matron’, facilitate open and transparent dialogue between patients, their families and carers, and hospital staff.

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A journey of customer service culture begins...

Nottingham University Hospital’s NHS Trust is still in the early stages of its journey towards embedding a culture of customer service throughout its organisation; however it has already learnt a number of useful lessons in the use of patient feedback to drive change and create an ethos of continual improvement. In 2006, the creation of the Trust through the merger of Nottingham City Hospital and the Queen’s Medical Centre provided the opportunity to identify a single, common customer service culture. Central to the creation of such a culture was identifying the values and behaviours that need to be demonstrated by staff to not only improve patient experience and outcomes, but also to improve staff experience and satisfaction.

In Your Shoes…

The Trust engaged both staff and patients in the identification of those values and behaviours. A key method through which the Trust carried out this engagement exercise was a series of ‘In Your Shoes’ events, where staff could listen to patient accounts of their experiences and gain insight into both positive and negative experiences. The resulting change programme, entitled ‘Best For You,’ was rolled out to more than half of Trust staff through direct training. The core standards that were developed were communicated to existing staff through a series of ‘Events in the Tents’ and incorporated into annual performance reviews. The standards were also embedded into the recruitment process for new staff by integrating them into job descriptions and induction programmes.

The Friends and Family Test as a tool for improvement

Although the Trust has only been using the Net Promoter Score (NPS) for a short period, it recognises its value as a tool in both celebrating success and identifying areas for improvement. Respondents are also asked what would encourage them to give a higher score and feedback is sent to individual wards, where the results are placed in a visible area to encourage staff to strive for continual improvement.

Observing patients experiencing care

Another important mechanism through which the Trust gathers patient feedback is the Trust’s Patient Public Involvement Group, which meets on a monthly basis. One of the key functions that the group carries out is to carry out observations of the patient experience, from admission through to discharge. The Trust believes that the use of individual real life examples offers powerful insight into the patient experience and negative feedback is mapped against the accepted values and behaviours in order to pinpoint to staff the areas in which they can improve.

Using patient feedback on the ground

One example of the way in which patient feedback has been used to implement positive change stems from the re-design of the reception area of the Ophthalmology Department, which was initially implemented with no reference to patient feedback. The re-designed area proved difficult to navigate for visually impaired people and, following engagement with patients and the Royal National Institute for the Blind, the area was changed to better reflect patients’ needs.

Helping staff through the customer service transition

The Trust recognises that, for every new standard or change in practice that is implemented, there will be ‘enthusiasts,’ and also those who question that change and are reluctant to change their behaviours. The Trust counteracts this through the use of direct face to face communications, where staff can be empowered to take ownership of new processes. It is also in the process of developing effective reward mechanisms, which reward staff commitment rather than compliance.

Key points from Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust:

- Understanding ‘what culture do we want to create?’ is a key starting point on the journey towards the development of a customer service culture.
- The responsibility for improving the patient experience lies with all staff, but requires strong leadership at Board level.
- The delivery of continual improvement is fundamental to embedding a culture of customer service.

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Driving change and establishing culture: building on NPS

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB) has a ‘multilayered strategy’ in place surrounding the effective creation and maintenance of a customer services culture within the organisation. Patient feedback underpins this strategy, with a clear focus on patient experience and satisfaction at the core of UHB’s organisational culture.

Utilising technology to drive change

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is one method of receiving patient feedback that is implemented within the Trust. This is included on all patient questionnaires, with electronic systems, such as online surveys delivered via bedside monitors and tablet computers, a favoured method of delivering the NPS question within the Trust.

UHB’s use of tablet computers on wards is a particularly effective method for gaining this patient experience data, combining the face-to-face approach of a member of staff or volunteer visiting patients directly to gain their opinions, with the technological advantages of this data entry at the point of contact. Such direct methods of obtaining patient feedback can be seen to have a positive impact upon response rates, with the Trust reporting 15-20% of patients providing NPS feedback per month, a level which is acknowledged as a significant amount and a higher level than may be experienced in many other Trusts.

A personal touch...

The Trust is also moving towards alternative NPS administration. Questions will now be incorporated into follow up telephone interviews undertaken by the Trust after patient discharge. This provides an opportunity to speak with patients away from the hospital environment, in a more personal way than is possible with paper or computer based surveys. Improving response rates and obtaining more detailed and accurate information are therefore key outcomes which underpin this shift towards incorporating the NPS question into broader telephone feedback strategies employed within the Trust.

A range of other methods for obtaining patient feedback are also used within the Trust such as patient feedback forms available in all clinical areas, informal feedback such as patients letters and comments and ward visits and open ‘surgeries’ held by the Trust’s governors, during which patients are able to share their views or highlight any issues to members of the board.

Going beyond expectations to improve patient experience

Patient feedback is a key driver of change and new initiatives within UHB, with the Trust having developed and implemented a range of measures designed to improve the experiences of patients and their families in response to feedback received.

These initiatives include:

- comfort packs for bereaved families, which include snacks for those staying overnight with their loved ones, hand creams and flavoured mouth swabs to make their relative more comfortable during their passing, and a car parking token so that they don’t have to pay for their parking when they do leave the hospital following a bereavement. Such provisions were recognised as ‘all little things, but so powerful’, with the initiative having received ‘great feedback’

- the introduction of ‘socialised lunching’ and the creation of a designated dining area where elderly patients are encouraged to eat together, dining with ‘china cups and plates’ and provided with music and entertainment – comforts and stimulation which are identified as having made a ‘huge difference for people with dementia’.

These initiatives reinforce the Trust’s ethos of not only receiving feedback, but then acting upon and using this resource to drive change, create and maintain a customer service culture within the organisation and improve patient experience. Acting on feedback in this context relates not only using this to drive improvements and change, but also contacting those who have provided this feedback to ensure that they feel part of the process and, most importantly, that they have been listened to.

A personal RSVP to the patient

Acknowledging patient feedback is something which is built in to the Trust’s culture, with any feedback received being channelled through the Director of Nursing and this being responded to within 48 hours as standard practice. This involves a member of staff calling the patient back during this 48 hour window, and this member of staff maintaining responsibility for the issue or enquiry until it is resolved, ensuring a consistent point of contact for the patient. This practice is something which is particularly positively received by patients, who are glad to have their comments acknowledged and have some form of feedback from the Trust. For the Trust’s Director of Nursing, this is a fundamental part of driving change and implementing a customer services culture within the organisation, as the ‘patient revolution agenda is about people feeling they’re listened to’.

Including the patient in their care

This ethos of listening to and involving the patient is also reflected within the Trust’s approach to the co-production of care. The introduction of a scheme called ‘Myhealth@QEHB’ is a key example of the Trust’s commitment to listening to and encouraging patients to be involved in their own care. ‘Myhealth@QEHB’ is a patient portal system which enables patients to play an active role in their medical treatment by allowing them to have access to, and a degree of input into, their medical records and to communicate and interact with staff and other patients. This exemplifies the Trust’s commitment to patient involvement as this technology not only allows patients to take an active involvement in the co-production of their care, but the system was also designed in collaboration with a group of patients suffering from liver conditions to ensure that it met their requirements.
The value of listening...
Both receiving and responding to patient feedback is central to UHB’s approach to the Patient Revolution Agenda, and is something which is reflected and reinforced throughout the organisation from ward up to Board level. The value of listening to patients, and using their views and experiences to drive change and instil a strong sense of customer service and patient focus within the Trust is something which UHB recognises and incorporates into their broader organisational culture.

Key points from UHB Case Study:
- A multilayered strategy is key to sustaining a broader patient focused culture.
- Providing a timely response to feedback is vital in ensuring that patients feel they are being heard.
- Routine and ‘real’ patient feedback is valued at Board and ward level and is regularly used to instigate service developments and improvements.

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A customer centred approach

Five years ago, a move to new hospital buildings provided Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust with the ideal opportunity to instigate organisational change and implement a customer centred approach, both in terms of the design of the facilities and in the staff values and behaviours that the Trust promotes. Patient reference groups and staff were consulted on the design of the building and the facilities offered, where the key aim was to enhancing the patient and carer experience from the moment they enter the site to the moment they leave.

Patient feedback is an important mechanism through which the Trust conducts continual evaluation of its service offering. It places equal emphasis on the identification of areas in which it can ‘celebrate success’ and areas in which it needs to improve. The Trust believes that the most effective means of collecting patient feedback is direct engagement in the form of face to face surveying. This offers a number of benefits over other methods, including the level of support that can be offered to patients who might otherwise struggle to provide feedback and the opportunity to probe responses in more depth.

The Trust has used a variety of face to face methods to collect feedback from patients, including:

- The Patient Experience Tracker (PET) system, where portable mobile data capture units are used to capture and upload data.
- The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is used as a means of collecting feedback from a random sample of patients that are being discharged on a given day.

Patient stories are used to maximum effect, with positive and negative examples presented at Board level and used to drive change.

Patient feedback is collated on a monthly basis and the results are sent to Divisional Teams and Service Line Teams and are also fed through to the hospital’s Governors, a sub-committee of which focuses directly on patient experience. The Trust places particular importance on analysing feedback by theme, which enables it to identify specific areas in which it can improve. Any changes to values and working practices are then cascaded back down to individual teams.

All staff together with a common goal: good customer service

The Trust values openness and transparency and staff are encouraged to highlight any difficulties they face in adopting the values and behaviours required to deliver high standards of customer service. Staff are able to provide anonymous feedback through drop boxes located throughout the hospital and are also encouraged to raise any pertinent issues during daily team meetings.

The delivery of a culture of customer service is something that the Trust believes is the responsibility of all members of staff. Senior members of staff are expected to ‘go back to the shop floor’ to provide support to staff and understand the issues that they face. Non-Executive Directors each spend a day shadowing the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), in order that they have a better understanding of the issues being raised.

Barriers to good customer service

One of the key barriers identified by the Trust in the delivery of a customer service culture is the physical separation of patients and staff, particularly reception staff, who were formerly sat behind glass screens. In the new building, there is no physical segregation between reception staff and patients, and staff are encouraged to stand up and actively welcome patients. This means that communication is easier and staff can more easily judge if a patient needs more support.

Engaging the community through focus groups

The Trust places strong emphasis on engagement with the wider community and the feedback obtained is used to not only drive change but also to test ideas for change. A key example of this is the use of focus groups made up of service users to discuss potential changes to service offerings. The Trust takes specific steps to ensure that those who are vulnerable or with protected characteristics are represented within patient experience feedback and consultation exercises and is currently recruiting a member of staff to assist this process.

Interview with Tracey Brassington, Customer Services Manager, Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Key points from Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust:

- The introduction of new hospital facilities provides a key opportunity to instigate a process of organisational change in line with the Patient Revolution agenda.
- Strong leadership is crucial; however the responsibility for delivering high standards of customer care lies with each and every member of staff.
- Examples of good practice provide learning opportunities that are as important as those stemming from examples of poor practice.

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