

Quality Improvement Project: Communication tool

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Introduction

- A person with a learning disability (LD) may require support in order to communicate effectively (Mencap, 2016)
- Poor communication support diminishes the voice of the individual and can result in diagnostic overshadowing or poor-quality care (LeDeR, 2020)
- Due to Covid-19 this is more important than ever (Thomas, 2020)
- Organisations must adapt communication to suit an individual's needs (NHS, 2017; DoH, 2001)
- Through discussion with key collaborators, I identified that the current communication boxes in place were inconsistent and there was a lack of awareness and understanding around them. Thus identifying the focus for my change project

Improvement methodology

Langley et al (2009) Model for Improvement

Aims statement

A newly developed communication tool will be piloted by June 2021 in one inpatient area, to ensure that staff have access to the right resources at the right time to effectively adapt communication to suit the preferred method of an individual with learning disabilities, in order to meet their needs efficiently.

Measurement – how will we know that a change is an improvement?

- Measures of outcome, process and balance will be recorded so the impact of the change can be successfully evaluated
- Staff being able to use the right resources at the right time to adapt communication strategies to support an individual with a learning disability will show the outcome has been reached
- Collection of data through direct observation, patient feedback, staff questionnaire and evaluation through audit of the tool. This would ideally show that people with a learning disability felt supported and able to communicate with staff feeling comfortable and confident in using the tool.

Interventions – what change can we make to result in improvements?

1. Tool developed in collaboration with interest groups, patients and staff across a variety of departments
2. Ensure the tool is visible
3. Guarantee that patients are informed of the tool
4. Make sure the tool is appropriate and fit for purpose
5. Train staff to have an understanding and awareness of tool and its use

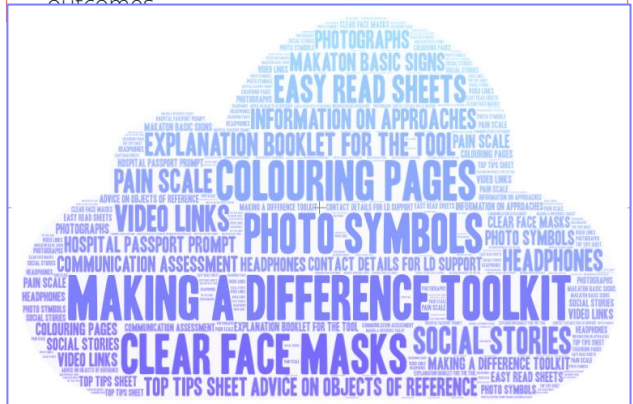
Plan Do Study Act cycles

During the pilot roll out PDSA cycles will be carried out. Using a small sample size of one inpatient area meaningful information can be collected. Carrying out numerous PDSA cycles allows for the tool to be amended to ensure it is fit for purpose and that the roll

The impact

- Engagement across different teams and professionals
- Development of networks
- Scoping and research to identify resources
- Taking the lead in development of the tool
- Identification and consideration of appropriate measures in order to implement and evaluate the tool
- Following completion of the pilot implementation there will be roll out across all patient facing areas within the hospital. All staff will have the awareness and understanding to utilise the tool appropriately to support an individual with learning disabilities with

Thought cloud – What should a communication tool contain? outcomes



Leadership learning

The RADA skills workshop was invaluable. This allowed me the confidence to have a physical presence and to take ownership of the project. It gave me the skills and techniques to initiate important conversations and to develop a rapport amongst key networks allowing for collaborative working and delegation.

Throughout the leadership programme I have developed my knowledge and reignited my passion for continuous learning. I have been able to understand my personality more and develop into my leadership role.

Next steps

- To use this poster as an evolving tool to support the ongoing process and flexible improvement approach
- To fully develop the communication tool in collaboration with interest groups
- Ensure consistent check on results from pilot implementation by liaising with key people
- To conduct an audit across the hospital of awareness of the Learning Disability Strategy including communication tool development
- Update the mandatory training to reflect the updated tool ensuring staff awareness and understanding
- Following the principles of 'Ask, Listen, Do' use patient stories to evidence the impact