

## Culture of Care: Staff Care & Development

# Community of Practice summary

**21st August 2025**

### Session aims

- Hear about best practice and learnings emerging from wards
- Reflect on your successes and challenges in the programme
- Interact and connect with other wards and organisations

### Mentimeter

- Everyone was invited to share what they wanted to get out of the session today. “**Inspiration**” and “**learning**” came through most strongly.
- Participants were asked what from the programme has stayed with them the most. “**Confidence**” came through most strongly, alongside “**team building**” and the ability to “**make a difference**”.

## Presentation: Cohort 2 themes

- The Staff Care and Development team identified four key themes from working with ward teams in Cohort 2 of Culture of Care: Staff Care and Development over the past five months

### A – Agency of the Team

#### Challenges:

- Staff taking part were motivated to improve culture on their ward but often felt **limited** by lack of resources, time, or even small practical barriers.

#### Opportunities:

- **Bringing in QI support and executive sponsor support** from the Trust early strongly supports wards to make progress.

- **Empowering junior staff members** to take accountability can help move things forward quickly.

## **B – Belonging and Safety**

### **Challenges:**

- Many staff regularly encounter **racist abuse** within their settings, which can be often directed at staff from service users. While affected staff members describe an understanding that the abuse from service users can be related to acute illness and/or a lack of understanding of other cultures, this abuse can significantly affect wellbeing and morale.
- Established team working dynamics - particularly ensuring all roles are held as equally important, can be a challenge when delivering QI projects. **Blame between staff groups** is a cultural challenge, particularly around workload fairness, responsibility and accountability.

### **Opportunities:**

- Projects specifically designed around **celebrating and promoting cultural difference** can work towards reducing incidences of abuse.
- In turn, developing an environment of **psychological safety** can make staff feel more confident to speak up about instances of abuse and discrimination, where there can otherwise be low rates of reporting.
- There is a further opportunity for organisations to **assess processes in place to handle incidents of racist abuse**, and consider taking similar steps to those in policies on physical abuse.

## **C – Co-production**

### **Challenges:**

- **Knowing how and when best to bring in the voices of lived experience** in project design can be challenging, particularly in project types for which the direct benefit is for staff (although with the belief that any

improvement in staff care will indirectly benefit the care staff can offer to service users).

### Opportunities:

- Bringing in a **strategic lived experience advisor at an early stage** can strongly support wards with co-production, and make connections with the wider work of the organisation.
- Projects involving **joint activities** between staff and service users have improved confidence, built mutual understanding and improved relationships.

## D – Delivering Cultural Change

### Challenges:

- There is often a lot to improve in culture in line with the standards, meaning ward teams often **took some time to agree on a project idea**.
- Some members of staff may be **resistant to or sceptical of change projects** if they're used to things on the ward being done a certain way.

### Opportunities:

- **Early engagement of the wider staff** in the selection of improvement ideas is key to enable sustainable changes.
- **Seeking feedback** and ensuring the whole team can input can help reduce barriers to implementation and make for a change project that truly benefits the whole team.

### Key takeaways:

- **Early senior support** is vital for unblocking small but important barriers.
- Use organisation-level resources to support **co-production**.
- Model **open communication** to strengthen ward culture.
- **Engage the wider team early and often** to embed sustainable change.

## Presentation: sustaining the impact from your QI project

### Key takeaways:

- To ensure impact from a QI project is sustained, it must become part of the **regular rhythms of work on your ward**.
- As such, the project team must **continue to review the success of the project**, optimise if needed, and **communicate the benefits** to ensure the wider team continue to engage.
- Keep **engaging with your wider team and service users** for feedback, and don't be afraid to make changes if goals or context shifts to ensure your project continues to be successful.
- Ensuring the **brilliant basics** are in place - e.g. accessible folders for documents, meetings set up in diaries, MS Teams channels (or similar) for communication - can make it easy to sustain rhythms and have conversations when your formal coaching ends.
- **Don't forget your longlist of ideas** generated at the start of your coaching journey. Once one project is up and running this can then inform your team's next focus, ensuring a culture of continuous improvement on your ward.

Here is a link to our [sustainability pack](#) including steps you can take post project, and tools you can use to structure meetings after your coaching finishes.

## Breakout rooms:

In breakout rooms, ward teams shared what they are doing or plan to do to sustain their impact of the projects. Ideas included:

- Finding ways to celebrate success and communicate **good news stories** as well as challenges.
- Embed your project into the **usual ward rhythms**, e.g. making it part of team meetings where relevant, can keep momentum up.
- Get **regular feedback** from the wider ward team and service users on the project, to ensure the project is still having a positive impact.
- Get **support from the wider QI team** or from the Trust.
- **Senior members of staff** should continue to emphasise the importance of the project and maintaining a good care culture.

### Wrap up mentimeter

- At the end of the session, participants were asked what would stay with them today. “**Sustainability**” came through most clearly, alongside “**sharing**”, “**co-production**”, and “**connections**”.