



INCREASING ACCESS TO THE NCFMH CARERS' GROUP

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Designing and piloting a questionnaire to look at staff perceptions of the carers group

Aim

The carers' access QI project aims to increase attendance to the monthly NCFMH carers group. The aim of this project was to design and pilot a questionnaire to measure staff knowledge, attitude and referral behaviour and to identify any potential barriers to staff referring carers to the group.

Why is this important to service users and carers?

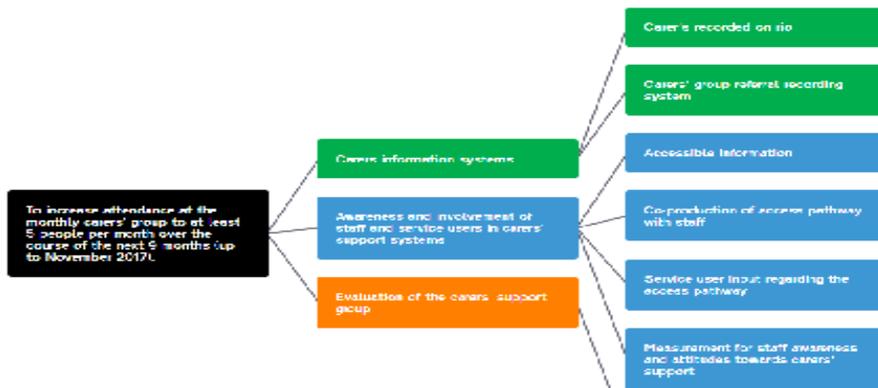
There is a large evidence base demonstrating the role of carers as an integral part of service users' care. This highlights the need for services that support carers.

Two previous carers' access QI projects identified that 1/3 of carers did not know about the carers' group, communication about the group from ward staff was important for carers', and staff reported feeling uninformed about the group.

The questionnaire

An 18-item questionnaire was developed by the author in order to measure staff awareness of the carers' group across three domains; knowledge of the group (6 items), attitudes towards the group (6 items), and referral behaviour (6 items). The items were identified through discussions with colleagues, literature searches, published reviews of awareness programmes in healthcare settings, and were informed by the previous SRRPs.

Driver diagram



Data

Summary of findings

Quantitative

- The majority of the staff knew about the carers group, although rated their knowledge of what happens in the group as very limited/limited.
- ¾ of staff thought that the group was helpful/extremely helpful for carers who attend.
- Very few staff reported talking to service users and carers about the carers' group.
- Staff said they would like feedback on which carers attend the carers' groups.

Qualitative

A content analysis identified the following themes:

1. Perceived lack of knowledge about the carers' group was a barrier to talking to carers about the group.
2. Staff would like more information and training on the carers group.
3. Duration of client admission and whether or not this fell near to the time of the monthly carers' group impacted likelihood of staff referral to the group.

Learning and what next?

The results show that staff are aware of the carers' group at NCFMH, perceive it to be a helpful resource for carers, and feel confident in talking to carers and service users about it. Both quantitative and qualitative aspects of this project indicate that staff lack knowledge about what happens in the group. These results are consistent with the previous QI projects that identified that staff felt uninformed about the group and hence there is little communication about the group from staff to carers. This points to the need for training to be provided at ward away days.



Tell us your story in a nutshell

NCfMH runs a monthly carers group facilitated by a clinical psychologist, a research assistant and a trainee clinical psychologist. Despite qualitative feedback from carers that the group is useful, the number of attendees has been consistently low (an average of 2.23 per group over the last 12 months). The referral pathway requires ward staff to pass on details of carers to the psychology team so that the carer can then be contacted and invited to the next group. Two previous qualitative QI projects identified staff awareness as a possible barrier to referral to the carers' group. For the current project an 18-item questionnaire was developed by the author in order to measure staff awareness of the carers' group across three domains; knowledge of the group (6 items), attitudes towards the group (6 items), and referral behaviour (6 items). The results showed that staff are aware of the carers' group at NCfMH, perceive it to be a helpful resource for carers, and feel confident in talking to carers and service users about it. Both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the this project indicate that staff lack knowledge about what happens in the group. These results are consistent with the previous QI projects that identified that staff felt uninformed about the group and hence there is little communication about the group from staff to carers. This points to the need for staff training.

The questionnaire has provided a baseline for the team to use to measure staff awareness of the carers' group at NCfMH. The team are planning to implement a new change idea – to attend and give a presentation about the carers' group at ward away days. Staff awareness can be re-assessed following the presentation.

Any additional team or project photos?



Paste them into a slide and we will share them with your project story!

Please return your completed poster to elft.qi@nhs.net