

## **November 2017 Trust Board – Trish’s story**

Trish\* is a local mum who attended the November board meeting to share her story of how her feedback has been listened to and used to improve the Care Trust’s Single Point of Access (SPA) service.

Trish’s son had been bullied about his size for a long time, resulting in prolonged school absences and a referral to the Trust’s Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Supporting her son, while caring for the rest of the family and working, took its toll on Trish who eventually visited her GP for a referral to the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT). She was seen within five days of her GP appointment and during her care she became an active member of the Trust’s Service User Involvement programme.

Single Point of Access (SPA) is a telephone service which allows service users to call one number and be put through to the right team. Trish was a regular caller to SPA and recognised that, at busy times, it could be difficult to get through, which made it hard for her to make the effort to call when she was feeling really low. After getting involved in Service User Involvement activities, Trish met with the Care Trust’s clinical administration manager, who talked her through the volume of calls and number of services all supported by the SPA team. Trish could see that the team was working hard to answer and direct all the calls. She explained that from her previous experience as a call handler, she believed that staff welfare was one of the most important aspects of delivering an excellent service. Our clinical administration manager took Trish’s feedback and developed it into team objectives to improve SPA’s service. These objectives include cross-training staff to meet the needs of more service users.

Trish was then invited to SPA to meet the people who had been supporting her over the phone for so long. She shared her personal struggles with feeling low and needing to speak to someone. Trish helped the team to review their voice guides, inserting more positive and reassuring words and phrases.

During the visit, Trish enjoyed meeting the Trust’s call handlers that she’d spoken to so many times before. She found the atmosphere light and friendly, and found that her visit increased her confidence in the service because she had witnessed first-hand the commitment to patient care.

Trish plans to continue attending service involvement opportunities to share SPA’s good work, and has explained that if any of her friends ever needed advice, she is confident that she could talk them through the process and encourage them to contact SPA, as ‘they will be able to help you.’ Thanks to the support of our CAMHS team, Trish’s son found the confidence to start playing rugby and continued to play at a semi-professional level until the age of 19.

\*Names have been changed to protect identities.