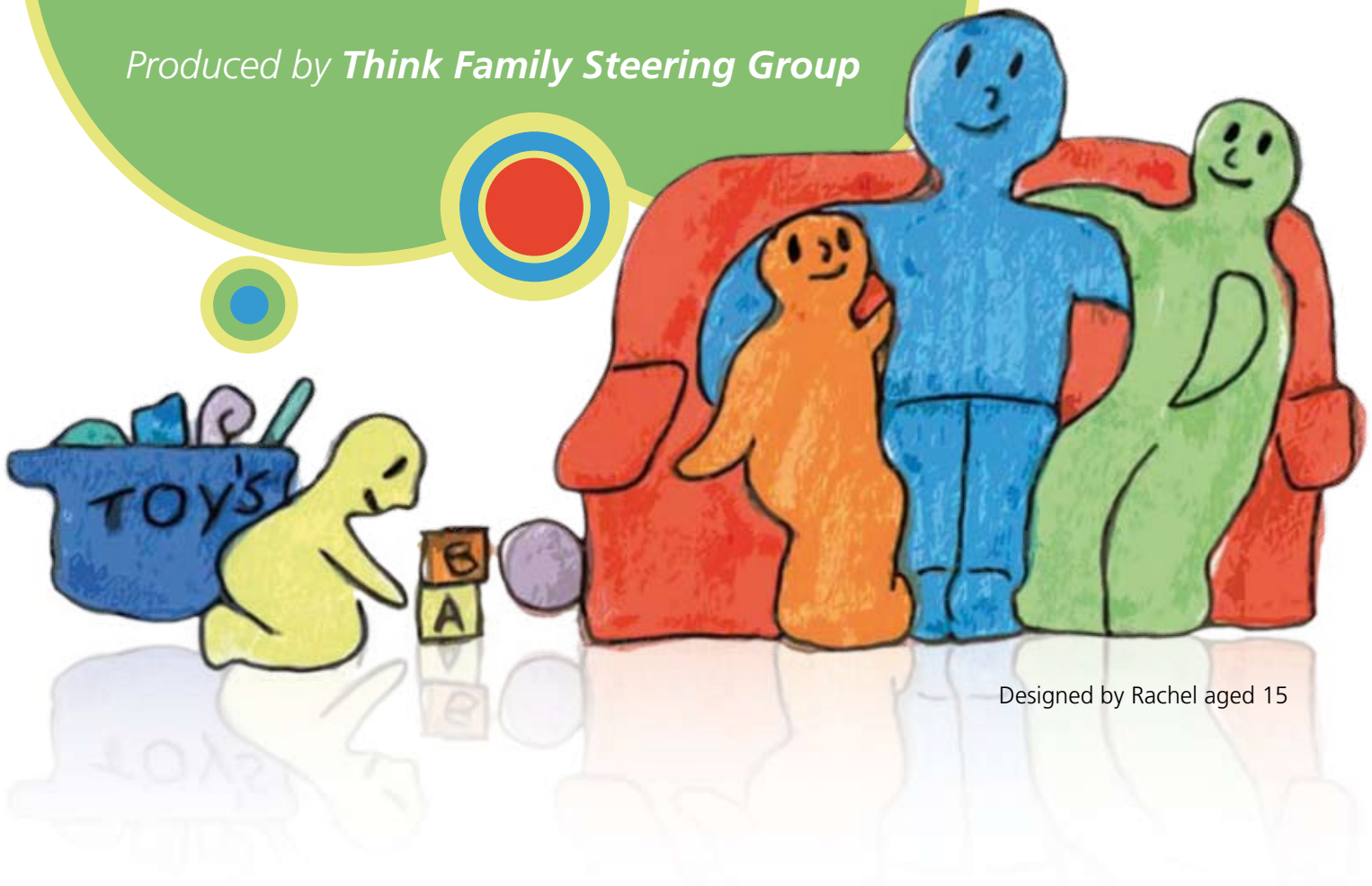


Family Rooms Review 2011

Produced by *Think Family Steering Group*



Designed by Rachel aged 15

In partnership with

**Believe in
children**



Barnardo's

Comments from our survey:

"Going into a ward is hard enough but when staff are polite and also informative about family rooms it makes visiting a lot easier and nicer."

"The room just means we had a special place that was private. The staff did not intrude but it felt they understood. My mum was quiet and ill but I still wanted to just be with her and I think the staff tried hard to make me feel welcome."

"This room made my admission less distressing as I had regular contact with my family. I would recommend the family room to everybody."

"The nurse was kind and got me and mum a drink. She said it was our special time."

"This was an excellent facility that improved my stay as an in-patient."

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Foreword



It isn't often that we are given an opportunity to make such a positive impact on the lives of whole families.

The development of Family Rooms in all in-patient services across Mersey Care NHS Trust started with involvement of families, listening to their views and opinions and then acting on them. This review of the Family Rooms in Local Services allowed service users, young people and staff to share their views.

The views are overwhelmingly positive (don't take my word for it, please read on...) but we are not complacent. We can and will always make improvements.

We plan to carry out a similar review in low, medium and high secure services this year.

It only remains for me to thank all the members of the Mersey Care NHS Trust Wide Think Family Steering Group, in particular Louise Wardale from Barnardo's, Pauline Gannon and Linda Chadburn from the Governance Team but most importantly to all the young people, service users and staff who took part in this Family Rooms survey.

Not only in the Trust but through our involvement in the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) 'Think Child, Think Parent, Think Family Work' we will ensure that 'Thinking Family' is part of our daily work.

Carol Bernard

Service Director
Liverpool Clinical Business Unit
Mersey Care NHS Trust

We have been working in partnership with Mersey Care NHS Trust for a number of years to raise awareness of the needs of young carers, children and young people affected by parental mental ill-health.

It is so encouraging that our role as a 'critical friend' has been welcomed from the outset. This has paved the way and established that working with the whole family is quite simply a sensible and extremely effective approach. The family rooms are a response to delivering services, that really do place families at the heart; their experiences have rightly been given centre stage.

This has been a journey, one I have been privileged to be a part of and many others have joined the Keeping the Family in Mind collaborative

along the way. In doing so they have and continue to provide a vital role as champions for parents and their children. Looking back, it is clear that together we have travelled a great distance. We must keep striding forward and by working collaboratively with families and Mersey Care, we can successfully demonstrate that the experiences of children visiting their parents in hospital can be dramatically improved. We move forward with the strong motivation, energy and creativity which have been the building blocks that have influenced these improvements and that 'too difficult' is not an excuse we use!

Louise Wardale

Keeping the Family in Mind Coordinator
Barnardo's Action with Young Carers Liverpool

What is the Mersey Care Family Room?

It is a room which allows children, young people and their families to visit their parent or family member in a comfortable environment; being 'away from the ward' has been understood as one of the principal requirements.

The rooms are very much the kind of environment you would find at home, which is clearly more conducive to a child's perspective of 'visiting' someone. Each room is a small sitting room designed for and by young people with toys and playthings to facilitate a homely environment. One young carer, Cait, who has been heavily involved stated:

*'you need to have privacy, and going on those wards is pretty scary, you need time together, and just getting a little space away can make all the difference when so much is happening. You know your mum is ill but she is still **your** mum and just being with her really helped me and her too'.*

The involvement of children and young people, supported by Barnardo's, has ensured that their participation has remained central. This has included involvement on a number of levels eg, choosing the right room, deciding on décor, furniture, toys, facilities eg baby changing facilities, designing and facilitating a training programme for staff. The Trust has illustrated their pledge by investing in young carers,

valuing their contribution and having a defined budget for payments to service users and carers who get involved, including young carers!

Of particular and unique significance is the '**Jelly Baby**' logo, which is the kite mark awarded, by the young people, to the Trusts who have met the requirements set by the young people.

The process of empowerment is summed up by Cait:

'staff should never underestimate how important the family room is and that's why I have got involved in visiting new ones when Mersey Care are working on them. I first used one when I was 15 and though the room obviously did not make my mum better, it did make us feel that we were important and welcomed and that visiting is vital. For me now it makes such a difference to be listened to and knowing that we really can make a difference, this makes me feel that my experiences are not ignored, but real action happens and things do get better'.

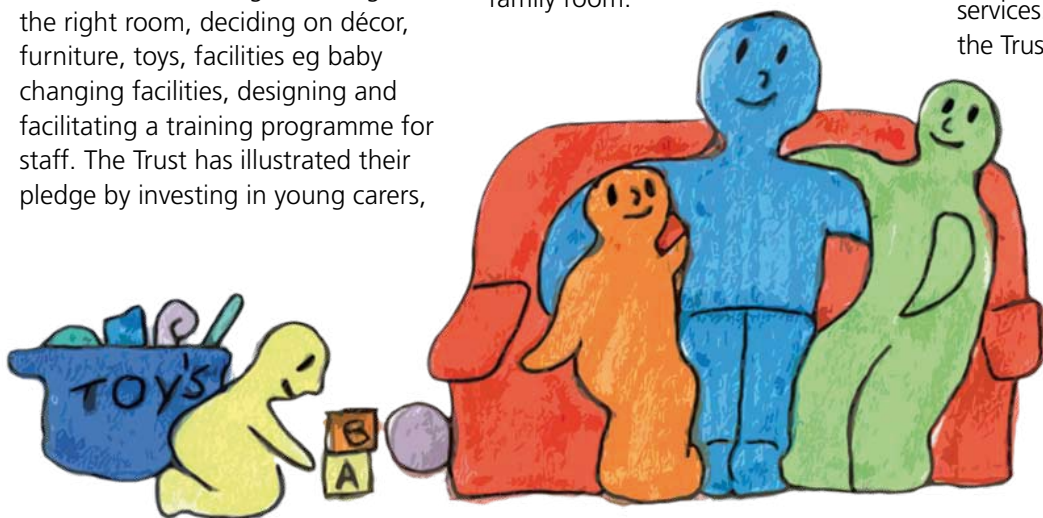
This is further reinforced by the Trust's commitment that it is 'a given' that all new resources and service developments will have a family room.

Sarah, who is now a young adult carer was actively involved in designing the first room and recalls her experiences, describing visiting her mum on an acute ward she said:

"not knowing who are staff, who are service users and feeling really trapped. I could cope with my mad mum, she was not well at all, but she is my mum, but seeing other people really got to me and my sister and two little brothers, we wanted to see our mum, she wanted to see us, but going on those wards just was not right for any of us."

Trust managers also understood these fears and the Family Rooms are now the venue which facilitates and supports the successful implementation of the Trust's Policy and Procedure for Visits by Children, available on the Trust website¹.

The partnership working with Barnardo's, which has led to the development of the family rooms, has won 2 national awards, the Society Guardian Public Service Award and NHS Centre for Involvement Impact Award. In 2007 the family room was used as a case study in a national film about how patient and public involvement can lead to better NHS services. To view this film please see the Trust website².



Designed by Rachel aged 15

Key Messages from this Report

The Family Room initiative was inspired over 10 years ago, driven by a grass roots approach to effecting change for families who have had experience of admissions to in-patient mental health services.

Barnardo's Keeping the Family in Mind (KFIM) has worked proactively to ensure the views of children, young people and young carers whose parents have a mental health problem are listened to and can influence the services their families receive. KFIM is committed to ensuring that the improvements that come about are informed by the voices and lived experiences of families.

It would be remiss to state that effecting change in institutional attitudes was a simple process because this would minimise the hard work of those championing the rights of families to visit their parents in a way that safeguarded children and their parent's recovery.

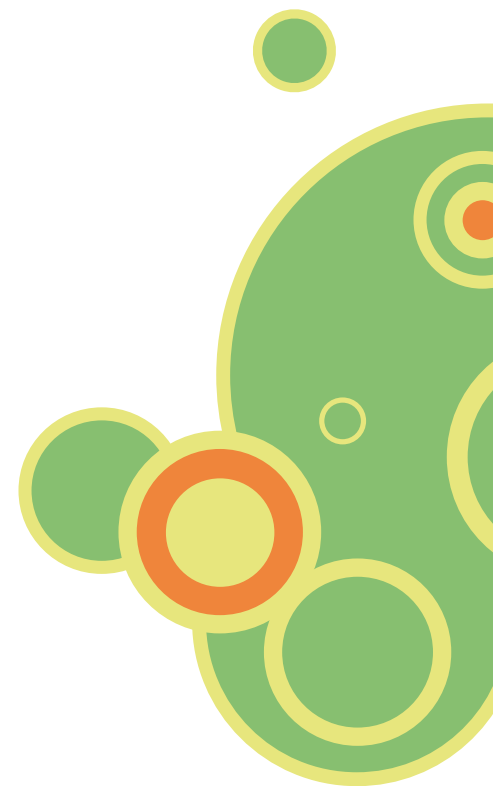
The work that began in Mersey Care NHS Trust over a decade ago has rightfully been highlighted as best practice and now encompasses all Mental Health Units, for adults and older people, the Addiction Services, the Low Secure Unit (LSU) and Merseyside Forensic Service within SaFE Partnerships CBU and High Secure Services. It is evident that the real experiences of families coupled with strong leadership and commitment from senior managers has contributed overwhelmingly to the success of the family rooms.

The comments made by children and young people who are young carers help us to understand what a difference the rooms and the experience of visiting can have on their lives. The critical issue of privacy remains central to their experiences.

Comments from service users, family members and staff are on the whole positive, emphasising the ongoing improvements required can realistically be achieved. All three groups highlighted that the rooms are well used and very much appreciated. Evidence provided illustrates that whole process of family visiting has benefitted service users' recovery and has been fundamental in maintaining family support networks and allowing families to be families in-spite of crises.

It is clear that those stakeholders involved in producing and reviewing family rooms are passionate and there are many positives from which to draw inspiration.

However, what is also clear is that nobody is complacent. Those involved are rightfully proud of their achievements, but are realistic that this journey is one of evolution and must be allowed to continue to grow, adapt and inspire others to challenge institutional and hegemonic stigma with regard to mental health service users and their families.



The Case for Family Rooms

Over the last 10 years, the impact of parental mental illness on family life has been increasingly acknowledged in research and policy.

A stay in hospital can represent a significant crisis, not just in terms of a parent's individual mental health but in family life overall, and may have long term repercussions beyond the period of hospitalisation itself. At home everyday routines are disrupted, other adults are over-stretched and both parents and children often feel worried and powerless. An intervention, intended to provide safety and support during a time of acute distress, can fail to promote recovery if the specific effects of hospitalisation on the whole family are not taken into account. This is well captured in 'Parents in Hospital: How mental health services can best promote family contact when a parent is in hospital report'³.

One solution has been the development of the network of family rooms across Mersey Care. This initiative did not however grow in isolation and must be seen in the context of the wider programme of partnership work in Merseyside, which can be directly attributed to the Barnardo's Keeping the Family in Mind collaborative (KFIM)⁴.

The KFIM project continues to provide a vital role as a champion for parents and their children, as well as coordinating a range of initiatives and projects. Its particular strength has been to ensure the views of young carers are listened to and that they meaningfully inform strategic and service development. The family rooms are a real illustration of tangible outcomes which are making a difference to families impacted by parental mental ill health.

Context and Developments

It would be fair to begin by asking the question 'why then in 2001 was a family room launched in one of the acute inpatient units in Mersey Care NHS Trust before the imperative and rational was as obvious as it is now in 2011?'

Looking back now there is little doubt that new ground was broken as this innovative and unique partnership was being forged with Mersey Care NHS Trust and Barnardo's Keeping the Family in Mind.

Back in 2001 we decided that 'too difficult' was no excuse and KFIM grew as a real example of partnership working; where the direct participation of families themselves, parents, children and particularly young carers is central, in order to really inform the work and make it effective. Innovations such as the family rooms are one example of what can be achieved by taking a strong rights based approach. Running in tandem and complimenting the process was the imperative that young carers have the right to be seen and heard AND to be involved in decision making.

Following an evaluation of the first room in 2004, this unique scheme was highlighted in the Mental Health and Social Exclusion report⁵. The commitment to really involve young carers, supported by Barnardo's, is the bedrock that has allowed the development of what is now a network of family rooms across the Trust.

There are now 15 Family Rooms across the Mersey Care Services. Mersey Care provides specialist mental health, learning disability and substance misuse services for Liverpool, Sefton and Kirkby. It also has a wider role providing medium secure services for Cheshire and Merseyside and high secure services nationally at Ashworth Hospital.

The strong leadership from Mersey Care and the commitment of senior managers throughout the process of development and delivery of the rooms has been essential. Carol Bernard, Service Director Liverpool Clinical Business Unit (CBU) Mersey Care NHS Trust, chairs a steering group which meets quarterly with clear terms of reference. The development of the rooms illustrates that it is essential to have top down and bottom up processes working together to support families.



³ Mental Health Act Commission, Barnardo's & CSIP, 2007 ⁴ KFIM is a strategic development project which grew out of Barnardo's Action with Young Carers Liverpool ⁵ Social Exclusion Unit ODP, 2004

Reviewing the Family Rooms

The Think Family Steering Group initiated a family rooms evaluation survey which began in 2010 to gather views on the facilities available to families; this was launched with a Census Day to begin the process.

It was agreed the scope of the review would include all the units except the Low Secure Unit, Scott Clinic (medium secure unit) and Ashworth Hospital (high secure services), which would be reviewed at a later date.

The group wanted to evaluate levels of awareness and use of family rooms, how the rooms are rated by those who use them and if improvements could be made.

It was agreed to gather views and experiences directly from:

- Young Carers supported by local young carers services across the Mersey Care footprint (Liverpool Barnardo's Action with Young Carers, Sefton Young Carers-PSS, Knowsley Young Carers)
- Service users and family members who are currently being supported by in-patient services
- Staff working on the wards

Posters were displayed in the units as well as utilising the internal communications across the Trust including bulletins, newsletter articles, posters, computer 'pop ups', briefings and champions. The aim being to canvas the views and experiences of the young carers, staff, service users and family members by having them complete a short questionnaire.

This process began with Carol Bernard and Louise Wardale, from Barnardo's, running a focus group with young carers supported by Barnardo's Action with Young Carers Liverpool. The outcome was a survey form, designed by young carers, which could then be completed to gather their views. With support from Mersey Care's Governance Manager and a Clinical Auditor this form was then used as a guide to develop the questionnaire for service users, family members and staff.

It was agreed that the views of young carers would be gathered via the young carers services that support them, with the Liverpool Barnardo's service taking the lead. Although the rooms are for all children and young people and some of these are young carers, it was felt a safer and supportive process to gather views from young carers who are being supported by a direct service was needed. Though this limited the cohort, it was agreed that this was the most appropriate way to safely and sensitively gather their views in a meaningful way.



Survey Results

294 surveys were returned by young carers, service users, family members and staff. The survey was audited and findings are listed below which will now inform the Trust's Family Provision Group as it considers the needs of families.

Family rooms involved in the evaluation:

- Brain Injuries Unit
- Broadoak Unit
- Boothroyd Ward
- Kevin White Unit
- Park Unit
- Elm Ward
- Mossley Hill Hospital
- Rathbone Rehabilitation Centre
- Stoddart House
- Windsor House
- Windsor Clinic Alcohol Services
- PICU (Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit)

The results are illustrated in three sections:

- 1 Young Carers Survey**
- 2 Service User & Family Member Survey**
- 3 Staff Survey**



A Family Room at Mersey Care

1. Young Carers Survey

Questions:

1. Have you seen the posters on the ward about the family room?
2. Has a member of staff ever told you that there is a family room for you to use?
3. Do you feel ok about asking a member of staff if you can use the family room?
4. Have you ever asked a member of staff if you can use the family room?
5. Do you feel that you are treated well when visiting a member of your family in hospital?
6. When a member of your family was last in hospital did the staff explain things to you?
7. When a member of your family was last in hospital did you use the family room?
8. When a member of your family was last in hospital was the family room booked for you?
9. Have you ever had to share the family room with another family?
10. When you last used the family room was it clean?
11. When you last used the family room was it homely?
12. How safe did you feel in the family room?
13. Do you feel that there are enough facilities in the family room?

11 responses were received from young carers.

UNIT/AGE GROUP	5-11	12-15	16-18	16-18	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	-	2	1	-	3
Stoddart House	2	1	1	-	4
Windsor House	1	1	-	-	2
Not recorded	-	-	-	2	2
Totals	3	4	2	2	11

Have you seen any posters on a ward about the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	-	1	3
Stoddart House	3	1	-	4
Windsor House	1	-	1	2
Not recorded	1	1	-	2
Totals	7	2	2	11

64% of young carers said they had seen posters on the ward advertising the use of the family room.

Has a member of staff ever told you that there is a family room for you to use?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	1	-	3
Stoddart House	3	1	-	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	1	1	-	2
Totals	8	3	-	11

73% of young carers said that a staff member had told them that there was a family room for them to use.

Do you feel okay about asking a member of staff if you can use the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	3	-	-	3
Stoddart House	3	-	1	4
Windsor House	1	-	1	2
Not recorded	1	-	1	2
Totals	8	-	3	11

73% of young carers said that they felt comfortable asking a staff member if they could use the family room.

Have you ever asked a member of staff if you can use a family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	1	-	3
Stoddart House	3	1	-	4
Windsor House	-	1	1	2
Not recorded	1	-	1	2
Totals	6	3	2	11

55% of young carers said that they had asked a staff member if they could use the family room.

Do you feel that you are treated well when visiting a member of your family in hospital?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	1	-	3
Stoddart House	3	1	-	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	2	-	-	2
Totals	9	2	-	11

82% of young carers said that they were treated well when visiting their relatives in hospital.

Some examples of what young carers said about how they are treated included:

"Very excellent care, thank you."

"The staff were polite and spent five minutes in the room with me, my mum and my nan. The nurse just made us feel welcome."

Windsor House

"I took my younger brother in, he is 9 years old. The nurse met us in reception and then we went to the room. She chatted to us."

Stoddart House

"We were not offered to use the family room and were not informed of there being one. Didn't feel well treated."

Broadoak Unit

"The nurse was kind and got me and mum a drink. She said it was our special time."

Windsor House

"It's a private place and it's not rushed."

Broadoak Unit



When a member of your family was last in hospital did the staff explain things to you?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	1	-	3
Stoddart House	3	-	1	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	2	-	-	2
Totals	9	1	1	11

82% of young carers said that the staff explained the situation to them.

When a member of your family was last in hospital did you use the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	1	-	3
Stoddart House	4	-	-	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	1	1	-	2
Totals	9	2	-	11

82% of young carers said that they used the family room the last time their relative was in hospital.

When a member of your family was last in hospital was the family room booked for you?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	1	-	3
Stoddart House	3	-	1	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	-	2	-	2
Totals	7	3	1	11

64% of young carers said that the room was booked the last time their relative was in hospital.

Have you ever had to share the family room with another family?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	-	3	-	3
Stoddart House	-	1	-	4
Windsor House	-	2	-	2
Not recorded	-	2	-	2
Totals	-	11	-	11

Young carers all said that they had never had to share the family room with another family.

When you last used the family room was it clean?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	-	1	3
Stoddart House	4	-	-	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	2	-	-	2
Totals	10	-	1	11

91% of young carers said that the family room was clean the last time they used it.

When you last used the family room was it homely?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	-	1	3
Stoddart House	3	1	-	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	2	-	-	2
Totals	10	1	1	11

82% of young carers said that they thought the family room was homely.

How safe did you feel in the family room?

UNIT	VERY SAFE	SAFE	UNSAFE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	1	1	1 NOT RECORDED	3
Stoddart House	4	-	-	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	1	1	-	2
Totals	8	2	1	11

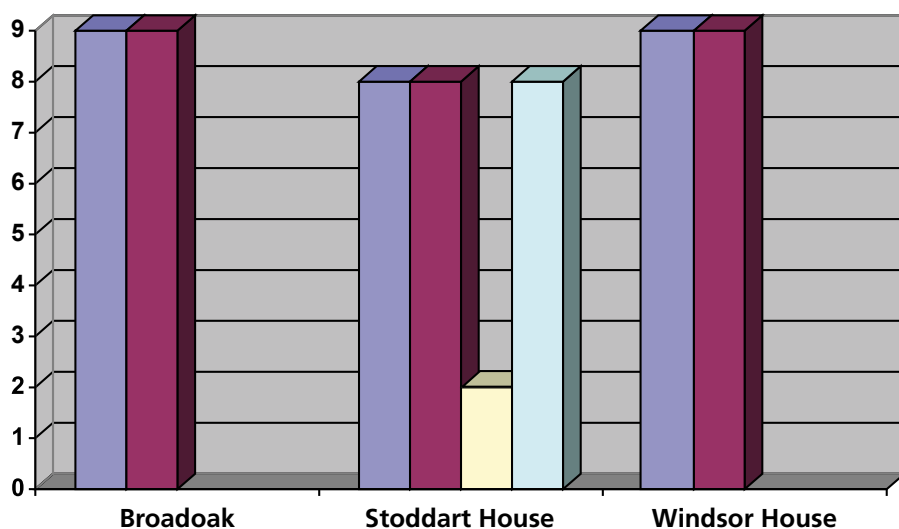
91% of young carers said they felt very safe or safe in the family room. The response from one other young person was not recorded.

Do you feel that there are enough facilities in the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	2	-	1	3
Stoddart House	3	1	-	4
Windsor House	2	-	-	2
Not recorded	2	-	-	2
Totals	10	1	1	11

82% of young carers felt that there were enough facilities in the family room.

When asked to rate the family room on a scale of 1-10, 8 young carers gave the following scores



"Important to have a separate and safe place for the children to be able to visit."
Stoddart House

"Thank you."

"The room just means we had a special place that was private. The staff did not intrude but it felt they understood. My mum was quiet and ill but I still wanted to just be with her and I think the staff tried hard to make me feel welcome."
Windsor House

"I liked the room because it was a bit like a living room with a couch and TV. It was relaxing and not in a rush. They listened."
Stoddart House

Comments from young carers about the family room include:

"The room did have a welcome sign on the door but when we last used it, it was not there. The jelly baby was not on the door and it should be on."
Broadoak Unit

"The room was nearby so we did not have to walk far. It was quiet and we were by ourselves. It was private."
Windsor House



"Times for using the room needs to be constant and ongoing. Everyone is entitled to use them however sometimes they are unavailable so I reckon there needs to be more in my opinion."
Broadoak Unit

"My mum has stayed in hospital a few times but this is the first time I have taken my little brother. I did not realise how far away the room is, my brother was a bit upset but that's because mum is ill. Maybe footsteps on the floor to the room like in children's A&E would be good – it may add a bit more family feeling to it."
Stoddart House

2. Service User & Family Member Survey

Questions posed to service users and their family members:

1. Have you seen the posters on the ward about the family room?
2. Has a member of staff ever told you that there is a family room for you to use?
3. Do you feel confident about asking a member of staff if you can use the family room?
4. Have you ever asked a member of staff if you can use the family room?
5. Do you feel that your family are treated with dignity when visiting you in hospital?
6. Have you used the family room?
7. Was the family room booked for you?
8. What time of day would you use the family room?
9. Have you ever had to share the family room with another family?
10. Was the family room clean?
11. Was the family room homely?
12. Do you feel that there are enough facilities in the family room?
13. Do you feel that your family are safe in the family room?

109 responses were received from service users and their family members.

UNIT	SERVICE USER	FAMILY MEMBER	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	25	9	34
Boothroyd Ward	2	0	2
Kevin White Unit	6	0	6
Park Unit	10	2	12
Mossley Hill	6	3	9
Stoddart House	16	8	24
Windsor House	9	1	10
Windsor Clinic	4	6	10
PICU	2	0	2
Totals	80	29	109

Have you seen the posters on the ward about the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	16	15	3	34
Boothroyd Ward	-	2	-	2
Kevin White Unit	1	3	2	6
Park Unit	5	6	1	12
Mossley Hill	2	6	1	9
Stoddart House	17	4	3	24
Windsor House	9	-	1	10
Windsor Clinic	4	5	1	10
PICU	-	2	-	2
Totals	54	43	12	109

50% of service users or their family members had seen a poster advertising the family room.

Has a member of staff ever told you that there is a family room for you to use?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	29	5	-	34
Boothroyd Ward	-	1	1	2
Kevin White Unit	4	2	-	6
Park Unit	9	2	1	12
Mossley Hill	8	1	-	9
Stoddart House	21	2	1	24
Windsor House	8	1	1	10
Windsor Clinic	6	3	1	10
PICU	1	1	-	2
Totals	86	18	5	109

79% of service users or their family members had been advised by a member of staff about the family room.

Do you feel confident about asking a staff member if you can use the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	29	2	3	34
Boothroyd Ward	-	2	-	2
Kevin White Unit	5	1	-	6
Park Unit	12	-	-	12
Mossley Hill	9	-	-	9
Stoddart House	19	2	3	24
Windsor House	9	-	1	10
Windsor Clinic	9	1	-	10
PICU	2	-	-	2
Totals	94	8	7	109

89% of service users or their family members felt confident about asking a staff member if they could use the family room.

Have you ever asked a member of staff if you can use the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	15	19	-	34
Boothroyd Ward	1	1	-	2
Kevin White Unit	3	3	-	6
Park Unit	6	6	-	12
Mossley Hill	4	4	1	9
Stoddart House	19	5	-	24
Windsor House	8	1	1	10
Windsor Clinic	2	8	-	10
PICU	1	1	-	2
Totals	59	48	2	109

54% of service users or their family members had asked a staff member if they could use the family room.

Do you feel that your family are treated with dignity when visiting you in hospital?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	31	-	3	34
Boothroyd Ward	1	1	-	2
Kevin White Unit	3	1	2	6
Park Unit	10	2	-	12
Mossley Hill	8	-	1	9
Stoddart House	22	-	2	24
Windsor House	9	-	1	10
Windsor Clinic	9	-	1	10
PICU	2	-	-	2
Totals	95	4	10	109

87% of service users or their family members felt that their family were treated with dignity when visiting their family in hospital.

What time of day would you use the family room?

UNIT	MORNING	LUNCHTIME	AFTERNOON	EVENING	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	3	2	13	14	32
Boothroyd Ward	-	-	2	-	2
Kevin White Unit	-	-	3	2	5
Park Unit	2	-	9	1	12
Mossley Hill	-	-	6	-	6
Stoddart House	1	1	10	11	23
Windsor House	2	-	4	3	9
Windsor Clinic	-	-	3	5	8
PICU	-	-	2	-	2
Totals	8	3	52	36	99

52% of service users or their family members who expressed a preferred time slot said they would like to use the room in the afternoon, with 36% preferring the evening, 9% morning and 3% lunchtime.

Have you used the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	14	20	-	34
Boothroyd Ward	1	1	-	2
Kevin White Unit	3	3	-	6
Park Unit	6	6	-	12
Mossley Hill	3	5	1	9
Stoddart House	21	3	-	24
Windsor House	7	2	1	10
Windsor Clinic	2	8	-	10
PICU	2	-	-	2
Totals	59	48	2	109

54% of service users or their family members had used the family room.

Was the family room booked for you?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	13	1	-	14
Boothroyd Ward	1	-	-	1
Kevin White Unit	3	3	-	6
Park Unit	3	2	1	6
Mossley Hill	1	2	-	3
Stoddart House	21	-	-	21
Windsor House	7	-	-	7
Windsor Clinic	2	-	-	2
PICU	2	-	-	2
Totals	53	8	1	62

85% of service users or their family members who had used the family room said that the room was booked for them.

"Too many toys all over the place."

Broadoak Unit

"Door not always properly shut."

Park Unit

"You cannot force atmosphere it's totally artificial."

Park Unit

"There were lots of people about and didn't know who they were, though room itself was fine."

Stoddart House

Have you ever had to share the family room with another family?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	-	14	-	14
Boothroyd Ward	-	1	-	1
Kevin White Unit	-	6	-	6
Park Unit	1	5	-	6
Mossley Hill	-	3	-	3
Stoddart House	1	20	-	21
Windsor House	1	6	-	7
Windsor Clinic	-	2	-	2
PICU	-	2	-	2
Totals	3	59	-	62

95% of service users or their family members who had used the family room had not had to share it with another family.

Was the family room clean?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	14	-	-	14
Boothroyd Ward	-	1	-	1
Kevin White Unit	4	-	2	6
Park Unit	5	-	1	6
Mossley Hill	3	-	-	3
Stoddart House	19	1	1	21
Windsor House	7	-	-	7
Windsor Clinic	2	-	-	2
PICU	2	-	-	2
Totals	56	2	4	62

90% of services users or their family members who had used the family room had found the room clean.

Was the family room homely?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	12	1	1	14
Boothroyd Ward	-	1	-	1
Kevin White Unit	4	-	2	6
Park Unit	3	2	1	6
Mossley Hill	2	1	-	3
Stoddart House	17	1	3	21
Windsor House	7	-	-	7
Windsor Clinic	1	-	1	2
PICU	1	1	-	2
Totals	47	7	8	62

76% of service users or their family members who had used the family room said that it was homely.

Do you feel that there are enough facilities in the family room?

UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	8	4	2	14
Boothroyd Ward	-	-	1	1
Kevin White Unit	3	1	2	6
Park Unit	3	2	1	6
Mossley Hill	2	-	1	3
Stoddart House	12	4	5	21
Windsor House	7	-	-	7
Windsor Clinic	2	-	-	2
PICU	2	-	-	2
Totals	39	11	12	62

63% of service users or their family members who had used the family room thought that there were enough facilities in the family room.

Do you feel that your family are safe in the family room?

UNIT	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	13	1	-	14
Boothroyd Ward	-	-	-	0
Kevin White Unit	5	-	-	5
Park Unit	4	2	-	6
Mossley Hill	3	-	-	3
Stoddart House	17	-	3	20
Windsor House	7	-	-	7
Windsor Clinic	2	-	-	2
PICU	2	-	-	2
Totals	53	3	3	59

90% of service users or their family members said that they always felt their family was safe in the family room, with 5% saying sometimes.

When asked why service users or their family members did not feel safe, responses included:

"People can come in and out on family occasions."
Park Unit

"Arguments with certain people."
Park Unit

"Maybe close the door as people have easy access toward the room."
Park Unit

Service users and their families were asked for their comments about the family room, and to freely give their opinion; positive and negative comments include:

Positive Comments

Broadoak Unit:

- "Yes I would recommend it to others."
- "This room made my admission less distressing as I had regular contact with my family. I would recommend the family room to everybody."
- "It's quiet and away from the wards."
- "This was an excellent facility that improved my stay as an inpatient."
- "Happy with facilities for children, no dislikes, access to hot and cold drinks might be an improvement."
- "I would recommend the room to someone else. It is private, homely and comfortable. Enough for the kids to do."
- "Yes I would use it again. The children were safe, makes you look forward to visits. Needs water."

Park Unit:

- "I liked the playing toys in there, there are plenty of games in there to do or watch, and there's a good music system in there as well."
- "I like the children's toys inside of it, it's a cosy sized room. I'd use it again and I'd advise it for someone else to use."
- "I would use family room. I would recommend the family room to another family."

Stoddart House:

- "Would use it again."
- "The family room provides a good space for families to come together when required."
- "Very important to have this facility for children and patient (parent)."
- "I think that this room is an excellent provision to the service."

Kevin White Unit:

- "Yes I would recommend the room to a family, while your getting on with your business your kids can play with the toys instead of harassing you."
- "I liked how comfortable the room is decorated and furniture is nice and feels nice."
- "Would recommend."
- "Not used it yet although I have been shown the facility and it looks alright nothing more you could ask for."



Negative Comments

Broadoak Unit:

- "Dislike the size, like the furniture."

Boothroyd Ward:

- "Some family games would be good."

Park Unit:

- "More toys would be nice and being able to have a hot drink would make the visits more relaxing."
- "Should be more toys to play with."
- "Room is airless and claustrophobic."

Mossley Hill:

- "Too small."
- "Tea/coffee."

Stoddart House:

- "I would like to suggest another family room as there are lots of patients here and sometimes it is booked up and you have to wait until it's available."
- "Not enough for teenage children 12-16 need some music, atmosphere."
- "More toys for children not enough choice regarding age and gender."

PICU:

- "Would be improved if a tea machine was available."

When asked to score the family rooms out of 10 service users and their families scored an average of 8/10.

3. Staff Survey

Questions:

1. Are you aware that the Trust Policy and Procedure for visits by children incorporates guidance for the use of family rooms?
2. What information regarding the family room is readily available on the ward?
3. How do you encourage the use of the family room?
4. Do you find that the family room impacts on your time and work in any way?
5. Do you feel that the family room could be improved in any way?

There were 174 responses from staff members.

UNIT/LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT	0-4 YEARS	5-9 YEARS	>10 YEARS	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	21	9	17	47
Boothroyd Ward	7	5	5	17
Kevin White Unit	5	4	3	12
Park Unit	4	3	3	10
Mossley Hill	2	2	3	7
Rathbone Centre	1	4	5	10
Stoddart House	21	10	14	45
Windsor House	3	3	3	9
Windsor Clinic	3	2	-	5
PICU	7	2	3	12
Totals	74	44	56	174

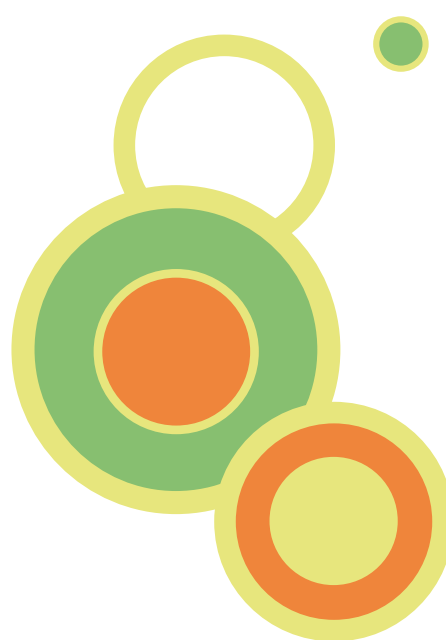
Are you aware that the Trust Policy and Procedure for visits by children incorporates guidance for the use of family rooms?

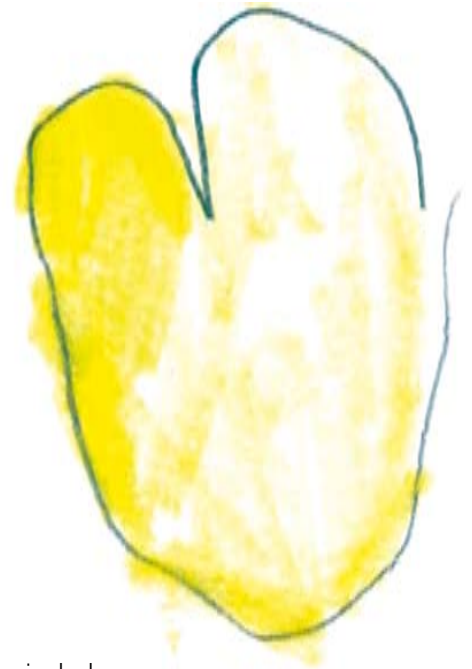
UNIT	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	42	1	4	47
Boothroyd Ward	8	3	6	17
Kevin White Unit	10	-	1	11
Park Unit	9	-	1	10
Mossley Hill	7	-	-	7
Rathbone Centre	10	-	-	10
Stoddart House	39	1	5	45
Windsor House	7	-	2	9
Windsor Clinic	5	-	-	5
PICU	11	1	-	12
Totals	148	6	19	173

86% of staff members were aware of the guidance for the use of the family room incorporated in the Trust Policy.

What information regarding the family room is readily available on the ward?

UNIT	POSTERS	LEAFLETS	WELCOME PACK	VERBAL
Broadoak Unit	28	6	12	13
Boothroyd Ward	7	1	-	-
Kevin White Unit	7	1	8	2
Park Unit	-	-	-	-
Mossley Hill	5	-	-	2
Rathbone Centre	-	-	-	-
Stoddart House	-	-	-	-
Windsor House	-	-	-	-
Windsor Clinic	-	-	-	-
PICU	-	-	-	-
Totals	47	8	20	17





How do you encourage the use of the family room?

Comments received by staff regarding how they encourage the use of the room include:

Staff Comments

Broadoak Unit:

- "Inform patients on admission."
- "Advise all patients with children that it can be used for all children under 17."
- "Provide information regarding room bookings."
- "Encourage all visitors with children to pre book."
- "Advise service users (s/u) they can access to family room if required."
- "Explain to patients the room is available to use & show them the room. Assist with booking it."
- "Raise awareness with newly admitted patients, book room when required."
- "By informing patients and family members."
- "Every patient with children or relatives under 18 are offered the use of the family room."
- "Advise reason for family room is so s/u have a safe place for family members."
- "I don't."

- "Advising s/u it is off the ward away from the environment, it is safer for children, more private."
- "Patients are informed of family room on admission."
- "Informing s/u's anyone under 18 must use the family room."
- "Inform s/u that if they want children to visit they need to book the family room."

"Inform service users that if they want children to visit they need to book the family room."

Broadoak Unit

"Explain privacy & safety especially young children."

Boothroyd Ward

Boothroyd Ward:

- "As family with children are more vulnerable on the acute ward staff advise patient relatives to call to pre book the family room."
- "I was not aware there was one. However, I would not encourage its use due to the geography of the building, there could be security issues."
- "I don't encourage it but try to find a place e.g. tv lounge that is free for a family visit in private."
- "Not suitable as the family room is upstairs, tend to use the small female lounge."
- "Don't."
- "Normally when s/u has several visitors or it is a special occasion e.g. birthday."
- "Suggest it."
- "NO, because there is no lift for the clients who can't walk."
- "Not had occasion to but would if appropriate."
- "Explain privacy & safety especially young children."

Park Unit:

- "We promote the family room to all s/u's."
- "I advise there is a room available & happy to show it to them where it is situated."
- "Explain that it is for the safety of children."
- "Advise visitors of young children to use the room."
- "Inform patients that we have the facility & we can arrange a time to use the room on some occasions, to encourage family visits."
- "Make them aware of its purpose."
- "Ask patients if they want to use it."
- "When orientating new patients to the ward we show them the family room & explain its use, encourage them to book when they would like to use it."
- "Staff inform s/u's on admission."
- "Advice that is private but support is available."

Mossley Hill:

- "When a new patient is admitted inform them that it is available to them if they wish."
- "Offer facility to families bringing children, inform s/u about facility when admitted."
- "Asking the relatives to come to the family room to visit."
- "Ask if they would like to use it."
- "By telling relatives."

"More quieter environment & facilities available for children under 16."
Stoddart House

"Explain that it is for the safety of children."
Park Unit

Rathbone Centre:

- "Inform patients & relatives about the facility."
- "Patients ask to use it."
- "When patients ask for children to visit we book it, but this is very rare."
- "Always offer it & it is always taken."
- "Ask visitors if they would like to use the family room with son/ daughter or other family member."
- "We ask visitors to go to the family room where it is a safe and comfortable environment for children."
- "We don't need to ask family & patients."
- "Take the family to the room."

Stoddart House:

- "Inform patient on admission about the family room."
- "Discuss with patients & carers on admission & visiting times. Can be implemented into care plans."
- "Tell people when visiting."
- "I always ask people in reception with children are they using the room. I have opened the room for people waiting outpatient appointments who have children with them."
- "Yes."
- "Suggesting its use at ward meetings, promoting at outside events."
- "Inform family and cares that the facility is available off the ward but still within the unit."
- "Staff discuss with s/u & family on admission & throughout admission to encourage the use of the family room."
- "For privacy, safe guarding children, children's activities, family quality time."
- "Encourage clients to utilise the room to have contact with their children."

- "By offering reception number direct to check availability inform patients/family of its location."
- "Encourage s/u with children to use the room & discourage young children on wards."
- "Let patients know they need to book it at reception."
- "Letting patients know it is a safe area & not on the ward."
- "Reassuring them that the room is a safe & comfortable area for visits."
- "More quieter environment & facilities available for children under 16."
- "I have not encouraged the use of the family room."

Windsor Clinic:

- "Give relevant information to family."
- "I do make the s/u aware of the facility."
- "Upon admission information is relayed re booking process."
- "Advise patients to book if they have children visiting."
- "Informing patients of our family facility and safe space."
- "Inform patients the facility is available to them."

Windsor House:

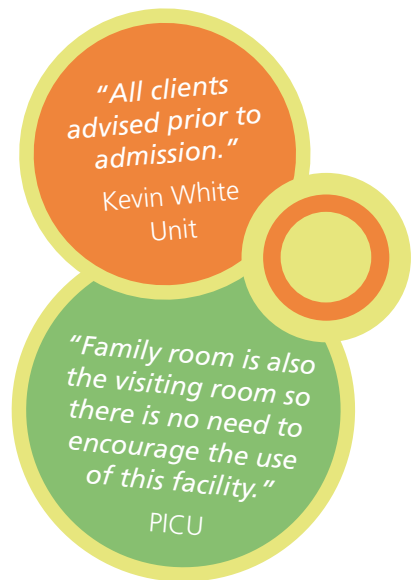
- "Pass information about the room to s/u through use of pamphlets & sessions with staff member."
- "By giving s/u & staff info."
- "By making patients aware of the facility & allocating time slots for the room when applicable."
- "Give the information to clients on arrival in clinic, refer to posters on the ward."

PICU:

- “The family room is utilised for the majority of visits.”
- “By explaining why it is there.”
- “Not part of my role.”
- “This is the only room available for visits due to the nature of the unit.”
- “Family room is also the visiting room so there is no need to encourage the use of this facility.”
- “Not always encouraged to have children visiting as it is usually inappropriate.”
- “When s/u come to PICU family’s are encouraged to come & use the facility as soon as safely possible, all carers as given info packs when s/u is admitted.”

Kevin White Unit:

- “If there are children on the visit, prioritise that the room is used for them.”
- “Children are always advised to use the family room.”
- “All clients advised prior to admission.”
- “Speak to clients when booking visits.”
- “All visits with children take place in the family room.”
- “Giving out relevant information to clients on arrival.”
- “Clients advised to tell staff if children visiting so appropriate room can be allocated.”



Do you find that the family room impacts on your time and work in any way?

UNIT	YES	NO	SOMETIMES	N/R	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	4	23	17	3	47
Boothroyd Ward	4	5	6	2	17
Kevin White Unit	-	11	-	1	12
Park Unit	2	6	1	1	10
Mossley Hill	2	5	-	-	7
Rathbone Centre	-	9	1	-	10
Stoddart House	6	34	5	-	45
Windsor House	-	7	-	2	9
Windsor Clinic	3	-	-	2	5
PICU	-	10	1	1	12
Totals	21	110	31	12	174

63% of staff members said that the family room did not impact on their time or work in any way, with 12% saying it that it did. 18% said that it sometimes impacted on their time.

Do you feel that the family room could be improved in any way?

UNIT	YES	NO	N/R	TOTALS
Broadoak Unit	23	14	10	47
Boothroyd Ward	10	2	5	17
Kevin White Unit	9	2	1	12
Park Unit	6	3	1	10
Mossley Hill	6	1	-	7
Rathbone Centre	1	9	-	10
Stoddart House	21	20	4	45
Windsor House	1	6	2	9
Windsor Clinic	2	-	3	5
PICU	7	4	1	12
Totals	77	59	26	162

Comments received by staff regarding room improvements include:

Staff Comments

Broadoak Unit:

- "More toys, drinks for relatives, water fountains."
- "More books and keys, coffee machine."
- "Dining table, coffee machine, water fountain."
- "To be more readily available, to liaise with other wards. So it's overbooked."
- "Staff not always aware of procedures, including how to book, more posters, etc needed in main reception."
- "Need more space if they have more children and health and safety reason."
- "Needs to be bigger not in the right place for this unit."
- "Room doesn't look or feel very comfortable needs a little cheering up décor-wise."
- "I feel that the family room is adequate perhaps more information i.e. leaflets could be provided."
- "It seems but there is a need to update the room and make sure it remains pleasant and inviting."
- "More information, small leaflets, TV could be put on the wall too low, water available but no cups."
- "Bigger room working toys equipment suitable for various ages."
- "More toys for children."
- "Too plain. More child friendly more for teenager."
- "Think each ward should have their own room."
- "Made more homely, more child orientated, bean bags more for the older child and games."
- "Location, could be decorated more child friendly maybe could be more attractive towards teenagers."
- "Could be more of them."

- "Provision of drinks machine."

- "I feel it should be a bigger room with more facilities for older children."
- "Could be better catered for older children than just babies."
- "More seating needs more colour theme and the water machine is not working."
- "Made bigger or two rooms one for bigger children."

Boothroyd Ward:

- "Separate entrance."
- "Yes - be used."
- "To promote the room itself for service user and family to be aware that this facility is available for their use."
- "More accessible in case needed within the ward."
- "Not seen the room. No lift access to 1st floor where room is. Elderly clients may have problems with stairs."
- "Yes."
- "Safer off the ward."
- "The family room should be placed directly on to Boothroyd ward itself so support and safety can be given if and when needed."
- "If it was located on the ground floor. If there was an intercom system so families could contact staff if they experienced any difficulties."
- "To grant more privacy to relatives a buzzer pin could be given to relatives visiting."
- "Don't even know where it is haven't seen it I believe it's upstairs."
- "I have not seen the room but would have concerns as outlined above."
- "No - a waste of money."

Park Unit:

- "Yes - it would be better off the ward."
- "Yes - as I feel that if the room was not on the ward it would be a lot safer."
- "Furniture is beginning to look a little worn and tired."
- "Room not ideally placed as it's very close to male bed area would be better off the ward especially if ward environment unsettled."
- "Should be off the ward to minimise stress/anxieties to families/children."
- "Difficult having the room based on the ward."

Mossley Hill:

- "Sometimes booking it can be a problem because the general office has shut or the key wasn't passed to ward otherwise it works well."
- "Yes by having a key handy and also open a café for family."
- "Every area should have a key."
- "Yes we should have a key. Regularly people phone at weekend and we aren't allowed to book, no access."
- "A larger room would be preferable however there are limits to availability of suitable space - location is good."

Rathbone Centre:

- "Yes, new furniture, children's pictures, children's furniture."

"Furniture is beginning to look a little worn and tired."
Park Unit

Stoddart House:

- "It could be made to look more comfortable homely colourful."
- "Perhaps make bigger posters for visiting room."
- "More toys, TV and games. Need more than one room as there can be high demand."
- "More games and books."
- "Occasionally young children are in the garden as the family room door is open, at the same time patients are in the garden smoking. This could cause safety issues/risks."
- "Some times garden door from family room is open and children are in garden area without parents. This should be made clear to patients."
- "To be tidied up more often and kept warm."
- "Could be brighter, more welcoming for families and to make the room warm as it felt cold."
- "Room to be made cleaner e.g. toys."
- "Room to be warm. Radio/CD to be available toys could be cleaned/renewed."
- "Computer games and DVDs are constantly being taken. There needs to be something to secure these items."
- "Bigger, soft mats."
- "Brighter, bigger and need more than one."
- "I feel the family room in essence provides a very therapeutic environment but its position within the unit is isolated which may be problematic."
- "It could be improved a little bit – lighting."
- "Emergency phone number to ward and security TV screening from family room to ward."
- "Security awareness of going into garden when requested not to."

- "More than one family room. To accommodate more families at one time."
- "Door to garden area/division for patients on ward using garden and children using it."
- "Dedicated outside space."
- "Could be improved to make it more child friendly and have more toys i.e. age and gender."

Windsor Clinic:

- "Room needs to be bigger with more facilities."
- "We currently have to use the same room as a multi-purpose lounge I would prefer it to be family use only."

Windsor House:

- "Yes could do with refurbish, brighter décor."

"Room to be warm. Radio/CD to be available toys could be cleaned/renewed."

Stoddart House

"Room needs to be bigger with more facilities."

Windsor Clinic

"I would have CCTV installed in family area for protection for all concerned."

PICU

"Separate money available for children's equipment."

Kevin White Unit

PICU:

- "More books, toys, items for young visitors/children, when allowed on unit. Perhaps more pictures or walls painted better!"
- "I would have CCTV installed in family area for protection for all concerned."
- "Maybe if it were bigger and incorporated CCTV. Also if it had more natural light."
- "There are always improvements that can be made as grow and develop in this area of the service."
- "More cheerfully decorated."
- "The family room is a bit bare - a few more furnishings, pictures, plants, etc."
- "More decoration is planned - i.e., art, pictures."

Kevin White Unit:

- "More selection of toys for various age groups."
- "Children under three may swallow chalks or crayons."
- "Separate money available for children's equipment."
- "Perhaps set monies could be made available."
- "Working TV."
- "Re decorating, this is happening in the next couple of weeks."
- "Maybe there could be set monies that could be made available."

Personal testimony from a parent and her nine-year-old daughter.

Our Story

My name is Chris, I am 38-years-old and I am a single mum of two. I am also a service user in Liverpool. Currently I am receiving treatment provided by Mersey Care through the Community Mental Health Team. The aim is to monitor my mental health and keep me well enough to stay out of hospital.

I was first diagnosed with a mental disorder 5 years ago. I have had two admissions into hospital as a result of my condition. Each admission being quite lengthy and both these admissions have been at different hospitals within Mersey Care.

Being detained in hospital is a frightening experience in itself, personally my biggest fear was my children and how I was going to be able to see them and how often.

I even thought they would be kept away from their mum whilst I was ill. This caused me a lot of anxiety and contributed towards high stress levels. On admission into hospital I was able to ask about how my children would get to visit.

The staff at both the units provided me with information about the facilities available to parents and their children in order for them to see each other whenever and how often as they liked during visiting hours. A Family Room for patients was available so patients could still see their children.

This information was provided to me upon my admission into hospital and this put me at ease enabling my hospital stay to be easier because I knew I was able to see my children on a day-to-day basis.

If this facility was not available then my stay in hospital would have been unbearable and I would have probably been detained for a lot longer as well as my children fretting for their mum.

My children were allowed to visit me every day. I was allowed to book the Family Room when my children were to come. Having a Family Room was to me like having medication; it helped me to get well. The Family Room was situated outside of the ward which meant they did not see any other sick patients when visiting. I believe the Family Room is vital to families with children and plays a huge part of the recovery process for the patient whom is detained in hospital.



Discussion

It would be fair to say that the survey findings indicate an overwhelming positive response from all three perspectives, highlighting the importance of maintaining family bonds when a family member is hospitalised.

The young carers' comments continue to remind us of the central importance of having a private dedicated space. Those that described positive experiences of the family rooms clearly are advocating for their development and uses which they felt helped ease very difficult and emotional situations. This went in hand with the significant role staff played, young carers clearly identified that central to making the family rooms work was person friendly staff and need for privacy from other patients.

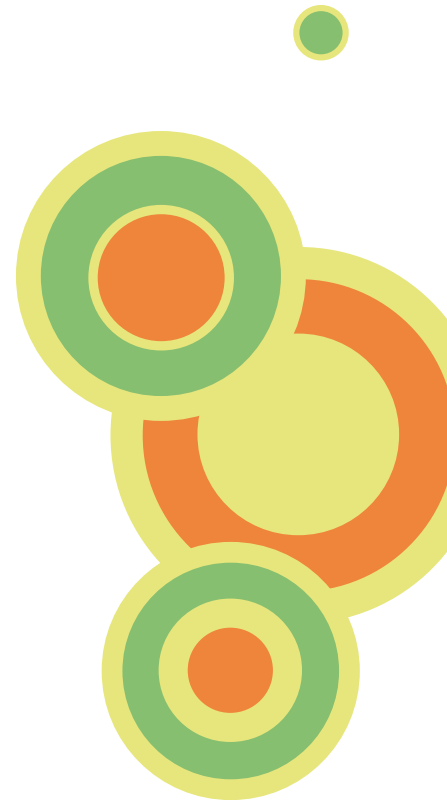
When asked to score the family rooms out of 10 service users and family members scored an average 8/10. Comments were in line with those of the young carers regarding the importance of the dedicated space and that they would on the whole recommend it, many described it as excellent and that it had made their stay less distressing, their children were safe and they looked forward to visits.

Staff members' responses indicated that they valued having a room. For some it can be concluded that the rooms are part and parcel of good service delivery, which should be provided to all service users, carers and family members. Though some of the comments could be construed as negative responses it is possible to conclude that these can actually be interpreted in a more positive light. For example the comments relating to needing larger spaces, problems booking the room, brighter décor,

more teenage appropriate games, information, new furniture, separate monies specifically for the rooms, all indicate that staff do understand the importance of the room and recognise improvements are needed. What is perhaps necessary is to revisit local rooms and ensure there is strong leadership at the service level, to enable the staff's suggestions to be carried out and implemented.

The survey demonstrates on the whole the positive impacts the family rooms have had across the Trust. Though given the findings from the 3 perspectives we need to view this in the context of constructive criticism and the following themes need to be further addressed

- Jelly baby Logo not always visible on wards - all rooms to ensure they display the logo
- Provide information on wards for families
- All units to have specific leaflet on the family rooms
- Posters not always visible - all wards to ensure they display posters to promote the room
- Signage - to explore creative ways of doing this
- Notice Boards - up to date and promote availability of the room
- Reinforce Family Room not to be shared
- Further follow up is required at specific family rooms to investigate specific feedback given in the survey
- Process of booking rooms particularly when the room is being used for other things
- Décor
- Equipment available



Conclusions, Recommendations and Next Steps

The family rooms across the Trust are a public statement to children and young people that they are welcomed, considered and that their parent or family member does at least remain physically accessible to them.

In particular when service users are parents they are receiving a message that their role as a parent is acknowledged and that their children are cared about.

The views highlighted in this review and anecdotal evidence collected to date clearly illustrates that it is very important to parents, family members and children to have access to such a space.

The report of the national parents in hospital review in 2007 highlighted the Mersey Care and Barnardo's family rooms as best practice and the work was illustrated as a case study. Specific factors were identified which contributed to the success of the unique project and how it was a bottom up initiative which had been championed at a senior level. This endorsement is immensely welcomed however the Trust wide family provision group knows that improvements are always necessary.

To this end it is helpful to consider the findings of this latest survey and the progress to date against the specific recommendations made in 2007 national review:

- Many Mental Health Trusts need to address a significant gap between what they say in their policies on family visiting and what is done in practice in in-patient services. All Trusts should review their practice in line with their policy and in collaboration with other stakeholders, (user groups and children's services, in particular) and develop a strategic approach to supporting all mental health service users who are parents, their carers and their children.
- Contact between parents and children when a parent is in hospital needs to be actively encouraged by staff.
- Staff need information and training to increase their:
 - Knowledge of the benefits to parents and children of contact,
 - Confidence in addressing family issues with patients,
 - Skills in communicating helpfully with children and young people,
 - Ability to challenge the stigma of mental illness and the barriers that it creates between parents, carers and children.
- Family visiting rooms which are accessible, warm, clean and well equipped should be available in all in-patient units/hospitals.
- Patients, carers and their children should be actively involved in the development of family visiting rooms.
- All new-build facilities should incorporate family visiting rooms in their design.

- Finally, and perhaps most importantly of all, services should act on the 10 messages to mental health professionals written by a group of children and young people in Liverpool (Barnardo's, 2005).

It is fair to conclude that this review indicates progress against all the above and as Carol Bernard Mersey Care's Think Family Lead, Liverpool CBU Service Director, said:

"It's important we build on the evidence base we have to develop a framework which ensures service users, carers and their families are supported in order that they can achieve their best possible outcomes. Central to this aim is the commitment to work collaboratively and in partnership with families and colleagues across adult and children services."

This report can be viewed positively as part of Liverpool's implementation of the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) Think child, think parent, think family - a guide to parental mental health and child welfare⁶. The collaboration between Barnardo's and Mersey Care has been promoted to support other Trusts and this is highlighted in the Family Room Case Study⁷. The family rooms are viewed as essential in supporting parents and their children and SCIE Social Care TV has produced three films and one of which features Mersey care's family rooms and a Liverpool young carer⁸.

The Mersey Care NHS Trust Wide Think Family Steering Group is not complacent and recognises there is a need to continually assess, review and evaluate working practices. This will ensure that we recognise and build on what is working well and this review supports us to identify and respond to what needs to work better.

6 SCIE, 2009 7 SCIE, 2009 8 SCIE Social Care TV Parental mental health - a Young Person's perspective

Finally, the effectiveness and importance of listening to families, particularly children and young people cannot be overstated. This has remained the central underpinning value to the rooms' development from the offset. Services users, their children and families in partnership with staff are best placed to keep us all on track and this review demonstrates that experiences. However, it is also evident that relatively small changes can make huge differences to families' experiences.

Mersey Care's family rooms are a public statement to children and young people that they are welcome and considered and that their parent or family member does at least remain physically accessible to them.

The young carers, service users, family members and staff who responded to this review made clear that the standard of facilities are extremely important to how supported they feel. They are a tangible expression of how they and their family are valued and they continue to contribute to the culture change within Mersey Care NHS Trust. We remain confident that the family rooms play a central role and are viewed quite simply as 'part and parcel' of Mersey Care and the final words go to a young carer:

"You need your mum, and when she has to go to hospital she does not stop being your mum, and you are still a kid, no matter how grown up you think you are... Your head is full of all sorts, but some how just having that room and decent staff just sort of helps you feel people do care and do understand. I am so pleased that our views got listened to and we can help other families too... thank you!"

"Central to this aim is the commitment to work collaboratively and in partnership with families and colleagues across adult and children services."



References and Further Reading

Keeping the Family Mind Resource Pack,
for further information contact louise.wardale@barnardos.org.uk.
http://www.barnardos.org.uk/resources/research_and_publications/books_and_tools_tools_for_professionals.htm#kfmpack.

Liverpool City Council Think Family Updates,
Can be obtained by contacting: thinkfamily@liverpool.gov.uk

Mental Health Act Commission, FWA, Barnardo's, CSIP (July 2007)
Parents in Hospital; How mental health services can best promote family contact when a parent is in hospital report http://www.barnardos.org.uk/parents_in_hospital_summary_report_july_2007.pdf

Mersey Care NHS Trust's Policy and Procedure for Visits by Children to Mersey Care NHS Trust sites can be found at www.merseycare.nhs.uk

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, (2004), *Mental Health and Social Exclusion, Social Exclusion Unit Report*. London

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) (July 2009).
'Think child, think parent, think family: a guide to parental mental health and child welfare' The suite of resources can all be found at
<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/parentalmentalhealth/index.asp>.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) (July 2009).
'Think child, think parent, think family: a guide to parental mental health and child welfare' Case study: Mersey Care Family Room Project
<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide30/casestudies/case04.asp>.

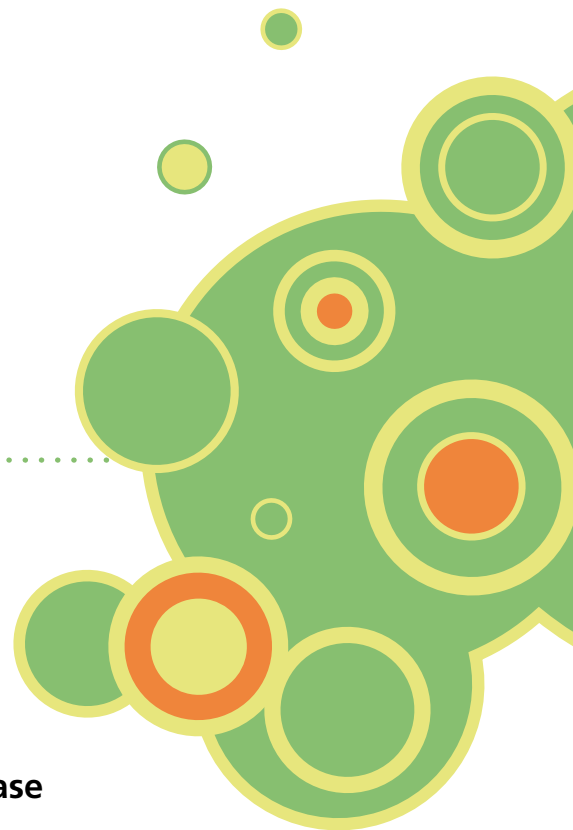
SCIE Social Care TV - three films present case studies looking at how the Think child, think parent, think family approach is working in practice.
<http://www.scie.org.uk/socialcaretv/topic.asp?guid=b01998f8-556d-447c-856b-b0c491f8e104>.

'The Family Rooms - Your Experiences' survey forms 2010 designed by young carers and the service users/family members and staff forms can all be obtained by contacting louise.wardale@barnardos.org.uk.

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Grateful thanks to everyone who took part in this family room survey,
with special thanks to Ellie and other young carers for their illustrations.

MORE INFORMATION:

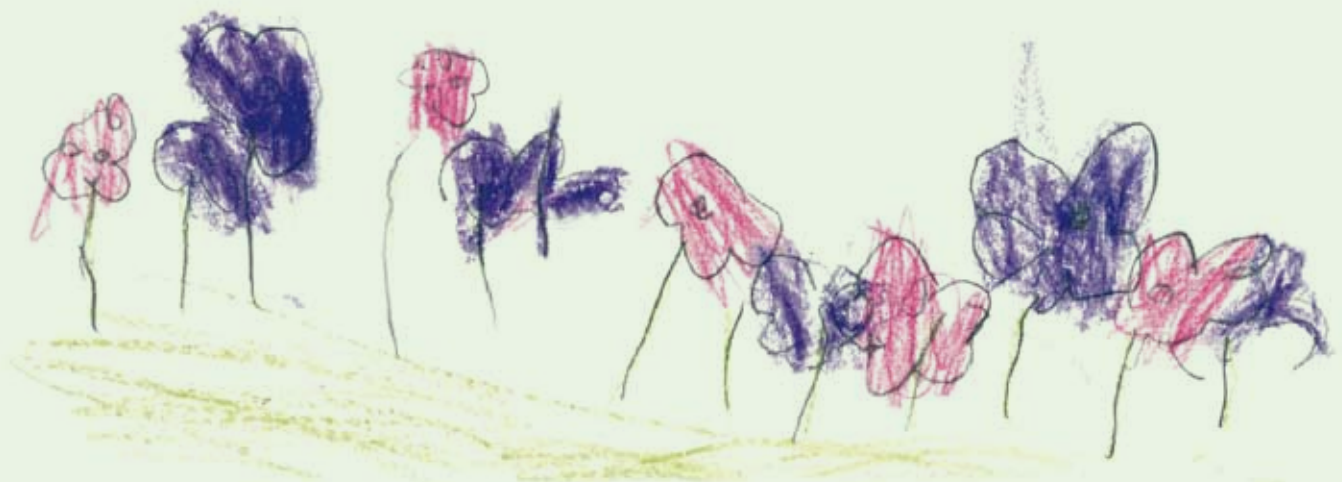
If you would like to find out more about the family rooms developments across Mersey Care NHS Trust please contact carol.bernard@merseycare.nhs.uk, telephone 0151 250 5027 or louise.wardale@barnardos.org.uk, telephone 0151 708 7323.



Messages from children and young people

These messages are aimed at people who work in mental health. They were written by young people so that the next time you come into contact with families where a parent has mental health difficulties, you will know what will help children and young people.

- 1 Introduce yourself. Tell us who you are and what your job is.
- 2 Give us as much information as you can.
- 3 Tell us what is wrong with our parents.
- 4 Tell us what is going to happen next.
- 5 Talk to us and listen to us. Remember it is not hard to speak to us we are not aliens.
- 6 Ask us what we know and what we think.
We live with our parents; we know how they have been behaving.
- 7 Tell us it is not our fault. We can feel really guilty if our mum or dad is ill. We need to know we are not to blame.
- 8 Please don't ignore us. Remember we are part of the family and we live there too.
- 9 Keep on talking to us and keeping us informed.
We need to know what is happening.
- 10 Tell us if there is anyone we can talk to.
MAY BE IT COULD BE YOU.





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www.merseycare.nhs.uk

This report is available in other formats on request.