

May Trust Board - Janine's Story

At May's Trust Board a patient story was told by Richard Carroll, Service Manager for Mental Health Acute and Community Services. It was about Janine's experience of the Care Trust's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service.

The IAPT service is an NHS programme of talking therapy treatments which supports people experiencing a range of mental health disorders.

Whilst the service supported Janine to full recovery, there were aspects of the service which she believed could be improved.

As a result of Janine's experience and feedback, the service is:

- Working with other local organisations to extend the range and flexibility of treatment, moving from a five day, 9am – 5pm service, to a seven day, 8am to 8pm service. This will make therapy more accessible for people, such as Janine, who have other commitments during normal office hours.
- Putting in place a telephone self-referral system, offering people with an immediate assessment.
- Increasing its involvement of service users in planning and reviewing the service.
- Reviewing the Care Trusts existing administrative staffing support with a view of possibility increasing staffing availability to take calls.
- Working more closely with the voluntary sector to reach seldom heard groups and sub-contracting some of work to voluntary sector organisations offering psychological support.
- Additionally, the service is looking at ways to increase the percentage of self-referrals (currently, 90% of the referrals are made via doctors) and will be making it more accessible by offering group therapy in different locations and at various times including weekends and evenings.

The following key points were highlighted during the Board discussion:

- The talking therapy is delivered through group work where service users are taught skills and techniques to manage their mental wellbeing.
- Between 60-70% of the people with moderate anxiety and depression referred to the service are treated by high intensity therapy. It is hoped that the self-referral offer will result in people accessing the service when they have a mild mental health disorder and only need low intensity therapy.