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Stevenage Dementia Involvement Group

HPFT Dementia Services

January 2023



Introduction

Stevenage Dementia Involvement Group provides opportunities for people with experience of dementia to have influence on research and the planning of new services. In each session the group will discuss a particular topic relating to living with dementia or health and social care services in Stevenage.

Stevenage Dementia Involvement Group met face-to-face on 19th January 2023

In attendance were five people with experience of living with or caring for somebody with dementia.

Attending the group was guest Michael Henderson, Senior Service Line Lead Older Adults Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT).

The topic of discussion was **HPFT's dementia services**.



1

IMAGE | Members of the Stevenage Dementia Involvement Group on 19/1/2023

What happened?

Michael outlined the existing services available at HPFT to people living with dementia. Michael explained about long term care and wards. There used to be more beds but now the emphasis is on providing better community services.

Services are currently going through a transformation:

- The average length of inpatient stays have been improved (from 400 days to 80 days)
- A dementia diagnosis pathway is being developed (currently a 12 week pathway trying to move towards a 1 step pathway).
- The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a 60% increase in referrals.
- Plans for 2023-24 include three possible dementia diagnosis groups:
 - Care Homes
 - Those likely to get a diagnosis
 - Complex needs and presentations (via Specialist Nurse)

Michael was interested in hearing the groups experience of using HPFT services and their suggestions on improvement.



Question: What are your experiences of dementia services?

In particular, services provided by Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT).

The group said:

- Most of the group had experience of going to the Memory Clinic.
- One member did not receive a follow up after their diagnosis and the services that were recommended were not suitable and did not take into account the person's personal situation (i.e. a service far away from home would not be easily accessible by bus).
- "*Overwhelmed with paperwork*" and not always user friendly.
- Group were in agreement that follow up (i.e. a year later) would be beneficial as care/support needs may have changed.



Question: How would you feel about a Specialist Nurse in Primary Care for Dementia Diagnosis?

The overall response from the group was positive.

The group said:

- Might be good, as people may be more open with a nurse
- Nurses who are specialised in Dementia is a good idea
- It would be easier to go to our local surgery, it's more local and familiar
- It is important for carers to also get registered at that time, to assess what they are entitled to and have a carer assessment



Question: What one thing should the service be doing?

The group said:

- It's a big thing being diagnosed, the way you are spoken to has an impact on how you receive the news.
- Keep asking and involving service users and carers/family.
- Important to understand the impact that dementia can have on family and carers, to involve them in plans.
- Discussed dementia champions in GP surgeries: some Stevenage surgeries have them but others do not. Most of the group were not aware of this role and if their local surgery had one.

Next steps

This group provided the opportunity for people living with and affected by dementia to share their opinions and experiences about HPFT dementia services with a senior staff member in that service.

For the guest, the session enabled them to listen to people's experiences and to get the views and opinions on improvement from service users.

This summary report has been read and approved by the group members who attended.

This group is organised by researchers from the University of Hertfordshire as part of the National Institute of Health Research Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) East of England. For more information, or if you are interested in joining or visiting the group, please contact Nicole Jones (nicole.jones@cpft.nhs.uk) or visit our website <https://arc-ee.nihr.ac.uk/stevenage-dementia-involvement-group> (or use the QR code below)



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