



OT APPRENTICES: THE IMPACT & EXPERIENCE FOR SERVICE USERS & STAFF -TOWER HAMLETS

Strategic theme

DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING OUR AHP WORKFORCE:

Aims	What did you do?	Data
<p>To develop increased capacity within the OT service</p> <p>To recruit staff from the local community</p> <p>To improve the life's of our service users</p> <p>To reduce stress in OT staff</p>	<p>Collaborated with Trust Apprenticeship lead Harriet Bone, to recruit a number of Apprentices from the local community to take up NVQ level Apprenticeships in the OT in-patient service at Tower Hamlets Centre for Mental Health</p>	<p>To date we have had 8 OT Apprentices over the course of 7 years- who have successfully completed NVQ levels 2 and 3 (duration of 1-2 years)</p>

How did this work improve the lives of our service users or staff?

- Firstly, in terms of increased capacity to deliver Occupational Therapy interventions, across the acute and PICU wards in Tower Hamlets Centre for Mental Health, there is obviously a direct positive impact on the quality of care of service users
- Secondly, by increasing the pool of staff from the local community, cultural competency within the OT service is enhanced; the apprentices serving as role models, as well as them having increased local knowledge / networks
- Thirdly, in terms of improving the lives of staff this increased capacity reduces to stress on qualified Occupational Therapy staff as they are released from some of the tasks that the OT apprentices can cover
- Finally, it has enabled recruitment of a number of young people from the local community who will have gained a valuable qualification in Health and Social care, which can be a springboard for them into a variety of career paths in NHS and AHP / Occupational Therapy

Learning and what next?

There have been some challenges along the way, including problems with recruitment of suitable apprentices; learning from which has included more careful recruitment strategies

As a service it has been fruitful in many ways particularly in relation to a latest addition of having an Apprentice who specialises in Sport/physical fitness and we will continue to operate this strategy