

TRUSTtalk

Magazine for staff, members, volunteers and people who use our services



Community
Mental Health
Transformation
.....

New Autism
Diagnostic Service
.....

Efficiency & Value
Programme
.....

Members
.....



We care. We respect. We are inclusive.



Paul Calaminus

Chief Executive FOREWORD

Trustalk is now available in a digital format meaning you can read it on your phone, a device or a computer. The digital version has longer more detailed versions of some of the articles plus some short films featuring people in this issue. It is also interactive as you can comment on the topics in this issue. Go and have a look:



I'D like to say that we are seeing signs of Spring, however, as I write this, an Amber cold weather alert has just been issued so it looks as if we will have to wait a while for warmer temperatures.

This edition of Trustalk is a Mental Health Transformation special issue - full of stories of how this work is progressing in all corners of the Trust, and how we are tailoring support to the individual. We have an interview with a Biggleswade Peer Support Worker who shares her inspiring journey from mental health crisis to employment in ELFT. You can read about the quality improvement work we have been doing to tackle waiting lists and waiting times, and the innovative ways we try to be there for people in crisis and pre-crisis with our 'Together Cafes'.

In Newham, we have opened a new Autism Diagnostic Service for adults, and established a new discharge service to catch homeless people when they have contact with local hospital services to prevent them returning to the streets.

A school in Tower Hamlets made a touching gesture in Children's Mental

Health Week by creating Thank You cards to give to Child and Adolescent Mental Health team. They wanted to show their appreciation to the team for looking after their mental health.

One of our longstanding service directors, Dean Henderson, is to retire after 14 years. Dean has steered services through a period of great change. We wish him well in his retirement.

Finally, we say farewell to the East London Vaccination Service which is to close at the end of March. COVID vaccination will no longer be offered to the whole population but will be available to those with high-risk health conditions from their GP practice or local pharmacy. It feels like the end of an era. There were times when we wondered if we would ever come to this point. The Vaccination team have played such a key role in protecting people in North East London and our staff. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who was on that journey and thank them for all they did for our communities.

**Paul Calaminus
Chief Executive**

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Royal Visit for Tower Hamlets



THE Risk and Governance Team at Health E1, Tower Hamlets, were in exactly the right position to see King Charles and, Camilla, the Queen Consort during their visit to the borough on 8 February. The Royal pair walked right past the front door on their tour of Brick Lane.

It was the King's first trip to the borough since his appointment. He toured Brick Lane shaking hands with people and being welcomed by Bangladeshi dancers and music. Staff at Health E1 joined people lining the road to welcome the Royals.

The King met heads of charities and businesses to learn about the impact of COVID, meet with community elders involved in the anti-racism movement of the 1970s, and attend Brick Lane Mosque, an iconic religious building which has served three Abrahamic faiths in its 280 year lifetime.

Dean Henderson, Borough Director for City and Hackney to Retire



AFTER 14 years as Borough Director for City and Hackney, Dean Henderson retired at the end of March 2023. Dean qualified and worked in New Zealand as a Social Worker before moving to the UK with his family in 1994. He settled first in

Bristol and has now spent almost 30 years living and working in the UK.

Dean has been an advocate for integrated care, building support services around the needs of service users rather than expecting them to fit into what is offered. Under his leadership, City and Hackney were the first Directorate to introduce single sex wards.

He led a Trustwide review of Care Programme Approach from 2016- 2018 - a successful collaboration across Directorates involving service users', clinicians, corporate departments and local authorities working together to create a new CPA process which was digital, easier to use and most importantly, recovery focused.

We wish Dean all the best in his much-deserved retirement.

School Children Say 'Thank You' to Mental Health Staff

AS part of Children's Mental Health Awareness Week activities, pupils at Christ Church Primary School in Brick Lane, Tower Hamlets, wanted to say thank you to CAMHS staff.



Alan Strachan, People Participation lead for East London's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, was presented with a bundle of 'thank you' cards when he visited Christ Church Primary School on in February. The children had made the cards as part of a series of activities to mark Children's Mental Health Week which ran from 6-12 February to thank staff for their hard work and for helping with people's mental health.

It was the idea of Deputy Head Lucy Romaine who contacted the Trust. She said, *"As well as making the cards, the children did lots of activities that focused on their wellbeing and explored activities that make us feel happier. We visited Hackney City farm to spend time with the animals, they did some gardening and artwork, and we talked about how to know when someone is sad and what we can do to support them. It's certainly got us talking about mental health wellbeing."*

Alan was delighted to receive the cards and will be passing them on to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health team at their next team meeting. He said *"I know my colleagues will appreciate the thought that went into the cards. It was really touching to meet some of the children and hear about their week of activities. It is so positive that issues of wellbeing and mental health are being talked about at a young age. The discussion will help them to notice changes in themselves or others and think about things that can help. Like listening, talking about it or doing something which lifts the mood or makes it feel a bit better. These are skills for life."*

Children's Mental Health Week

Place2Be launched the first-ever Children's Mental Health Week in 2015 to shine a spotlight on the importance of children and young people's mental health. This year's theme was 'Let's Connect.' The pupils of Christ Church School certainly did that!



Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work Visits Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies



TOM Pursglove MP, Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, visited the Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies service on 16 March. He met with staff who work in the service and two local residents who have recently used the service.

The Minister was keen to hear about the impact of Employment Advisors who are part of the Talking Therapies team, and to hear first-hand, the value of supporting people with common mental health conditions by providing employment advice to help them stay in work or return to work.

Dr Alia Hussain, Clinical Lead/Clinical Psychologist, and colleagues explained how the service works providing support and strategies to help people to address issues and build confidence, working alongside employment advisors. Tower Hamlets has a high unemployment rate (4.7%) compared with other London boroughs and just over 5% of the population have a disability so this service is much needed in the borough.

The Minister met with Chris Heidel and Anamika Butalia, Tower Hamlets residents who have recently received Employment Advisor support. They spoke of the importance of having a focus and purpose in their lives, the value of the support they had received from the service, and how transformed they felt from their contact with the service.

The Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Tom Pursglove MP said:

“It was truly inspiring to meet staff and patients at the NHS Talking Therapies Service in Tower Hamlets, where amazing work is being done to help people with mental health conditions on their journey into, or to return to, employment.

“In the week we published our Health and Disability White Paper which set out the fundamental principle that health services and work outcomes should be better joined up, I was delighted to see how existing services are delivering this and improving lives.

“Having a fulfilling job is an enormous source of self-worth and self-pride, and in Tower Hamlets I saw how positive conversations about getting into work are also hugely important to people who are on their health journey to recovery.”

Monton Jienpetivate, Associate Clinical Director for Primary Care Psychological Services said, *“The key success in helping people to get back on track quickly is to offer the right care at the right time, without multiple referrals or long waits. Around 80% of Service Users to the Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies is by self-referral. They receive psychological help alongside employment support in one place.”*

Just put ‘Talking Therapies’ into any online search field to find your local service.

ELFT CEO in HSJ Top 10



ELFT’S Paul Calaminus has been named among the top 10 NHS Chief Executive Officers (CEO) in the country for the second year running by the Health Service Journal (HSJ). The annual HSJ list of top 50 provider trust CEOs is judged by a panel of senior and respected healthcare leaders. The focus was on their likely

impact during the next 12 months, although past performance is also taken into account.

Paul was delighted, saying, *“This wouldn’t be possible without the support of our wonderful staff at ELFT and is a recognition of their work.”*

Eileen Taylor, joint Chair across ELFT and North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT), said: *“This is great recognition for Paul who leads ELFT with humility and the passion to improve the lives of the people we serve. His values based leadership and collaborative work across East London, Bedfordshire and Luton is making a real difference. We are fortunate to have him.”*

Paul joined the Trust in March 2017 as chief operating officer and was appointed as Deputy Chief Executive in December 2019 and interim Chief Executive in October 2020. He was appointed as Chief Executive in March 2021.



New Autism Diagnostic Service for Newham



A dedicated Autism Diagnostic Service has opened in Newham to assess people over the age of 18 for Autism. In recent years, there has been growing interest in Autism and surge in referrals leading to long waiting lists. Trusttalk met with Robin Betts, the Clinical Manager for the service, to find out more.

What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that affects how people perceive, communicate and interact with others. For legal purposes, it is classed as a disability. Autism may co-occur with mental health conditions or learning disabilities. While autism is not a learning disability, around 4 in 10 Autistic people have a learning disability.

With an estimated 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK – approximately 1% of the population – most people probably know someone who is Autistic.

What are the benefits of being diagnosed as an adult?

For this group, getting a timely and thorough assessment and diagnosis may be helpful because:

- it may help them (and their family, partner, employer, colleagues and friends) to understand why they may experience the world differently, and how to promote better understanding and autism-specific adjustments where necessary
- it may correct a previous misdiagnosis (such as Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder), and mean that any mental health problems can be better addressed
- it may help them to get access to appropriate services and benefits
- they will be entitled to have reasonable adjustments made by their employer, college or university, if they choose to disclose
- it may help women, and/or those who do not present with typical autism behaviours who may not before have been recognised as autistic by others
- They can join the autism community, or wider neurodiversity community for support.

Do we know why autism happens?

Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition caused by differences in brain. Research suggests that it has multiple genes rather than a single gene. Also, it appears to occur within families but it is not always the case. Lastly, certain environmental influences may increase the possibility of someone becoming autistic. However, it is not caused by emotional deprivation or the way a child is brought up.

Can people have autism their whole life and never know?

The simple answer is yes. Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition, which means that people are born with it. For different reasons, people may not be diagnosed when children, especially when their differences are internalised and not displayed. In the last years there has been an increasing awareness of neurodiversity, which may support people to detect their differences, wonder if autism could be underpinning the way they feel, and seek a diagnosis.

Why are more males found to have autism?

More men and boys are currently diagnosed as autistic than women and girls. This is changing slowly but surely, as more women and girls are being diagnosed as autistic. Women and girls are often better at masking or camouflaging their difficulties. Autism traits in girls are under-reported by teachers.

Why is there the sudden interest and increase in being assessed for autism?

Advances in diagnostic capabilities and greater understanding and awareness of autism spectrum conditions seem to be largely driving the increase.

Why are waiting times so long right now?

The increase in awareness and understanding around autism and neurodiversity has been a key point in the increasing number of referrals, which leads to waiting times.

You can read the longer article in the Digital version of Trusttalk. Information about the service can be found on the ELFT website.

World Autism Acceptance Week runs from 27 March - 2 April 2023



Special Issue: Community Mental Health Transformation - Beds and Luton, and London

Changes are being made to better support people with severe mental health problems in their communities. Community mental health transformation is taking place across ELFT services in City & Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Bedfordshire and Luton.

THE aim of community mental health transformation is to better support people with severe mental health problems in their communities and create a more accessible and flexible system by bringing together mental health services with GP practices, social care, the voluntary sector, and community groups.

We have been developing new ways of bringing together primary and secondary care with social care, other local authority services, our

third sector and local communities to support people with severe mental health problems, including complex emotional needs associated with a diagnosis of ‘personality disorder’ and disordered eating.

This pioneering transformation work – which began in our inner London footprint as one of the 12 national ‘early implementer’ sites in autumn 2019, and started in Bedfordshire and Luton in April 2021 – is an ambitious programme of change up to 2023/24.

It involves lots of conversations with

staff from stakeholder organisations, service users and local citizens to design and test new ways of working, and to help reshape community mental health services enabled by new NHS Long Term Plan investment.

Through workshops, focus groups and localised work in newly-formed ‘blended teams’, we aim to coproduce improvements to mental health care based in and around primary care networks (PCNs).

Bashir Hassan - Community Connector



from the NMHT.

“My job is to think about where people can find other help within the community that will improve their wellbeing and mental health,” said Bashir.

“If people are feeling isolated I refer them to a

community centre and if they are lonely I can refer them to a support worker”

He added: *“I also help signpost people to the right place if they need help with housing applications or rent arrears. I can link people with charities and for help with other things like Freedom Passes.”*

He said the biggest issue raised by service users is financial pressures.

Bashir also emphasised the importance of a team that reflects the diversity of the community they support.

“I speak Somali, Arabic and English and we also have team members who speak Spanish and Italian.”

Bashir is employed by Coffee Afrik, a community cooperative and community-based organisation operating in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham, and is co-located with the Neighbourhood mental health team.

Aileen Valydon, Operational Lead for Isle of Dogs & South Poplar Neighbourhood Mental Health Team (NMHT) Network 7 & 8, said Bashir and other community connectors help unlock a wealth of offers available within the community.

“Bashir has a wealth of knowledge, can influence the health system from within and – most importantly – he asks really important questions to service users and thinks about solutions that provide practical, positive changes to benefit their day-to-day lives,” she said.

“One example of his value is how he engages with service users who had many repeat mental health crisis presentations. There is a direct correlation between Bashir engaging with some of those individuals and them not returning to the crisis pathway.”

She added: *“He is incredible.”*

ONE way that the mental health transformation programme is providing a more flexible approach to care is through the work of community connectors.

The connectors work within Neighbourhood Mental Health Teams (NMHTs) and help link service users with organisations outside of ELFT as part of their recovery journey.

Hassan Bashir is a community connector with the Isle of Dogs NMHT.

The team refer individuals to Bashir when they think people would benefit from wider support with the community, while continuing to receive help for their mental health



Molly Johnson - Social Prescriber for Luton Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs)



A blended approach to community mental health is in place across all six Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in Luton.

The new approach is led by the four adult CMHTs in Luton, which now include specialist staff from the voluntary sector working alongside Trust mental health professionals.

The expanded offer includes daily triage available to each PCN, replacing a previous once-weekly triage and outcome approach.

The new-look CMHT teams include provision of community connectors, a senior drug and alcohol specialist, housing and offender outreach

workers and healthy lifestyles, social prescription link worker, domestic advisors and care navigators.

Molly Johnson is the social prescriber for the Luton teams.

She is co-located with the Luton CMHTs at Charter House and employed by Active Luton, which works to make a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the Luton community.

Molly's role is to help service users consider factors that might be influencing their mental health and enable support or opportunities for them to make positive changes.

"My work is about supporting the holistic environment around people's mental health treatment and connecting them with different sorts of community support," she said.

"It could be exercise, introduction to social groups, weight management support, stopping smoking, drug and alcohol advice or even housing and welfare support."

Molly helps each client over three months and offers flexible support which can include face-to-face meetings, phone calls over meetings via Zoom.

"I love the job," she said.

"Seeing the clients find their mojo again through meeting the right people or connecting with the right organisation is incredibly rewarding."

Trudy Wrake, Transformation Lead & Service Manager Luton CMHTs, said the new approach is structured around providing person-centred care and understanding the needs of the individual.

"People like Molly are proving invaluable in helping us think about the big picture of what support our service users need as part of their recovery journey," she said.

"There is also 'no wrong door' to getting help and support. Service users are guided to the right service or agency for their needs at the time."

Meet Jamie Stafford - CMHT Programme Director, East London

THE steps taken forward in bringing people and healthcare partners together is one of the highlights of the transformation programme, writes Jamie Stafford, Programme Director for the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme in East London.



The East London programme was selected as one of 12 early implementer sites in 2019 and tremendous progress has been made because of the commitment and hard work of service users, mental health professionals, social care professionals and Voluntary

Community Sector (VCSO) partners.

There was recognition that mental health services often feel really fragmented and the focus for everyone involved in this programme has been how to make care feel more joined-up.

It wasn't about creating more services – it was about making accessing mental health support less complicated.

Relationships have changed between different organisations and that has helped change and improve the care offer.

As an example, one of our GP colleagues in Tower Hamlets talks about how they might see a patient in the morning who would benefit from some mental health support.

Previously, she would have sent off a form and then waited for a reply – which may well have said the patient didn't meet the service criteria and advised them to try somewhere else.

Now, the GP joins a daily

neighbourhood huddle and will speak to people from mental health services and different voluntary sector organisations. She will share the conversation held with her patient and ask 'what do you think?'

There is then a joined-up conversation. The GP can then text her patient, who she only saw a few hours earlier, and say *'this is the plan and this is the service who will be in touch to support you'*.

It is a really responsive approach.

The programme is about providing an integrated mental health offer across all different services so people get a rapid response and rapid support.

I feel incredibly proud of the changes being made to improving community mental health care and incredibly privileged to work alongside amazing service users, health professionals and voluntary sector organisations who are making this change possible.



Community Mental Health Transformation



AN open event has been held in Dunstable to promote mental health support available across the town – and for service users to help design further changes to care.

ELFT services and partners from charities and community groups that offer help for people from across the town used the event to provide an overview of the range of different support available, from walking groups through to help finding employment.

Looking After Your Mental Health & Wellbeing in Dunstable was held at Dunstable Community Halls on Wednesday, February 8.

It included an overview of changes already in place to community mental health care, including daily triage meetings where ELFT and other community organisations discuss how to best support people.

Service users, carers and other members of the public who attended were also asked for their advice and guidance on further changes to care, including the language used by services through correspondence and face-to-face care.

“At its heart, this is about changing

our approach so we look at people holistically,” said Sally Wilkin, People Participation Lead for Transformation in Bedfordshire & Luton.

“All partners now meet daily to discuss the needs of people referred to us – both their immediate needs and also to think about how we can help further by looking at some of the factors contributing to people’s poor mental health.”

The event is part of the Trust’s community mental health transformation programme.

The programme is developing new ways of bringing together primary and secondary care with social care, other local authority services, our third sector and local communities to support people with severe mental health problems, including complex emotional needs associated with a diagnosis of ‘personality disorder’ and disordered eating.

“This entire programme is about co-production with every step shaped by service users and carers working in equal partnership with health professionals,” said Patrick Moore, Transformation Lead and Service Manager for Mental Health Services in Central Bedfordshire.

Asking for a Friend

A close friend of mine has recently lost his mother. They were very close and he is very down. I don’t know what to do and I don’t know what to say.

It is difficult to know how best to proceed when someone has a bereavement. You don’t want to say the wrong thing but playing safe and not mentioning it doesn’t seem right either.

It is of course normal to be sad when you lose someone you care about. There are many stages to grief and everyone is different in how they cope and feel. There could be feelings of guilt. Some may feel relieved when somebody passes away if they have been unwell for a long time and it has been hard to watch this and support them. Sometimes people may feel they have to be strong for others, or they may feel embarrassed to be tearful and out of control emotionally. So the first thing is not to assume how your friend is feeling but let them know that you are there for them. So ask open questions in a soft or quieter voice to convey that you do care and want to support them. Such as: How are you today? How are you doing? How have you been feeling after all that has happened?

And then take your cue from their response for the conversation that follows. Remember, you won’t make him feel worse if he is already feeling upset. But your kindness will be noticed and appreciated. If your friend tells you that they are really struggling and finding it hard to keep going, suggest that they book an appointment with their GP who will be able to suggest some options to help him through. There are some helpful websites too that he could look at:

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/>

<https://www.thegoodgrieftrust.org/>

<https://www.ataloss.org/>

<https://sudden.org/covid-19-bereavement/>





Together Cafes – The Alternative to A&E for Mental Health Needs

THE Tower Hamlets and Newham Together Cafes are a community-based initiative aimed at providing support and assistance to residents in a self-defined mental health crisis at evenings and weekends. The Cafe provides a welcoming and comfortable environment where individuals can receive care and support from trained support workers, peer support workers and healthcare professionals.

Accident & Emergency

Going to the Accident and Emergency (A&E) can be a stressful and overwhelming experience, especially for those with mental health concerns. A&E is designed to handle emergency situations, such as serious injuries or life-threatening conditions, and as a result, waiting times can be long, and the environment can be chaotic. For those in mental health crisis, there is an alternative.

“The Together Cafe offers a more relaxed and personalized approach to healthcare. Visitors can receive care in a quiet and calming environment, where they can take the time to discuss their concerns with a trained volunteer or healthcare professional.”

Said Melanie King, Tower Hamlets Crisis Pathway Service Manager.

“The Cafe provides a wide range of services, including basic health assessments, advice on managing long-term health conditions, and support for mental health and well-being.”

Helping to reduce the pressure on A&E

Additionally, by visiting the Together Cafes, individuals can help reduce the demand on the A&E. This not only benefits the wider community, but it also ensures that individuals receive the care and support they need in a timely and effective manner.

With its welcoming environment, personalized approach, and wide range of services, the Cafe offers a more relaxed and effective way to manage people’s mental health.

For more information about the crisis alternative provision in your area, please see the information below:

NAME	ADDRESS	OPENING TIMES	MANAGED BY
Newham Together Cafe	Rokeby Centre, Rokeby Community Hub, 63 Rokeby Street, London, E15 3LS Phone: 08081 968 710 Email: Nh.togethercafe@nhs.net	Monday to Thursday (and all Bank Holidays): 5pm - 9pm Friday to Sunday: 12pm - 9pm	Hesita/East London NHS Foundation Trust
Tower Hamlets Together Cafe	Osmani Trust, Osmani Centre, 58 Underwood Road, E1 5AW Phone: 0808 196 2130/078 2678 0554 Email: Th.togethercafe@nhs.net	Monday to Friday: 5pm - 9pm Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays: 12pm - 9pm	Hesita/East London NHS Foundation Trust
Walk-in Crisis Cafe - City & Hackney	The Raybould Centre, City and Hackney Centre for Mental Health, London, E9 6SR	Open 6pm - 9pm weekdays and 12pm - 4pm at weekends	East London NHS Foundation Trust
The Bedford Beacon	Bedford Wellbeing Centre, 3A Woburn Road, Bedford, MK40 1EG	Every Thursday 5:30pm - 9pm	East London NHS Foundation Trust
The Lighthouse	The Lighthouse, Leighton Buzzard, Whichellos Wharf, The Elms, Stoke Road, LU7 2TD	Monday & Tuesday: 5.30-9pm Wednesday & Friday: 10am - 3pm	East London NHS Foundation Trust
Mental Health Crisis Cafe - BLMK	Florence Ball House, Bedford Health Village, 3 Kimbolton Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK40 2NX Phone: 01525 722225 Email: crisiscafe@mind-blmk.org.uk	Monday to Saturday: 5pm - 11pm	Mind BLMK

Townscape Touches Brighten Charter House



A splash of colour has been added to brighten visits for service users to the Trust’s Charter House site in Luton.

Artists Aimi and Lucy Rix have been busy adding vibrant images of Luton’s townscape throughout the ground and first floor of the site, which is home to Luton’s adult community mental health teams (CMHTs) and to CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services) for Luton.

The project was launched after service users shared their views on how to enhance the environment for people receiving support from teams at Charter House.

Trudy Wrake, Transformation Lead & Service Manager Luton CMHTs, said, *“Our hope is that these small touches will go a long way in making Charter House feel brighter, warmer and provide a more welcoming environment for our service users.”*



Tackling Waiting Times and Waiting Lists



SINCE June 2022, the Trust has offered a Quality Improvement programme to support teams from across the Trust to apply QI methods tackle waiting times and waiting lists by improving the flow of people through their services. In January, many of these teams came together in person for the first time to share ideas and to strengthen their learning community. Some of the high impact change ideas that have led to an improvement include sending text message reminders, offering Saturday clinics, creating designated appointment slots, and improving communication to service users and carers.

Here are a few examples of the optimising flow work going on across

the Trust:

- Tower Hamlets Mental Health: The psychological Therapies service have been sending text reminders to service users, which has seen a reduction in the time taken between a first appointment and the second appointment from 141 days to 74 days.
- Primary Care: The recruitment and retention team are testing out ideas such as designing locality specific job descriptions; using recruitment videos in adverts and developing wellbeing champions, which has reduced their vacancy rate from 21% to 16%.
- Newham Mental Health: The older adult's community mental health team have increased the percentage for people receiving a consultation within 6 weeks from 37% to 69%. They have been testing the introduction of a primary care liaison role and defining their GP's inclusion criteria to reduce inappropriate referrals. They have also started a Saturday clinic so that families can attend.
- Tower Hamlets Community Health services: The foot health and continence teams aim is to reduce the percentage of rejected GP referrals. The team have tested several change ideas including educating GP's on referral criteria, updating their 'I am a GP' website and including necessary referral information on their patient record software.
- Newham Mental Health Child and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS) – by testing out ideas such as group counselling sessions and defining caseloads, the team have seen a reduction in the number of service users on their waiting list for a first appointment.
- Specialist Services: Bedfordshire neuro development team have been testing increasing the multi-disciplinary team meetings, this is to reduce bottle necks in the time it takes for children over 13 years to receive an assessment and diagnosis which has shown an initial improvement.

Preventing Homeless People Being Discharged Back to the Street

A Newham Integrated Homelessness Project aims to use the opportunity of hospital contact to find safe accommodation for homeless people. The new integrated discharge team will work across Newham University Hospital wards and A&E services.



They will provide expert input, liaison, and facilitate and support the discharge of homeless people who present to acute services or who are admitted into hospital.

The team will work closely with the Integrated Discharge Hub, housing teams, adult social care teams, primary care teams and the voluntary sector. The service aims to discharge the person to safe accommodation to avoid them being discharged back to the streets.

Raguraman Padmanabhan (Ram), Service Lead for the Project said, "We hope by intervening at this point and providing alternative accommodation options, we can prevent further illness and health deterioration in this highly vulnerable

group. This will lead to a reduction in unscheduled re-admissions and A&E attendances, and hopefully be a turning point and break the cycle."





Meet Morgan, Biggleswade New Peer Support Worker



MORGAN Newell is a Peer Support Worker based in Biggleswade. She started in the Trust in the Befriending Team in March 2022 and quickly fell in love with the work. Since then, she has been involved in a range of areas— and now she is a couple of weeks into her new role as a Peer Support Worker. Trusttalk caught up with her to hear about her journey.

What interested you in becoming a Peer Support Worker?

Honestly, it was purely because I wanted to offer people the help and support that I wished I had received during my hardest moments. There were so many times when I would have really benefitted from having someone who knew the shameful and terrifying parts of mental health struggles. I want to be able to do that for someone else.

Doing this role has made me grateful for the bad experiences. It has given them a purpose and has made me into the person I am today.

If my past and my conditions help someone else, then it was worth it.

What types of roles/jobs have you done previously?

I worked as a freelance administrator for a small technology company. I went to university to study Sociological Studies which went well until the end of second year when I was in a car accident. I went through some awful personal stuff and had a mental breakdown - all just before the pandemic! It was a really rough time but it was enough for me to actually get some help. Within the following year, I was diagnosed with Depression, Anxiety, Complex-PTSD, and Autism. It was the most terrifying and relieving time of my life.

Later, I was referred to an ELFT employment specialist, Tracy Brewer Reeves from Spring House. I have since worked for the Befriending Service, Autism Bedfordshire, People Participation and Rainbow Bedfordshire. With the skills and confidence these services gave me, Peer Support seemed like the best next logical step.

What is an average day for you - what types of things are you involved with?

As a Peer Support Worker, I use my lived experience and personal diagnoses to help and advise service users through their personal recovery journeys. I will support them at appointments and look for social events and workshops that match their personal interests and experiences. Above all, I will try my best to understand them from their perspective.

In the quiet periods, I will spend my time researching various social events that could be useful; this is all on a shared excel spreadsheet I created for the entire team.

What is the best part of your job?

The excited and elated tone in someone's voice when they

realise that I just get it. When I say something about my own experience, there are those moments where you can see the bittersweet relief that they don't have to convince me. Being able to offer that feeling is amazing.

What is difficult about your role?

Knowing the limits of what I can do to help. The stories you will hear are the worst moments of people's lives and you may not be able to immediately help them.

Who inspires you?

It is so difficult to pick a specific person as inspiration. Instead I draw inspiration from art, books, and media. In my mind, art is an expression of experience and emotion - which sounds just like what I do. How could I not find that inspiring?

If you weren't working in the NHS, what would your alternative career be?

I'd maybe train as a therapist or go into mental health research (Careers I hadn't even considered at the start of my degree!)

What helps you to stay on top of life?

Remembering to be an active participant in my life. When I was younger, I always used to say that I wanted to grow up to be happy. Now that I have grown up, I will choose to demand it, to seek out the things that will bring me joy. As Rebecca Solnit said in her book, *The Hope in the Dark*, "Hope is not a lottery ticket you sit on...it is an axe you break down doors with ... to hope is to give yourself a future."

Thank you for taking the time to listen to me and thank you to everyone in the NHS for helping me find my place.



The role of Apprenticeships @ELFT

NATIONAL Apprenticeship Week in February provided a great opportunity for organisations such as ELFT to celebrate the achievements of our apprentices.

Apprenticeships are a valuable training programme that offer hands-on experience to individuals while they learn and earn a wage. These programmes have been proven to provide a range of benefits to employers and individuals, including in the healthcare industry, such as the National Health Service (NHS).

Apprenticeships @ELFT - Looking at the numbers

Currently, ELFT has 183 members of staff on an apprenticeship programme, either for upskilling or as an entry level route into health care. Topics range from Business Administration and Coaching to Social Work and Advanced Clinical Practitioners.

In January 2023, ELFT took on nineteen Level 7 Clinical Associate in Psychology (CAP) apprentices. This marks the 50th apprentice to have started the CAP apprenticeship programme at ELFT over the past two years.

“Investing in apprenticeships is a way to fill skills gaps and develop a skilled workforce.” ...said Harriet Bone, Learning & Development Business Partner for Apprenticeships.

“Apprenticeships provide a structured and cost-effective way to recruit and train staff in a variety of roles, from clinical and non-clinical roles to leadership and management positions. The benefits of apprenticeships to the NHS are numerous.”

The value of apprenticeships within the NHS

Firstly, apprenticeships allow the NHS to access a diverse pool of talent. This includes individuals who may not have the traditional academic qualifications but possess the relevant skills and experience to thrive in a healthcare environment. Apprenticeships also attract individuals who are eager to learn and contribute to the NHS. This helps to create a more inclusive and representative workforce that can better meet the needs of a diverse patient population.

Secondly, the healthcare industry is facing a significant shortage of skilled workers, and apprenticeships provide a way to train new staff and upskill existing employees. The NHS can use apprenticeships to fill critical gaps in areas such as nursing, healthcare support, and mental health. This helps to ensure that patients receive the care and treatment they need, while also reducing the burden on existing staff.

Thirdly, apprenticeships improve staff retention rates. The NHS faces significant challenges in retaining staff, with many leaving the sector due to stress, burnout, and other issues.

“Apprenticeships can help to address this issue by providing staff with clear pathways for career progression and development. This helps to increase staff motivation and engagement, while also reducing staff turnover rates.”

To learn more about apprenticeships at ELFT, please visit - www.elft.nhs.uk/working-for-us/apprenticeships

Farewell and Thank You to the COVID Vaccination Team



THE service at the East London Vaccination Centre at Mile End (previously at Westfield Stratford) closed on 31 March 2023. Going forward, the national COVID vaccination programme will focus

on high risk clinically vulnerable patients with most vaccinations in North East London, Bedfordshire and Luton provided in local pharmacies and GP practices.

ELFT and other local partners will

be discussing the best future delivery models in line with advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. (JCVI) Our joint priority is to ensure easy and convenient to access.

In its last weeks, the centre has been providing vaccination to patients who have had a stem cell or bone marrow transplant and needed to restart their COVID vaccination course.

The Westfield site gave 246,800 vaccines through the height of the programme. The team spearheaded the local vaccination programme which included the Mass Vaccination event which took place at the London Stadium. Many of the staff employed at the Centre have moved to other job in the Trust.





MP Dame Meg Hillier Visits Greenhouse Practice in Hackney



its service users with much compassion and humanity, how to make sure some of the services are better conceived, coordinated, monitored and run. This would give benefit to some of the most desperate people in society, such as asylum

DAME Meg Hillier, the Member of Parliament for Hackney South and Shoreditch, visited the Greenhouse Practice on 17 March to see the work going on in the practice to support the local community. The practice supports people who are living in hostels or supported accommodation, rough sleepers, and people who spend a significant amount of time on the street or in other public places.

Dame Meg Hillier's visit provided an opportunity for discussion and was a chance for her to hear directly from the patients. Some shared their personal stories of hardship and struggle. Dame Meg was deeply moved by their stories and has asked them to work with her on improving things for this vulnerable group.

Martin, The Poet, one of the practice representatives said, *"It was productive to speak to the MP and the senior management of the Practice to highlight both the things that the Greenhouse Practice does very well, supporting*

seekers, homeless, those with complex needs, and mental health issues."

Dame Meg, who nominated Greenhouse Practice for the prestigious NHS Parliamentary Award, used the visit to personally present them with the Award. *"It was a breath of fresh air for the Greenhouse Practice",* said Sultan Ahmed, Practice Manager at Greenhouse, *"as it was inspiring to hear positive feedback from both the patients and the MP."*

Another patient, Liam, remarked that it was refreshing to have a face-to-face conversation. He felt that Dame Meg's visit had given him and the other patients a voice and a sense of hope for the future.

Dr Mohit Venkatarm, Executive Director said, *"This day highlights the importance of community-based healthcare and the need for compassion and humanity in the healthcare system. It is a reminder that small acts of kindness and support can make a huge difference in the lives of those who are struggling."*

Watch Out for Scam Phone Calls Claiming to be from the NHS



ELFT'S Counter Fraud Team are working with the police to raise awareness of a series of phone scams whereby fraudsters are calling people and pretending to be from the NHS.

The calls appear to originate from what appears to be a local Kent area code telephone number which starts with 01233. The scams have been directed at Bedfordshire residents but could happen anywhere. The caller identifies themselves to be from the NHS and in particular from the 'Health and Wellbeing Service' and after a conversation, offers the sale of vitamin supplements for £170.

Bethan Raistrick, ELFT's Local Counter Fraud Specialist explains. *"It is important to convey to the public that no NHS service would under any circumstances call members of the public and attempt to sell vitamin supplements. If you receive such a call, you need to be aware that it is a scam call."*

A second devious scheme to obtain personal details from people over the phone has also been reported. In this one, calls are made from a withheld number. The caller pretends to be from the NHS. When the resident answers the phone, the caller says *"Hi, I'm from the NHS. We have your referral."* The caller then asks the resident to confirm their identity by asking them for their personal details like name, address, date of birth, etc. The scam caller will be vague about what service they are calling from.

Bethan goes on to urge the public to be vigilant to such calls to avoid revealing personal information that could be used for fraudulent activity. She says, *"If you get a call from any of ELFT's services, our staff will be happy to provide their full name, the team they work for, their base and contact details, and the reason for their call. If the person calling you will not provide this information, end the call. Do not share any personal information."*

If you are in doubt about a call and are receiving care from one of our services, call us on the number you have on a letter or from the ELFT website, and just check.

If you think you or someone you know has been the victim of a crime, please call the Police on 101.



Unlocking the Potential of ELFT's Efficiency & Value Programme: Paper Copy

ELFT is committed to ensuring the Trust remains financially viable in the long-term and has to meet a challenging efficiency target of £17.5 million in 2023/24.

To achieve this, ELFT has developed the Financial Viability Programme which focuses on reducing costs and improving value for money. Everyone is encouraged to take part in this programme by reducing waste, developing services with good value in mind, reducing supplier contract spend, reducing paper processes, making the most of system functionality, and reducing carbon impact.

By contributing to this work, you can help us reach our efficiency target and ensure the Trust remains financially viable in the long-term. Here's how we are unlocking the potential of this programme and how we can encourage all staff, service users and our local communities to do their bit.



Reducing Waste

Reducing waste is key to ELFT's Financial Viability Programme. Anyone can get involved by identifying areas where we are not using resources and processes efficiently and taking positive action to reduce this waste. Our Pharmacy Team have already implemented great initiatives on medication waste, preventing several hundred pounds of spend per week. Read their story and access waste reduction tools on the intranet. Get in touch with the

Financial Viability Team for support.



Service Developments

Develop services with value in mind. Line up care pathways in the best way for the populations we serve, and use resources effectively in the area of prevention. Think creatively across care pathways and directorate boundaries to eliminate repetitive processes for service users.



Supplier Contract Spend

Reducing supplier contract spend is a great way to contribute to our efficiency target. Morrison Ward at John Howard Centre and Oakley Court in Bedfordshire have achieved fantastic results by improving inventory management and only spending money on the supplies that service users actually want. Read their stories on our QI microsite and be inspired to try this in your area of work.



Paper Processes

Save money and reduce your carbon footprint by reducing paper processes! ELFT have saved over £400,000 a year by changing their printing habits and will now progress to offering the option of appointment letters being sent via email. Consider whether a digital process could work better and try to eliminate the need for paper forms.



Sustainability

ELFT are committed to reducing their carbon impact and costs by providing more

sustainable transport infrastructure for staff to use, reducing miles travelled, reducing single-use plastic and replacing it with a more sustainable alternatives. Anyone can join our Climate Network and check out stories on the Green intranet page to help them become more environmentally sustainable.



System Functionality

Make the most of our systems and buildings! Check systems for functions you're not using and make sure we're making use of all available building space – really make our systems work for the money and reduce costs.

Be bold and be creative - share your success stories with us! If you're aware of money being wasted and don't feel you can do anything about it, get in touch with ELFT's Financial Viability Team for support.

Financial Viability Programme Management Office

- Sarah Barnett, Programme Manager: sarah.barnett6@nhs.net
- Dr Waleed Fawzi, Clinical Lead
- Tahir Abdullah, Finance Lead

Executive Directors for Financial Viability

- Samantha Gibbens, Interim Chief Finance Officer
- Lorraine Sunduza, Chief Nurse

Visit <https://www.elft.nhs.uk/intranet/teams-support-me/elft-value-financial-viability> to find out more information.





MEMBERS

WELCOME to our Membership page, you may remember that we spoke about our goal to improve how we communicate with you; whether that be meetings, how we engage our local community, how our Governors can hear from you – in short all things membership.



We were really pleased that some of our members were able to meet with us at our 'Conversation' meetings held in January. They shared their thoughts on ELFT Membership, what it means to them and what it could mean to others. We have also held the three sessions of our Membership Task and Finish Group. It had representatives from across our Trust, including members, governors and service users. We are co-producing our new Membership Engagement plan to ensure that our plan considers both our members and the wider population that we serve. Our current membership strategy is very lengthy. Our new plan will fit on one page and we hope to 'talk' to everyone.

We will share the final plan with you and some plans for the year in the Summer edition of Trusttalk.

Our Governors have been busy. Along with Membership planning, they have undertaken the important role of appointing our Trust Chair. As you will have seen, Eileen Taylor was appointed as our Chair with effect from 1 January 2023. It is a Joint Chair role - Eileen is also Chair of NELFT.

We also held our first in person Council of Governor meeting on 9 March at the Bishopsgate Institute in London. It was the first time we had held this meeting face to face since early 2020.

It was heart-warming to be back in a room with our Governors, some of whom we hadn't seen in three years. We also said our official good bye to Mark Lam, our previous Chair, who left the Trust in 2022. We hadn't had the opportunity to say goodbye. Our next Council of Governor meeting will be held on 11 May 2023 – why not join us and come along and meet your Governors.

Caroline Ogunsola – our Lead Governor tweeted – *“We met today face to face for the first time in months. What*



a joy to see my fellow fabulous #Governor, our fantastic NEDs, and most importantly it was a joy to see people in flesh.”

You can see in the photos some of our Governors and board members discussing the importance of 'getting the basics right' and what it means to them.

If you would like to contact the Membership office or your Governors you can call us 0800 032 7297 or email us at elft.membership@nhs.net



Our usual plea - Help us Save Pennies

As you are no doubt aware costs for the NHS (and all of us) are increasing. We are trying to make sure that we make the best use of our money, so, if Trusttalk is posted to you please let us have your email address. You will still hear from us, but it will be by email. We would prefer to send you an email version of Trusttalk, not only will we save trees, we will save on postage costs! So please, if you have an email address - let us know, you can email us at: elft.membership@nhs.net please include your full name and address.

.....or if you no longer wish to hear from us (and that's ok), please let us know using the same email address or give us a call on 0800 032 7297.

Innovative App Helping Children with Anxiety



NEWHAM parents, carers, teachers, GPs and other adults can sign children up to access an innovative new app for children ages 7-12 years. The NHS-approved Lumi Nova app has been developed as a result of extensive co-creation with experts from University of Reading, MindTech (NIHR-funded medtech cooperative), clinicians, teachers, parents and children themselves.

It is a fun and safe digital therapeutic intervention that can be accessed on mobile phones and tablets. Children take part in a fun intergalactic-themed mobile game which helps them to process how they are feeling.

The National Institute for Health & Care Excellence (NICE) advocate it as a first-line treatment option for children with mild to moderate anxiety.

The ELFT Charity

THE ELFT Charity supports innovative projects that make a positive, lasting change and go above and beyond what the NHS would usually provide.

Monies aim to:

- Improve social networks
- Improve employment prospects
- Improve digital accessibility



You can find out more about the ELFT Charity via the QR code here or go to the ELFT website: <https://www.elft.nhs.uk/get-involved/elft-charity>

Thanks to staff who baked for a Corporate Staff Get-together - and to those who ate the cakes - raising £130. If you have an idea to raise money for the ELFT charity, we'd love to hear from you. Email us: elft.charity@nhs.net



Chair FINAL WORD



I am one month in to my assignment as Joint Chair of ELFT and NELFT and although a lot of plates are spinning and my tongue gets tied when trying to spit out the names of the trusts, I am thoroughly enjoying myself.

I chaired board meetings at each of the trusts in January and, importantly, held an in person board to board meeting of the two trusts. The energy in room was palpable. Both executive and non executive directors see ample opportunities for further collaboration. Subsequently the executive teams of both trusts went off and identified a few specific areas for additional collaboration. As I walk around both trusts, I hear from people at all levels about joint working that is leading to improved outcomes for our service users and greater efficiency.

I laid out my vision and priorities as joint chair which I would like to share with you. My vision is to improve the health of the populations we serve and address equity of access, experience and outcomes. My four priorities as joint chair are:

1. Patient leadership and putting patients and carers at the heart of everything we do. Equity of access, experience and outcomes must be in our sight at all times.
2. Providing the best possible environments for our staff, focussing on their well being, empowering them and ensuring they have equity of access to opportunities.
3. Data driven decision making and assurance at the boards and making the board deliberations and papers clear and accessible to our staff and communities.
4. Being the best possible system player and an anchor institution in the communities where we operate.

I have been very grateful to the NELFT family for making me feel so welcome and giving me the opportunity to meet so many people and visit a number of services so early on. I am very grateful to the ELFT family for cutting me some slack while I get up to speed with my new responsibilities.