

4Ps

Development programmes for people in healthcare

What happened in the session?

compiled from 4Ps experience to date at different locations

Creating and acting on feedback

Achieving a more responsive service.

Boosting staff morale.

Informal and formal ways of working that effect and publicise improvements

We need to give patients good and useful information for a great many reasons, not least of which is that it makes life very much easier all round. For most of the same reasons we, too, need to be kept informed about our performance from the patients' point of view.

Participants were asked how their department gathers information. Is it logged? Is it systematic? How is that information stored and disseminated? Did the people who actually collected the information know exactly why they were asking for it and how it would be used?

The group were encouraged to think of situations when you should not ask for feedback – for instance: when you know the answers already and, or, will not be acting on them; you haven't checked whether or not the information is usable and, even if it is, no responsibility has been assigned to deal with it.

Then the opposite – ways in which comments might be encouraged and a dialogue created, such as writing up patients' suggestions on a display board – with a note as to the action taken; supplying pencils and paper and inviting patient comments – for a prominently displayed comments box; keeping a comments book and including oral informal feedback to staff.

How do the group think it could be made clear to patients that we need their feedback, and how much we value it?

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We considered complaints and the huge expenditure of time, as well as the low morale and general unhappiness they can engender. They are widely publicised in a department, and very likely all the way through the Trust. Are compliments so well publicised? Can they think of some way of making sure that everyone gets to hear about them? Do patients know how very much their thanks are appreciated? How do the group deal with this?

Patient user groups can be a rich and lively source of constructive feedback.