

The Bridge Club

Wolfson House Low Secure Forensic Unit

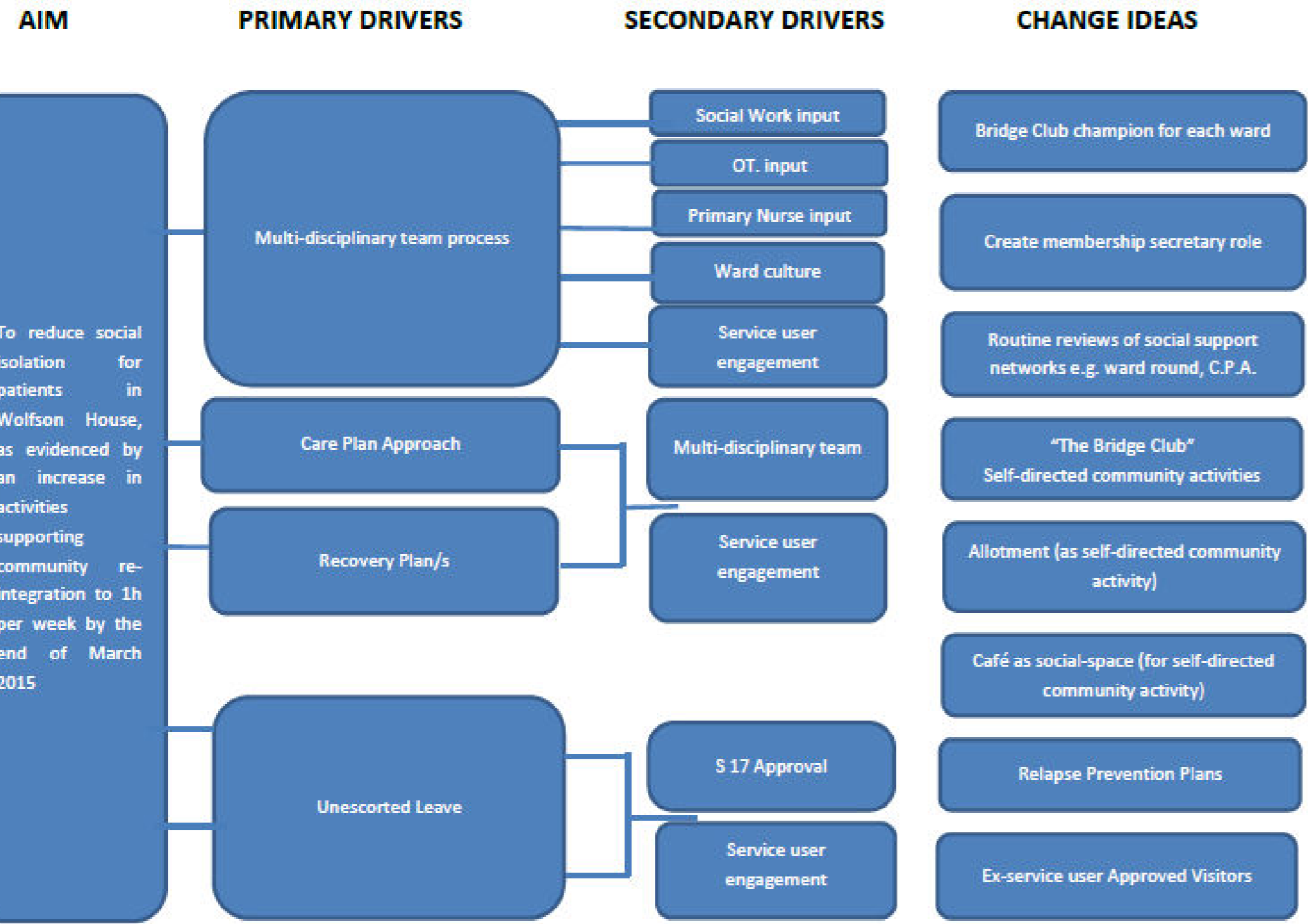
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Background

This project was inspired by service users in Wolfson House, a low secure forensic psychiatry unit. Typically discharged after long periods of institutional care, people reported experiencing severe social isolation at the point of discharge from hospital.

Our initiative seeks to reduce the impact of social isolation on our service users’ lives. Through it, we hope to ‘bridge the gap’ between hospital and the community by supporting aspirations for independence alongside self-directed recovery focussed activity.



Aim

To reduce social isolation for service users in Wolfson House, as evidenced by an increase in activities supporting community re-integration to 1h per week by the end of March 2015 for those participating in the Bridge Club.

This will be achieved by promoting and enabling the continuation of significant relationships formed in hospital, thereby capitalising on previously unexploited opportunities for developing and sustaining networks of social support.

The monthly Bridge Club meeting is open to all former and current service users at Wolfson House. Monthly meetings are designed to provide a ‘social space’ where service users can be supported to plan and engage in social activities with friends.

Monthly Social Event

On 25th February 2015 the Bridge Club held its first social evening in ‘The Spot’ at Wolfson House. We held a quiz with two cinema tickets as first prize, a voucher for breakfast for two at a local café as second prize, and a voucher for coffee and cake for two as third prize. The prizes were chosen as incentives to encourage more self-directed activities.

In total, eleven service users - including one who had been discharged from the inpatient unit - attended the event, spending a total of 14 and half hours. The majority reported having enjoyed the evening, but would prefer it to be held in the community. The Club will continue to meet on a monthly basis and future meetings will be held in the community. It is hoped that over time we can attract more service users, and if the club proves to popular, we will consider meeting on a more regular basis.

Weekly Community Re-Integration Activities

The Bridge Club has now been running for three weeks. Requests are invited for self-directed activities that support re-integration into the community, and service users are supported in pursuing activities such as trips to the cinema or gym. All of the service users granted leave for the purpose of Bridge Club were already entitled to unescorted leave and were using it, but additional leave was granted for these activities which are believed to offer additional therapeutic potential.

For each of the past three weeks, two service users have spent 2h playing football. Some service users have been granted leave for Bridge Club activities but not used it.

Measures

Outcome:
Number of hours spent engaged in community integration activities (average per week for ‘Bridge Club’ participants)

Process:
Attendance at monthly Bridge Club event
Service user satisfaction/feedback

Balancing:
During the past three weeks, patients involved in Bridge Club have not been found to have had any of the following associated with this initiative:

- Incidents of violence/aggression
- Positive urine drug screening tests
- Positive alcohol breath tests
- Absent without leave

