

# Developing a Service User Engagement Strategy in a Mental Health NHS Trust: *inspire*

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## What's next?

We want *inspire* to be an integral part of ALL mental health research in Norfolk and Suffolk.

*inspire* members have their own research ideas that we aim to develop alongside researchers.

*inspire* aspires to be seen as a national model of best practice for involving service users, carers and the public in all parts of mental health research.

## inspire?

*inspire* is a service user, carer and public involvement in mental health research group.

We work with researchers at all stages of the research cycle and develop our own research.

## Why?

There was a gap in public, patient and carer involvement for mental health research in Norfolk and Suffolk. This was an underrepresented area. *inspire* was created to fill this gap as well as complement existing local involvement groups.



## Tell me more...

*inspire* currently has over 40 people registered as part of its database. These include mental health service users, carers, members of the public and people from third sector mental health organisations. Our members range from age 20 to 68 and are from all walks of life. Members sit on one of three panels (youth, older age or adult).

We are still growing!

## How?

Through engaging, consulting and gathering information from service users, carers and the public about what they wanted from a mental health research involvement group. By liaising with national research involvement groups for examples of best practice and asking researchers in mental health what they need; *inspire* was born.

## It can't be that easy?

It's not! *inspire*, like all new groups, had teething problems; the logistics of running over two counties with members based throughout both counties being one of them! We constantly ask for feedback, both from our members and externally and continue to grow and evolve based on this.

## The views of those that matter – our brilliant *inspire* members...

"It was **illuminating** finding out about how research works, I feel I have a much clearer idea about the process and how lay feedback and participation can help"



"I feel **empowered** to make a difference and influence the future of services"

"I wanted to join *inspire* because the views of the patient are often neglected in research, I wanted **my views and thoughts to count**"

"Its great to be able to use my **own experiences** to help others"

"I want to use **my experience as a service user to shape the future**. I sit on the *inspire* youth panel and it's a really positive experience. It's about turning negativity into positivity and taking part in shaping the future."

Alex (pictured above)



Just some of the *inspire* team