

Mental Health News

Privacy & Dignity: delivering same sex accommodation in hospitals

The Mental Health News e-bulletin is a daily bulletin issued by the Mental Health Improvement Programme (MHIP) containing an item relating to a Mental Health issue, development or outcome in the North West.

The aim is to bring awareness to our stakeholders about service improvement and innovative projects underway in Mental Health across the North West, and to encourage you (the reader) to act as vehicle for ensuring that you or your organisation is engaged with the work where applicable.

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Government money has been awarded to make sure that people have their privacy and dignity protected whilst they are in hospital. The original focus came from concerns about gender mixing, but in the North West we are also focusing on the wider “privacy & dignity” agenda.

Mental health inpatient services may have very different issues to those of an Acute hospital.

- People tend to stay longer in mental health units
- Illness can make people particularly vulnerable
- Interventions like close observation could affect privacy & dignity

Each Trust has written a detailed improvement plan. These are backed up by a programme of National and regional support. The support includes visits to hospital sites to collect examples of work that might help other Trusts.

The projects around the region are very diverse, and include the following examples:

- Improvements to buildings eg to provide en-suite bathrooms
- Better information for service users and carers
- Values and beliefs training for staff
- Gender-specific ward areas and activities

All work is due to be finished this year and the Annual Patient Survey, as well as other information, will be used to measure the success of the programme.

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