

Reducing background noise levels on Cedar Lodge dementia ward – City and Hackney MHCOP

Author (s): Maggie Joyce, Carmel Stevenson, Cathy McCarthy, Dr Waleed Fawzi, Mrs Joanne McAllister (carer), Rosca Marange, Solomon-Ayeh Kwesi, Joy Shakes.

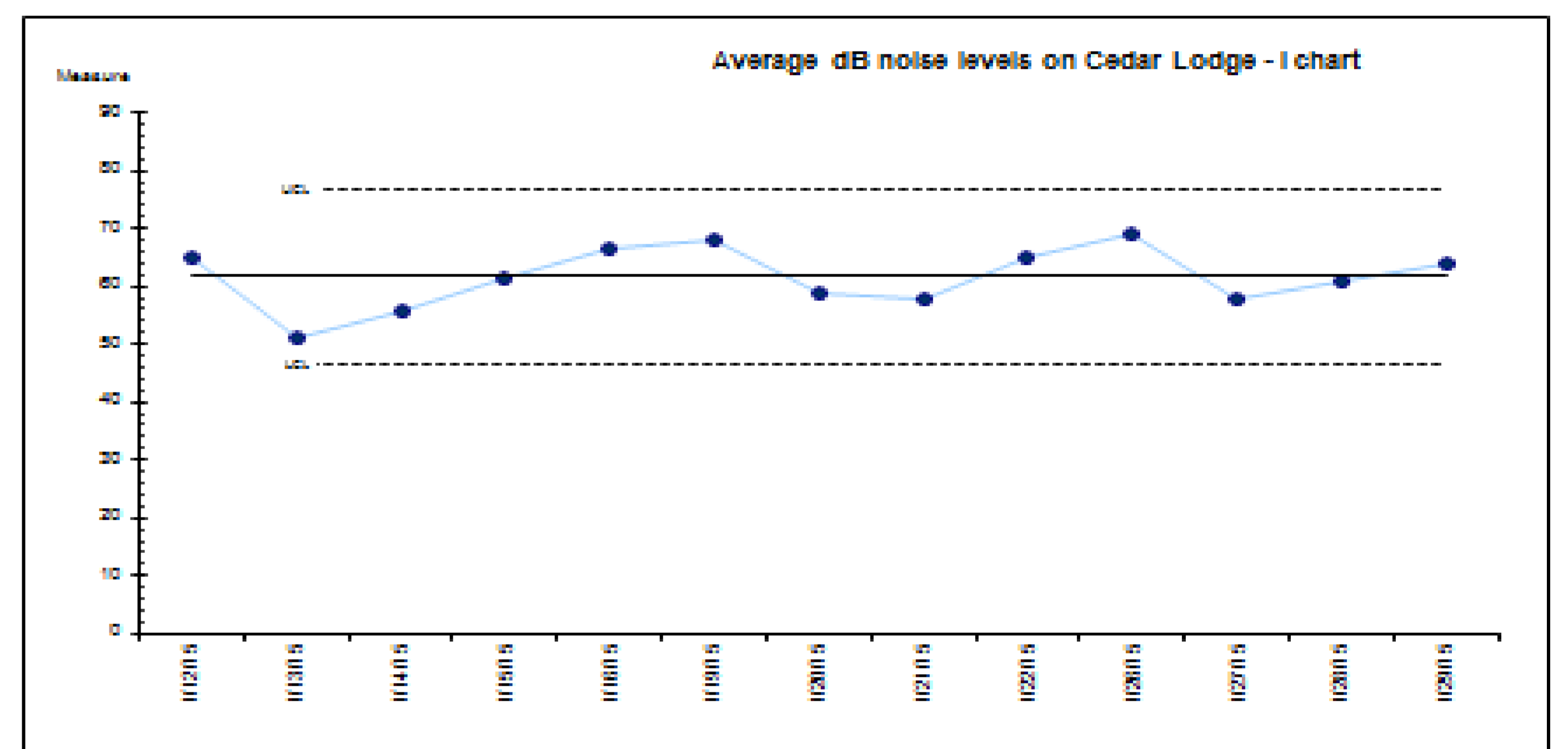
Background and aims:

Noise levels are high on older adults wards, leading to increased agitation and a reduced quality of life. World Health Organisation recommendations are for a maximum decibel level of 40dB on hospital wards, which is the level of a standard library. Having worked on a project on the ward on reducing violence, we decided to use quality improvement methods to address this issue. Our aim is to reduce average dB levels on Cedar Lodge to 50dB (from a current average of 65 dB), by end of June 2015.

PDSA:

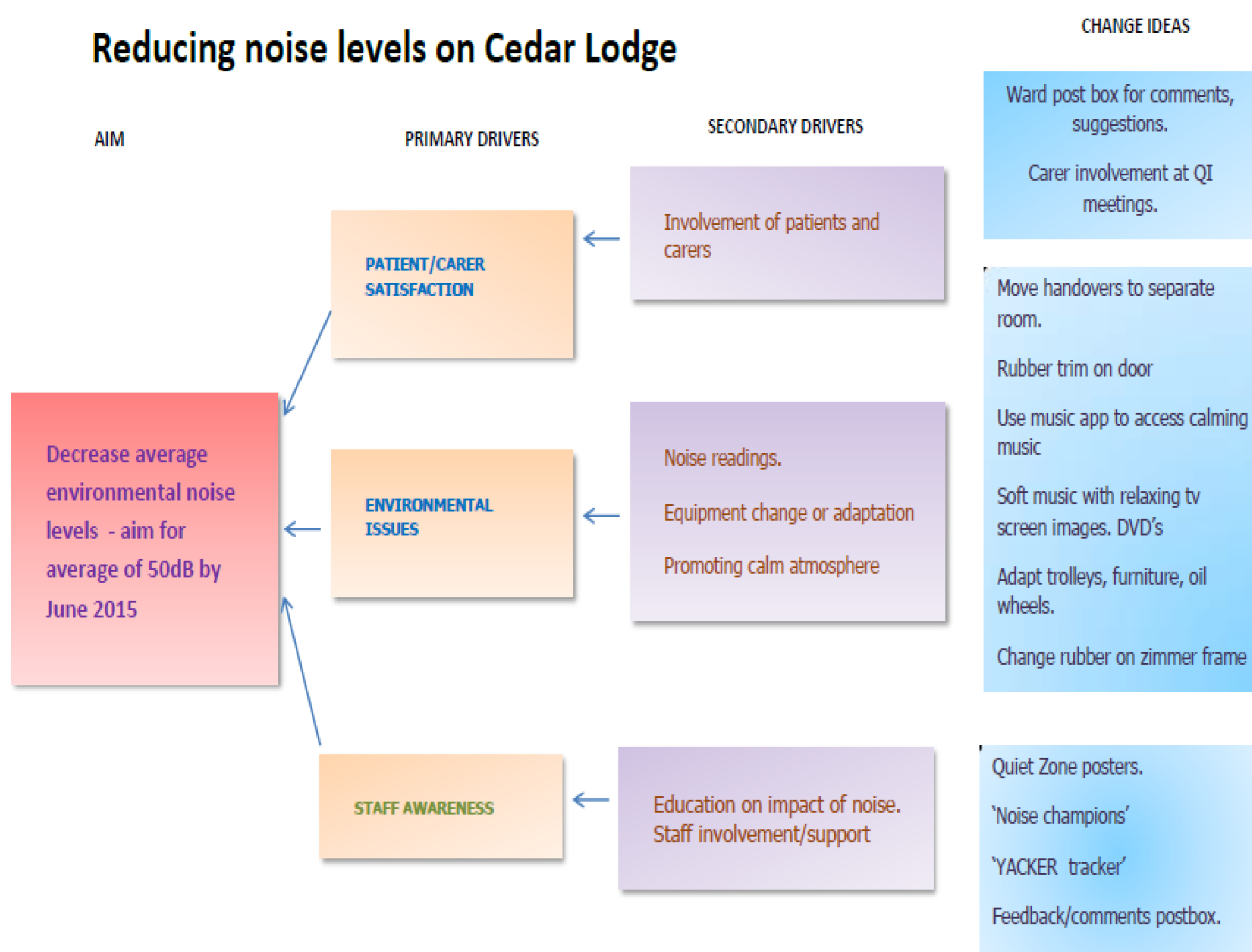
We have focussed PDSAs on the central ward area and the meal times. The first PDSA was to introduce a poster telling staff and carers about noise and the reduction project. The second PDSA was the 'Yacker Tracker', a traffic light system that can be set to turn to red whenever dBs exceed the desired level. (see image below). The third PDSA was felt pads to attach to the underside of chair legs and table legs, which reduce noise from scraping and moving of furniture. The fourth PDSA was to move the handover to a side room, thus reducing noise on the ward.

Baseline data: Noise reduction project



Cedar Lodge QI Project –

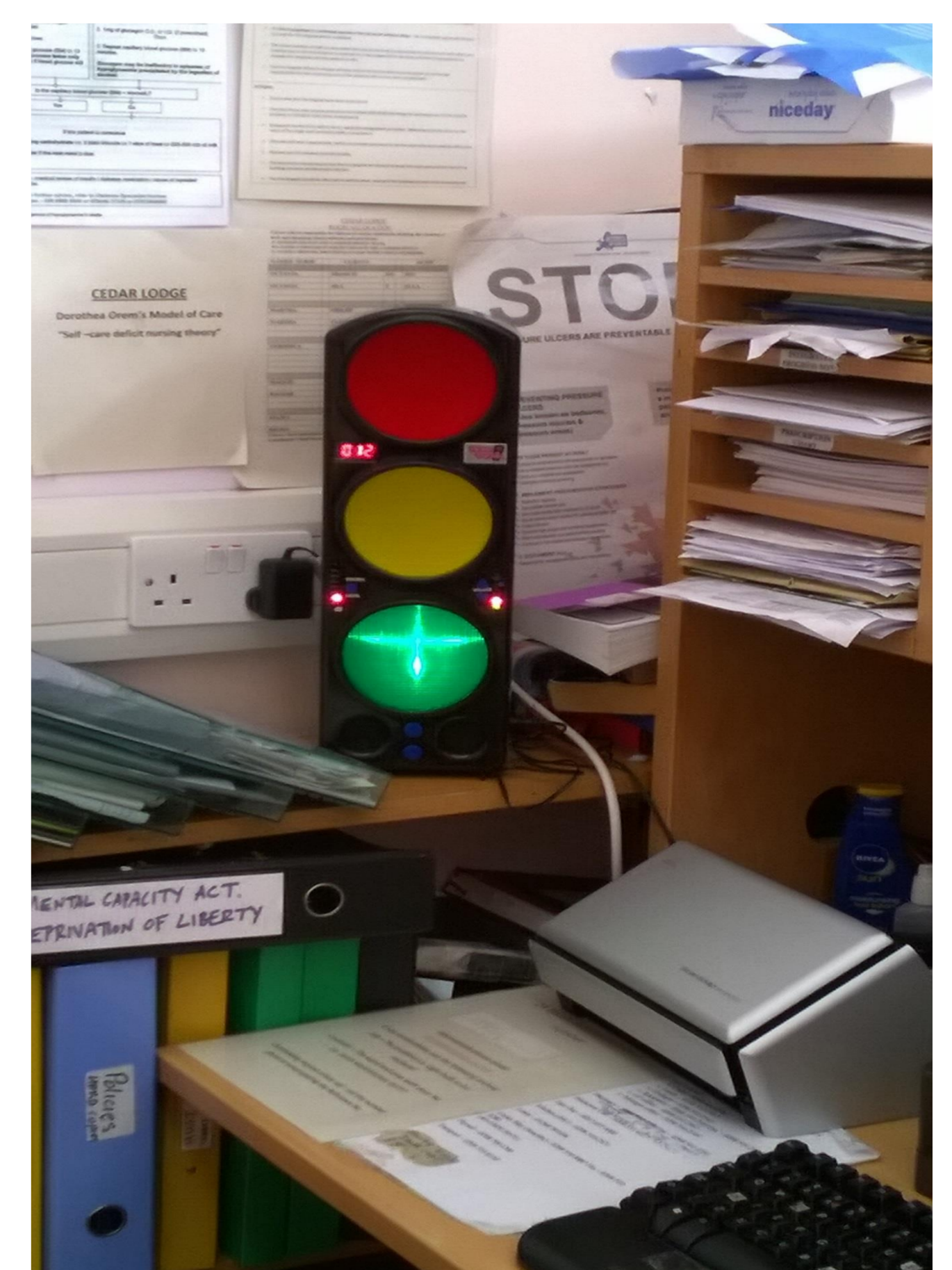
Reducing noise levels on Cedar Lodge



Methods: We formed a project team, and drew up a driver diagram (above) which helped us to focus our plans on the important areas of environment, staff awareness and patient and carer involvement. We used average dB readings over 2 months to establish a baseline dataset to track outcome measures. We devised a questionnaire for staff and carers, in which we embedded a question about staff and carer experience of noise levels on the ward. Out of this questionnaire process came the involvement of Mrs McAllister, a carer, in the project. She now attends our fortnightly ward QI meetings and has contributed some particularly valuable change ideas.

Plans:

We plan to test further change ideas including classical music at mealtimes. We have also located a foam band that can be used to reduce the noise of trolleys. We will be using QI charts to feedback on the project to staff.



Learning:

We have learnt of the importance of developing specific ideas based on staff and carer knowledge. We are also now using supervision to discuss QI and its benefits.

