

Case Study

CAPP

CAPP – Clinical Audit Patient Panel

The Commission for Health Improvement review in 2003 had highlighted that Sheffield South West PCT had a lack of patient involvement in their audit programme and, after hearing about a panel created in North Bristol Hospital, CAPP was established and has been operating since 2004.

The Clinical Audit Patient Panel consisted of 10 members who had been recruited after responding to a poster campaign encouraging involvement and asking for patients to volunteer and “make a difference”. Two of the original members had been previously involved within the services, and had experience of volunteering within the NHS but others had responded after seeing the posters and flyers in their community. After completing an application form, the group attended an information and training day and CAPP was established.

“I was interested because my husband was in hospital at the time with a serious illness....and both he and I had to take early retirement, so CAPP offered an opportunity to get involved in health care issues.” – Mary Dagleish, CAPP Member

The training session is a way for the volunteers to learn more about clinical audit and whether CAPP is what they want to be part of. It is also an opportunity for the audit team to assess the suitability of potential members. CAPP members do not receive any financial payment for volunteering but their expenses are reimbursed in line with the Department of Health guidelines.

“Volunteers join the PCT volunteering team by completing a short form and attending an informal discussion where they are asked to complete confidentiality and equal opportunities forms. At that point they are asked what areas of interest they have and, if they have ticked the “Clinical Audit” box, the clinical audit team will contact them.” – Helen Mulholland, Expert Patients Programme and Volunteer Manager – NHS Sheffield

The CAPP are now managed by the Clinical Audit and Effectiveness team within the Standards and Engagement Directorate at NHS Sheffield, but they are also part of the wider volunteering network managed by the Volunteer Manager. This not only ensures a co-ordinated approach to recruitment but also means patients are offered the opportunity to participate in other related projects and initiatives.

There are currently five members on CAPP with a further two awaiting training. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed in 2008 focusing on the overall diversity of membership of the panel. An action plan was subsequently produced and agreed and the CAPP chair has recently been promoting involvement by attending the Provider Services Governance meetings. A new round of recruitment has been initiated across the city. New posters and leaflets have been designed and distributed for this campaign and are initially being displayed within GP and dental practices.

The CAPP chair attends NHS Sheffield’s Evidence Based Practice Group, where clinical audits are discussed and a variety of regular updates are presented, for example NICE, Medicines Management,

research and the latest published evidence. This group are also part of the process whereby the clinical audit programmes are agreed and clinical policies are approved prior to ratification at Trust Board.

“The essence of CAPP is that they are directly involved with clinical audit projects and do not just sit on high level committees or organisational groups as token members. The panel are very much ‘hands on’ and this is what makes the significant difference between this panel and other patient panels in acute organisations.” – Beverly Ryton, Senior Clinical Audit and Effectiveness Facilitator

Patients are involved in every stage of relevant clinical audits, adding value to every aspect of the cycle. The following is a list of project examples that CAPP have been involved in:

- Record Keeping Audits (including dietetics, continence, district nursing, tissue viability).
- Funded Nursing Care Audit.
- Older People NSF – Standard 1: Age Discrimination. A CAPP member was part of the Standards group developing criteria for the audit of citywide policies in relation to age discrimination.
- NHS Live Audit – People with Breathing Difficulties (2005-6). The project methodology style is through the Discovery Interview technique, where each patient gives consent to be visited by a healthcare professional and a member of CAPP.
- Patient Satisfaction Surveys.

CAPP continues to be involved with the following:

- reviewing patient information/leaflets etc
- reviewing questionnaires that will be used to elicit patient feedback for specific services
- dignity and respect – both on the steering group and devising the clinical audits
- cardiac rehabilitation audit.

Currently CAPP are working with other volunteers on a project looking at Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) within NHS Sheffield. Looking at the impact of involving service users/patients/carers and the effect this has had on a service.

After some initial input from the PPI team, CAPP and the volunteers are now in total control of this project agreeing roles and responsibilities and what needs to be done, by whom.

Other work / involvement:-

- Evidence Based Practice Group - CAPP are represented at the evidence based practice group by their chair.
- Conferences / Events - CAPP attend a number of national and local conferences, events and meetings to share their experiences and raise issues for discussion.

Why are CAPP effective?

CAPP members bring a lay perspective to clinical issues which have enabled them to reduce jargon and improve usability of materials designed for patients or the general public, and identify basic questions about key service issues. Because they are not employed by the service providers or commissioners, they can provide an independent sounding board for both patients and staff.

There is a comprehensive recruitment process in place, supported by NHS Sheffield.

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