

Improving the Ward Environment

It is never too late to involve the library in a project. We were recently asked to do a quick literature search to look at literature to help back up the results of the Ward Environment project that had been undertaken by Karen Fidgett. She was just writing up her final report.

She had already visited most of the wards but wanted to see what other Trusts had done to improve their living space, & to make certain she had captured the essence of any national recommendations or standards. Karen knew that literature searching was an area where she hadn't much experience, so asked the library to do it on her behalf.

The library was able to find a number of important national recommendations or standards. They also provided a range of journal articles which presented the research around things like communal areas, staff & patient well-being, and security issues. Finally we were able to find a number of case studies or examples of good practice, which highlighted some interesting patient priorities.

Knowing that Karen had a deadline to present her report to the Board, library staff also highlighted some key areas in the material that had been found. In this case we didn't have a lot of time, but that is something we are often able to do. It makes a long list of abstracts less daunting. If we had had more time we could have done an in-depth synthesis on the topic, but on this occasion this wasn't required.

Karen was able to use the search results to back up the recommendations she was making to the Trust board that this should become an ongoing commitment from the Trust to provide a high quality environment for both staff & patients.

Karen said "I got what I wanted, more than I thought I wanted. There were a lot of options of what could be used" and "I wouldn't have known where to start without library support".

The presentation to the Board went well, and Karen was really pleased with the results. She felt the library's contribution gave the report "more weight, and backed up recommendations by giving it more gravitas".

The project is now an ongoing commitment to ensuring the Trust provides a safe, secure & welcoming environment for inpatients, visitors to the Trust, and for our staff. A part time post has been set up to help support staff to achieve this.

So remember, it is never too late to ask the library for help, but involving us early on in a project, may also help.

**For more information on how the library can support your team,
contact us: Library@sssft.nhs.uk**