We are all aware of the continuous media spotlight on the NHS, which is often negative. While all trusts realise that they must be accountable as a public service, and watch every penny, this can mean that the dedication of staff, and all their hard work, is often overlooked.

Surrey Oaklands NHS Trust believes that valuing staff is imperative, but until now, we have never openly celebrated their contribution to public wellbeing. The Local Modernisation Review (which is how the NHS Plan is being put into action in Surrey) is trying to encourage new schemes and initiatives, which includes a central programme called ‘Improving Working Lives’. In line with this, the Trust has started a new Staff Awards scheme, to celebrate those individuals and teams encouraging new and innovative changes within the Trust. The Trust Board agreed that this was an event that was needed, and so, kindly, agreed that it should be funded by the Trustees of Surrey Oaklands - a big thank you to them! These awards were held on the evening of the 6 September 2001, at the Hilton Hotel, Croydon.

As everyone walked into the huge venue, there were murmurs of awe and big smiles. The room shone with spotlights and there were stars everywhere. The tables were decorated with flower displays by the Old Moat Garden Centre (who also won the Team of the Year Award), and there was the low hum of excited conversation... it could have been the Oscars.

The evening began with a short welcome by Gill Galliano, Acting Chief Executive, the dinner was served, the conversation flowed, and everyone was happy meeting old friends from wards, members of teams and departments, and that friendly voice over the phone who now had a human face. By the end of the meal we were all ready for the awards... and the entertainment!

Dr Phil Hammond was available to help Brian Perkins, Chairman, present the awards, and the 14 winners were thanked, congratulated, and cheered by other staff in the Trust before the entertainment began. ‘Struck off and die’ is an act (frequently found in the Comedy Store, London) consisting of Drs Phil Hammond and Tony Gardener, who were hilarious, and had the additional advantage of knowing all about the NHS (Phil is still a practising doctor in sexual health in Bristol and Tony also qualified in medicine before becoming a full time actor and comedian). The Staff Awards evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all (especially the entertainment!) and everyone who attended are now looking forward to the Staff Awards in June 2002.

Modernisation and shifting the balance of power - Ring out the Old, ring in the New!

The local NHS in which Surrey Oaklands NHS Trust is an important part is about to undergo a great change. As a key feature of ‘The NHS Plan - a plan for investment, a plan for reform’ presented to Parliament by Alan Milburn in July 2000, the Government wants to see 110 local Health Authorities abolished on April 1st 2002 and replaced by 314 Primary Care Trusts. Primary Care Trusts will be the future commissioners of services in all sectors of care - acute, mental health, learning disability and to some extent, social care.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
**THE RIGHT TO LOVE & MAKE NEW**

By Dr Adam Abdellnour

Everybody has the right to be sexual and to be free from sex discrimination in a humane and dignified environment. They should be able to participate in social relationships, make choices independently as possible, and learn new skills.

Although locked wards and regimentation are no longer the norm, when it comes to sexuality and personal development changes seem to happen slowly, despite decades of discussion. Over-ambitious campaign groups have made many feel insecure, and held up progress. Staff, carers, and service users still need reassurance and more sensitive approaches are more successful.

In 2001, NHS patients were among many carers in Croydon, supported by the Croydon sexuality workers group, set up a seed-corn project to develop this awareness. Such people see sexuality as a long-term affect on the whole service culture, to provide the majority with support, and involve as many stakeholders as possible in developments. Sexuality should be an ordinary thing (like dietary care and wheelchair maintenance), a part of day-to-day and personal planning.

The project learned two lessons from the past. It set out to raise awareness and promote a common understanding of sexuality as well as to deliver sexuality training. And a system of active support for service users and staff was developed so that real changes could happen at all levels of the service culture. The needs of service users and staff needs for satisfying working practices were both addressed. We wanted all staff to become signs of possible sexual abuse and respond appropriately, and for service users to know how to say ‘no’, when to say ‘no’, and who to tell if something happened they did not like.

Surrey Oaklands drivers operating the service now have to take and pass a Driver and Vehicle Transport vocational driving licence, undergoing lifting and handling training and undertake a four day workplace aid certificate. All the drivers carry mobile phones and can communicate directly with the day centres and homes. This innovation and practical example of service are readily internalised, but most activities carry some risk. People choose to death on the path of an orange, or drown on narrow boats. Where we because we want fun or stop activity holidays!

But sexuality arouses hidden emotions and many people are confused about sexuality. So the dialogue about ‘risk of harm’, and the need to ‘protect vulnerable people’ (important issues in these times) result in procedures to control people efficiently, which are not in the interests of service users.

The ‘inadequate’ to this is to focus on sexuality as a part of loving relationships, good health, and normal adulthood. The ‘human rights’ position, through European human rights legislation. As people become more informed the culture will change naturally and smoothly, and managers will find ways to open channels for development in provision.

Sexuality and local services

Sexuality training makes bedfellows. The idea of a ‘sexuality planning group’ is a paradox! Sex is naturally secretive, unpredictable, and awkward, so it is very light touch interventions. Problems are often emotionalised, but in reality, sexuality is a very personal and private thing. If we are not sure what to do, or feel anxious for any reason, contact your mentor.

To ensure your manager is kept fully informed in the usual way.

Good governance

Opportunities for discussion, advocacy and appeal should be developed for service users and staff. The network is there to facilitate, advise and support, and can use agreed methods of action. If an affected idea would normally be carried out, it is still carried out where staff would normally see a term managers and service users’ agreement before acting, they still do so.

Providers should aspire to deliver a service that can accommodate sexuality needs, and manage the risk, without the kinds of prohibition that are still feared even under current law, and will be more so under proposed legislation!

Line managers need to be clear about their expectations, and must know what to do if they have concerns. Frontline staff need to know they are supported.

The Charter

● We recognise the value of all people, and support equal right to be adult and enjoy a good life.

● We believe that loving is part of being human, and so is touching and being touched. Carers should not have to everything they can to make it possible for people with learning disabilities to love and be loved.

The future

The NHS support network extends awareness and skills across Croydon using quite slender resources. It is robust and offers a long-term solution for meeting the personal interests of service users.

To find out more about this project and the mechanism by which we do this, please e-mail Dr Adam Abdellnour at spdp@marea.net.

References


2. The project is part of the comprehensive Croydon Sexual Services and Croydon Health Authority network (and with later Surrey Oaklands NHS Trust) with academic and psychiatric advice from the Department of Psychiatry of Disability at St George’s Hospital Medical School.


4. The Law Commission 2006 Setting the Boundaries. The law on sex offences, OFFICIALS, London (Sentencing and Offence Unit, 50 Queen Anne Gate, London SW1H 9LR)

About The Author

Adam Abdellnour is a chartered psychologist and chief executive of Inara (helping people to include people). He has spent the past four years working with Surrey Oaklands NHS Trust and Croydon Social Services to develop a project to support the Sexuality and Personal Development of people with learning disabilities.

Everybody has the right to be sexual and to be free from sexual oppression under the law. We expect staff and managers to respect the duties of the disabilities to respect this chart and apply it.

We have a duty to protect vulnerable people both as a means of control or restrict them unnecessarily.

We hope parents and unpaid carers will also make every effort to talk about sexuality to make it possible for people with learning disabilities to love and be loved.

We do it better

T HE SURREY RAILWAYS Transport Department have been successful in bringing in-house a contract worth £203,000 annually for non-emergency patient transport services. The service used to be provided by Surrey Ambulance Service, but our own Transport Department now can provide the service, to a higher standard.

Because Transport don’t have to deal with unforeseen emergencies they can route plan and ensure that vehicles are available at set times, are used more by other less centred service. The service is operated from the West Park site with six vehicles which are comfortable Renault Masters.

Staff need autonomy with support. In principle, no one should make inapproaches between sexuality and other health and safety issues are needed. Those who know service users best, are usually best placed to advise the service users on their best interests. But people still need someone to talk to, for advice and help with planning.

The message is: ‘we trust you to make good professional judgements in respect of sex and sexuality. But if you are not sure what to do, or feel anxious for any reason, contact your mentor.’

We require your manager is kept fully informed in the usual way.

**BRAND NEW BUNGALOW** for eight residents, and, in the lead up to the move has included a practicalised shopping and cooking skills, for better preparation of self,caring. Research shows that this type of service and focus on enabling leads to an increase in overall living skills.

The move to Derby House involved an increase in societal levels for the ladies to give them more individual support.

The focus is to move away from institutional care, which is inward-looking to more outward-looking services and the expectation that the ladies will make more use of the community facilities around them.

We have heard that the ladies are settling in well and are loving being a success. A new home and a new beginning for the residents of Derby House.
OWN A WET AND dreary afternoon in September, staff and service users with learning disabilities put that out of their minds and took a step into a new world! They were part of the first accessible AGM that the Trust had ever held.

Most people would agree that the sorts of things that are traditionally presented are not always easy to understand at the best of times. How were we going to do it?

During the week before, ideas were discussed and an overall plan was developed. It is true to say that some directors have had more experience than others of talking to service users. How would they get out? Would it be a challenge? No one said these things but there was tension in the air. We knew that we would not win any Oscars but we also knew that we had to take our first step. It was time to show that, as the largest learning disability Trust in the country, we are committed to making things accessible.

As the time came to start, the room filled up and filled up and filled up. Finally one was in and we got going. All the presenters had to remember to keep it simple and clear. Director of Finance, Kate Stepney had the hardest task explaining about the Trust’s money and balancing the books. She did a fantastic job showing things in a way that people understood from spending their own money.

People had a chance to ask questions and talk about what the Trust did for them. Old friends had a chance to catch up. The directors all sighed with relief and hoped the evening AGM would be as enjoyable.

We will learn lessons for next year but we stepped out onto the ice and did not fall through. We can work in a way that puts the needs of service users in the centre of what we do. We will listen to what people have to say and plan for next year.

First Accessible AGM

Tandridge District Council

To the Chairman

The surprise announcement at this year’s Surrey Oaklands NHS Trust AGM came from its Trust Chairman who announced that he would be retiring, effective January 31, 2002.

I first met Brian soon after his appointment when the Trust were holding their Annual General Meeting. From his early days as Chairman Brian has held a regular series of breakfast meetings for 8 years. The programme included a number of leading speakers on Mental Health from all over the UK, including ‘This Morning’ television psychiatrist, Dr Raj Persaud, a consultant at the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust, and Dr Chai Patel, Chief Executive of Westminster Healthcare.

The conference was attended by over 150 delegates. Due to the success of the event, the Trust will be staging another event on World Mental Health Day next year.

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Further presentations from Professor Alastair Macdonald from Guy’s and Dr Mark Prunty from the Department of Health resulted in a fascinating and inspiring day for Mental Health workers, GPs, Commissions and service users.

The event was well attended and supported by a high number of people. The Trust will be staging another event on World Mental Health Day next year.

World Mental Health Day

On 10 October 2001, World Mental Health Day was marked in many different ways. Here at Surrey Oaklands, we held 2 events.

The first of these was a conference held at the Croydon Hilton entitled ‘World Mental Health Day’. The programme included a number of leading speakers on Mental Health from all over the UK, including ‘This Morning’ television psychiatrist, Dr Raj Persaud, a consultant at the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust, and Dr Chai Patel, Chief Executive of Westminster Healthcare.

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Two for One a success

Following on from the Accessible Annual General Meeting, the Trust held the second AGM for the general public. The event was well attended by over 100 people who were interested in the Trust's services for a variety of reasons.

Many were friends or relatives of those being cared for by Surrey Oaklands and there were numerous representatives from local councils and partner organisations that provided a good balance of interest in learning disability and mental health.

In the two breakout sessions, Peter Kinsey, Director of Learning Disability, detailed the work of the Trust in line with the White Paper ‘Valuing People’. Peter summed up the core message of this to people with a learning disability as meaning ‘nothing about us without us’. Peter emphasised the growing importance of person centred planning as being the key tool to enable people with a learning disability.

This is a new care model focusing on the wishes of the ‘user’ - ‘It’s about what makes us happy’ - is the way one service user has described it.

In mental health, I. Kemp, Acting Director of Integrated Mental Health, led the discussion around the modernisation of mental health services. The integration with Surrey Social Services and the new model for Adult Mental Health services were the key twin topics of the seminar. There was public concern that the new rationalised and larger 50-bedded in-patient facility should be ready at the Department of Psychiatry at Epsom General Hospital before Capel Ward at East Surrey Hospital was closed. However support for the new five Community Mental Health Resource Centres containing community beds across East and Mid Surrey was apparent.

In the plenary session the public voiced their concern for staff in the homes and care staff on the ground. The Trust was encouraged to make staff feel valued and secure at every opportunity. Brian Taylor, Director of Human Resources and Strategic Development gave the audience some interesting workforce data. 66% of the Trust’s 3,000 staff are over 40 years of age and 3% are under 25. Clearly there is a need to bring more young people into employment throughout the Trust to ensure that services are not threatened due to waves of retirements.

Brian also noted the recruitment problems the Trust has been experiencing due partly to the high cost of living in Surrey, with the Trust spending £6.9m per annum on agency staff out of a turnover of £120 million. NHS Direct came in for particular praise from the audience as being a wonderful new service available to the public. The shock announcement of the night was from the Chairman, Brian Perkins, who made public his decision to finally retire on March 31, 2002, from the Chair of Surrey Oaklands after seven years of solid achievement in the role.

Dr Ray Perunse
ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR

On 6 September The Driscoll Centre held its annual ‘Fun Day’. Over 200 service users, staff and carers attended to listen to live music, enjoy the marquee and stalls and thoroughly enjoyed the late summer fair atmosphere. There was live music and dancing in the marquee, fresh food from the stalls and books and gifts available for the summer bargain hunter. Thank you to everybody who organised the day including Rosie Field, Centre Manager at Geoffrey Harris House, Yvonne Perera, Acting Manager of the Driscoll Centre and Barbara Dance, Deputy Manager of the Driscoll Centre. We thought we’d put together this photomontage for you to show you just how much fun everybody had!

Au revoir... not goodbye

by Susan Howell, Non-Executive Director

I have been a time of tremendous change since Surrey Heartlands days to the large, Surrey Oaklands NHS Trust we have now. We have survived mergers, absorptions, becoming the host site for NHS Direct, management restructuring and service reviews. A daunting agenda for any Board. It has been a privilege to work closely with the Executive Directors and my fellow Non-Execs.

What has impressed me is the resilience with which the staff have coped as they have lived through so much uncertainty. Their dedication in providing the best care possible has been outstanding and, at times, humbling. Non-Executives are extremely lucky to be involved in all aspects of the Trust that gives us a good overview of what is happening at any one time. Unfortunately it is now impossible to get round all the units to talk to users and staff as we used to. I have missed that valuable feedback.

I have been enjoying a member of the Audit and Trustees Committees, whilst my main responsibility has been Clinical Governance. I have chaired the Risk and Quality and Clinical Effectiveness Committees and hope we have set the foundations for future work. Thank you to Dr Robin Baru, Paula Smyth and Prashantia Ramakumar with whom I have worked closely. I have happy memories of Open Forums and conferences when so many clinical staff attended.

I shall be keen to see how the mental health services develop and what will be the final plans for St Ebba’s. Fortunately I am staying on as a Mental Health Act Manager, I’ll still be around, so it’s not really goodbye.

ANIMAL MAGIC!

During the late autumn months, Rosewood house and other homes around the Trust, received a visit from a local farm. This was in the form of a day’s interaction with the farm animals for many service-users with varying disabilities. The visit was funded by one of the service-users’ parents, Mr and Mrs Capan - thank you! The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all (including the animals) as you can see from the picture, and we will definitely be booking them again. Thank you to everyone who made the day possible.

CONTACT DIRECTORY

Liz wins with SOAP

We held a competition in the last edition of the Surrey Oaklands’ magazine to rename it. Thank you to everyone who submitted entries.

We thought it was important to select a name that reflects the Trust’s work with our partner organisations and felt the entry of SOAP (Surrey Oaklands and Partners) submitted by Liz Parkes, Strategic Commissioning Manager for Mental Health at Surrey Social Services fitted the bill. Liz won two tickets to the West End musical, Chicago, which she has very kindly donated to Let’s Link.

Let’s Link is an independent charity which works with health and social care services to encourage people with a mental health problem or a learning disability to be involved in the planning, development and monitoring of the support they need and receive.

STAFF BENEFIT FROM ON LINE SHOPPING

www.nhdiscounts.com

It is free to register and the site offers discounts on a wide range of products and services such as CDs, DVDs, mobile phones, books, holidays, health club membership, car insurance and much much more.

Mystic Morris

Morris’s lottery number predictions are

20 22 24 32 33 42

He forecasts that these numbers will be drawn on a Wednesday or Saturday in January 2002.
ANSWERS ON THE ENTRY FORM PLEASE

1. In the film 'The Lion King' who is Timone's best friend?
2. This quote is from which 80's film; "I figured if you gonna make a time machine, why not do it with some style?"
3. Who sang in 'Expresso Bongo' and then later at Wimbledon (Tennis)?
4. Complete this band name 'Dexy's ———— Runners'
5. Who was the Beatles drummer before Ringo Starr?
6. Who is this?
7. What name did Alvin Stardust originally sing under?
8. Who was in 'Circus Boy' and 'The Monkees'
9. Who is this (we will accept character name!)?
10. Can you name this Only Fools and Horses character?
11. Who is this trouble-making cat, Rhubarb or Custard?
12. What is special about Manx cats?
13. Where do they come from?
14. When was the last time you could turn the date upside down and it still read the same? CLUE: You might remember Michael Barritt explaining this on Nationwide!
15. Zola Budd is famed for what?
16. In the 1966 World Cup, who scored England's 4th and final goal?

All entries should be sent to Juliette Heppell at the Communications Department, Oaklands House, Coulsdon Rd, Caterham, CR3 5YA. These must be received by the 1st of February 2002. The highest scorer will receive a £20 Marks & Spencer voucher. In the event of a draw, this will be the first entry out of the hat. Good luck!