

A RICHMOND FELLOWSHIP CASE STUDY

THE

**POWER**

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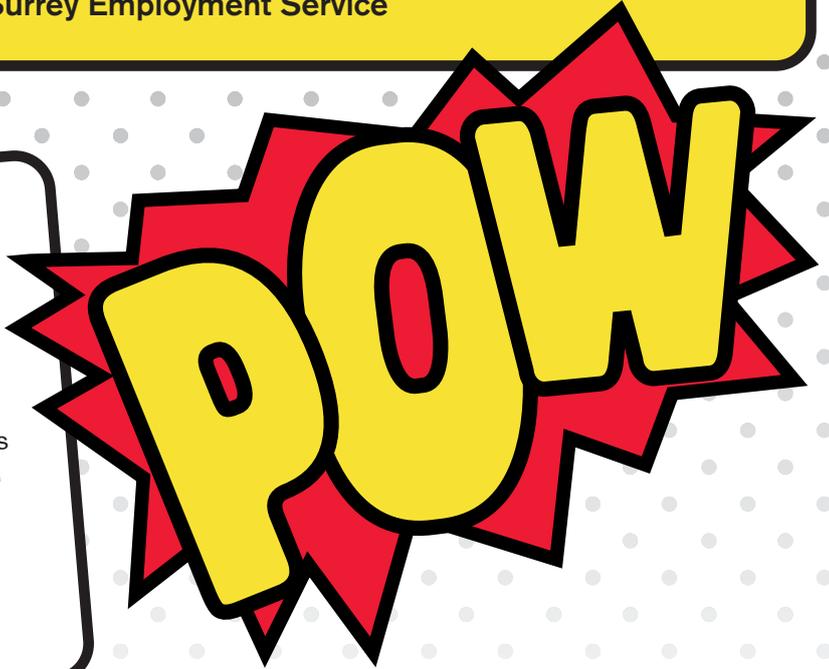


# INPATIENT JOB RETENTION **AND** EMPLOYMENT PILOT PROJECT

A successful partnership between Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Richmond Fellowship (RF) West Surrey Employment Service

## **KEY LEARNING** **FROM THE PILOT PROJECT**

- Job Retention support is highly effective when appropriately offered and delivered to people at point of inpatient admission
- Evidenced demand for employment and social inclusion support amongst inpatients who may previously have been considered too ill to engage with Services
- Need driven Public and Third Sector collaboration is achievable and it yields positive outcomes.



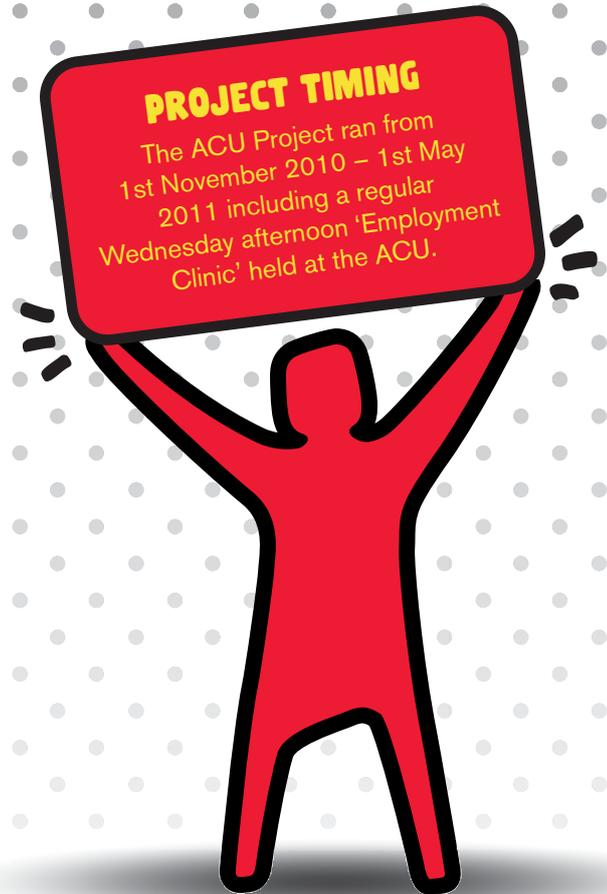
## **A NEED IDENTIFIED AND ACTED ON**

Patient Liaison Officer for Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SaBP NHS Trust), Patty Lopez, identified a need amongst inpatients of St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey, for employment support. This was most apparent on the acute ward where people were admitted for assessment, but where little or no liaison with a patient's employer was being provided. This created job retention problems for individuals which exacerbated their mental health problems.

Patty contacted RF's IPS Employment Advisor for the borough, Darren Ayers, who in conjunction with his line and Service management, agreed to resource a six month pilot of employment support delivery on the four wards of the Abraham Cowley Unit (ACU) at the hospital.

Together, Patty and Darren designed and implemented the programme, which included:

- promotion of the project to ward staff and patients
- early intervention referral routes
- contact arrangements
- permitting access to the wards
- scheduling on ward meetings, follow-up, clinical interface, and reporting procedures



## (SOME OF THE) PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED – AND SOLUTIONS FOUND

**Problem:** Employment status and needs not automatically checked on admission to hospital or during CPA.

**Solution:** Early intervention by Patient Liaison Officer ensured checks within 24 hours, and OT/Psychology departments at the hospital included vocational needs into reviews, groups and assessments.

**Problem:** Ward staff were not always pro-active in promoting the Services to patients and initial take-up was only 50% of capacity.

**Solution:** RF maintained time commitment to the project using spare time to promote the Service in person on the ward and at Occupational/Acute Therapist Team meetings. 1 to 1 liaison between the RF and NHS Leads increased ownership and commitment to the project by the NHS and a more proactive referral approach resulted. Actual physical evidence of delivery proved more effective than promotion via posters and leaflets, however project leaflets were eventually included in the ward admission pack with an RF referral form and Service information.



**Problem:** Entrenched low expectations and “too ill to work” culture among patients and professionals, increased feelings of hopelessness, anxiety and social phobias

**Solution:** RF’s Employment Advisor attended monthly ward meetings, communicating actual evidence of successful outcomes achieved through RF’s support, and reinforcing early successes achieved by the project. Individual, personalised, Advisor – Client relationships were central to amplifying tentative client interest and intent, and to cementing commitment to Client Action Plans.



**Problem:** The pilot was disrupted in the final months by NHS staff needing to focus on relocating wards to another hospital.

**Solution:** A joint NHS and RF report proposing permanent improvements to ward practice regarding emphasis on vocational and social inclusion was submitted to SaBP NHS Trust management.

## KEY OUTCOMES

- Twelve referrals received in six months – six for Job Retention support, six for Employment/Community Links Advice
- All Job Retention referrals resulted in Clients retaining their employment, and one referral even gained additional part time paid employment as a Sports Assistant in a school
- Of the six EA/CLA referrals, only one did not sustain engagement. Two gained voluntary employment outcomes during the pilot, and the others received on going core contract support at the end of the pilot
- Patty Lopez was nominated Employee of the Year by the CEO of SaBP NHS Trust for her involvement in and development of ACU Patient Social Inclusion Initiatives
- Improved awareness throughout SaBP NHS Trust of the effectiveness of RF's Employment, Retain and Community Links Services
- Improved clinical appreciation of the power of social inclusion to positively affect mental health recovery and wellbeing.
- Employment support needs checked within 24 hours of ward admission and vocational needs incorporated into ward groups, reviews, and assessments.
- Joint RF and NHS report proposing permanent improvements to ward practice around vocation and social inclusion was submitted to NHS Trust Management.

For more information about the project and RF's wide range of Services please contact:

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