

Oxleas Exchange

CONNECTING THE PEOPLE OF OXLEAS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Please take a copy today

▶▶▶ Rosie Shrimpton, newly elected Vice-Chair of the Council of Governors

Importance of listening

Rosie Shrimpton is one of our most active governors, representing the Bromley public constituency. She was recently voted in to a new role as Vice Chair of the Council of Governors.

Rosie plans to build on the good work done by Chris Stables, Vice Chair for the past three years. She believes: *"It is important that the Council of Governors act as a unit and the Vice Chair can help to make this happen and help ensure that each governor is given the opportunity to get involved as much as they are able to."*

Beckenham based Rosie was elected as a governor of Oxleas in May 2006. She said: *"I have found my three years as a governor very satisfying and would encourage anyone with an interest in mental health or learning disability issues to stand for election in August this year."* She is a trustee of the Bromley Mental Health Forum and believes: *"It is important that we keep well informed of local developments."*

She told *Exchange*: *"The stigma attached to mental ill-health is illogical when this can and does happen in most families."* She joined the Bromley and Orpington branch of the Samaritans in 2001 as a listening volunteer following the suicide of someone she knew. She believes *"listening is very important"* and has a particular interest in ensuring that out of hours care is as good as possible.

Rosie has a background in medical public relations. She puts these skills to regular use as Chair of the trust's Membership Committee. She told *Exchange*: *"The Membership Committee is all about getting the views of our members so we can provide services that meet their needs. It includes several governors who work with staff from the trust's Communications and Membership teams to keep our members informed and drive recruitment. I want us to recruit new members who care and will get involved."*

The Membership Committee aims to increase members from



Rosie Shrimpton, the new Vice Chair of the Council of Governors

under-represented areas. They are currently working with young people to produce an educational magazine covering mental health issues. Rosie said: *"The best thing about this is that the magazine is being produced by young people for young people. It also ties in well with the trust's social inclusion work."*

Another priority this year is to increase representation of people with a learning disability.

New website coming into bloom

You may be wondering why this issue of *Exchange* has a packet of seeds on the cover. We are holding a sunflower growing competition to celebrate our new website which launches in June.

The new website will be easier to use and navigate. It will contain more useful and up to date information which meets the needs of our audiences, particularly service users, carers and people who refer to our services. It will look great and uses images of sunflowers throughout.

Sunflowers are a symbol of peace, good luck and health. Vincent Van Gogh, who famously painted sunflowers, believed that yellow meant happiness.

Gardening is therapeutic, good fun and a great form of physical activity. Sunflowers are easy to grow. With this competition we hope to encourage more people to have a go at gardening and brighten up our buildings and people's gardens.

There are prizes for the tallest sunflowers grown on an Oxleas site and in a private garden. The closing date is 23/09/09 and the winners will be announced at our Annual Members' Meeting on 30/09/09.

So plant your seeds now and register your participation by emailing sunflowers@oxleas.nhs.uk. Email us with pictures of your sunflowers as they grow and we will load them onto the trust website.

Plant your seeds soon to stand the best chance of winning

Register your participation in the competition by emailing sunflowers@oxleas.nhs.uk



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•••▶ Chief Executive, Stephen Firn and Chair, Dave Mellish

Planting the seeds of success



Stephen Firn, Chief Executive



Dave Mellish, Chair

We are delighted to have achieved such outstanding feedback from our colleagues in the National Staff Survey (see page three for details). Every year since the survey began we have improved our results. This year's findings place us on the top 20% of mental health and learning disability trusts in the country for 21 of the 36 categories in the survey. Even more remarkable, is the finding that our staff rated us the best mental health and learning disability trust in the country for eight areas. These include feeling that their job makes a difference to patients; receiving relevant training; and recommending the trust as a place to work. A highly motivated and highly skilled workforce is the key to providing the best quality of services and will help us recruit the best staff in the future. We would like to thank and pay tribute to everyone involved in developing such a supportive and positive culture which also benefits patients and carers. We are not complacent, however, and have already begun work to take action in those areas where we could do better, including ensuring more staff having appraisals.

We would like to thank all staff, members

and governors who attended focus groups and contributed in other ways to the identification of our priorities for 2009/10 (see pages four and five). We are committed to working together to achieve each of these targets and improve the experience of people using our services and their carers.

As part of our plans for the coming year, we are working closely with Bexley Care Trust to plan the integration of Bexley Adult Community Health Services into Oxleas. These services include a range of nurses and therapists working to meet the physical health needs and promote wellbeing of local people in Bexley. We believe we can support staff in these services to deliver high quality care and residents of the borough will benefit from the provision of more coordinated mental health and physical health care. We aim to have completed our plans and proposals in the next few months and will then be sharing these with staff, members and governors and seeking your views.

We would like to congratulate Rosie Shrimpton on her election as Vice Chair of the Council of Governors (see front page). We look forward to working closely with

Rosie who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role. We would also like to pay tribute to Chris Stables, who did an outstanding job as the first Vice Chair of the Council of Governors and helped guide us through our first three years as a foundation trust. Elsewhere in *Exchange* there are profiles of governors Baeti Mothobi and Angela Clayton-Turner. We find their descriptions of how they are helping improve services inspiring and we hope this encourages many of our members to stand for election as governors in the summer.

Finally, we are looking forward to the launch of our new website in June 2009. The new website will be very easy to use, bright and informative. We are confident it will be a really helpful resource for service users, carers and all those associated with our services. In order to celebrate the launch we are holding a sunflower growing competition and your complimentary packet of seeds is attached to this copy of *Exchange*. We hope you will all feel inspired to plant the seeds and look forward to seeing the pictures of them growing in your garden and providing additional colour to each of our sites.

•••▶ Health and Wellbeing festival with free activities for all - Wednesday 20 May at The Valley

Oxleas and Charlton Athletic put on a united front

Oxleas and Charlton Athletic Football Club have signed up to a partnership that it is hoped will benefit the local community for years to come.

The trust and the football club hope the highlight of this partnership will be the annual Health and Wellbeing Festival. This year it's on Wednesday, 20 May at The Valley and everyone is welcome to call in between 9.30am and 3.30pm.

It is hoped the festival will develop year on year – especially in the build up to the London Olympics in 2012. Already a range of events are planned

in and around The Valley, including: exercise sessions; music, drama and dance workshops; healthy eating advice; education and employment opportunities; a tea dance for older adults; health advice and information on giving up smoking. There will be a football tournament on the Charlton pitch involving 12 teams and an opportunity for people to have a go at Olympic sports. We hope to attract 500 or more local people throughout the day.

CAFC has also agreed to donate memorabilia which will be given away in a free raffle for those who attend.



"The festival is an opportunity for anyone interested to come along and find out about or get involved in a range of different sporting, drama, arts, music, health, education, and employment activities. This is a fantastic collaboration between

Oxleas and Charlton Athletic Community Trust. I am really pleased we have so many organisations taking part which means we have something for everyone, for example the tea dance for older people."

•••▶ Phil Garnham, Joint Head of Nursing

●●●▶ Best National Staff Survey results to date and in the top 100 healthcare employers

Oxleas is one of the best in England say staff

The 2008 National NHS Staff Survey - which measures how staff feel about working for Oxleas - has produced the trust's best results to date. Comparison with other trusts providing mental health and learning disability services shows Oxleas to be one of the best trusts in the country to work for. Oxleas was above average for 28 of 36 topics covered in the survey and in 15 of 36 topics the trust received the best or second best score nationally.

Topics in which we achieved the best national score include:

- staff feeling that their job makes a difference to patients
- staff feeling valued by colleagues
- staff feeling involved in decision making
- quality of work-life balance
- staff receiving job relevant training, learning or development
- staff suffering work related injury (lowest)
- staff understanding their role and where it fits in
- staff that would recommend the trust as a place of work.

Another highlight was our focus on cleanliness. The 2007 staff survey placed Oxleas in the worst 20 percent for availability of handwashing materials. In 2008 it was in the top 20 percent. This reflects a lot of hard work that has gone into improving hygiene over the last year.

The National Staff Survey was carried out by the Healthcare Commission. A random



Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development Simon Hart (centre) with colleagues selection of 750 Oxleas staff were sent the survey between October and December 2008. 160,000 staff from 390 organisations completed it.

"These are our best survey results to date and they give a positive message as to how staff feel about working at Oxleas. It is a strong endorsement of our values that staff feel they make a difference to patients and would recommend Oxleas as a place to work."

●●●▶ Simon Hart, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Oxleas has also recently been named in the country's Top 100 Healthcare Employers. Health Service Journal and Nursing Times and NHS Employers annually identify the top healthcare providers (NHS and private organisations) in the UK.

The organisers said about Oxleas: "Staff love the feeling of being able to contribute and to be creative in the way they deliver care."



Magpie Dance - focusing on ability not disability

Magpie Dance, a Bromley based charity helps support over 150 dancers with learning disabilities each year - giving them confidence and developing their talents through the arts. Head of Communications, Russell Cartwright took part in a session and met up with Magpie's Adult Performance Group.

Magpie run over 200 sessions per year, enabling people to explore creative movement and arts in a supportive and stimulating atmosphere. Sessions are accompanied by live music from a professional musician. Magpie has to raise around £250,000 every year and none of that is regular funding which is quite a challenge.

Magpie was formed 23 years ago by Artistic Director Avril Hitman. Avril said: "At Magpie Dance we focus on ability not disability. There are so many benefits which come from dancing. It helps towards self esteem and there are the benefits of physical activity."

Zoe Pearce is 29 and has been coming to Magpie for the past five years and is currently a member of the Adult Performance Group. Zoe said: "I love coming to Magpie and I really enjoy the performances." Zoe has choreographed her own dance and recently started helping to teach at Youth Group and Open Community sessions. She added: "I really like helping other people learn to dance."

To find out more about Magpie Dance visit www.magpiedance.org.uk or call 020 8290 6633.



Magpie's Adult Performance Group with Oxleas Head of Communications Russell Cartwright



Annual plan for 2009/10

Introduction

These pages give an overview of the trust's Annual Plan and priorities for 2009/10.

The plans were developed with input from staff and governors and have been agreed and approved by the Council of Governors.

There are two elements to the plan:

- Four must do priorities which are based directly on the feedback from service users and carers. These indicate the areas we should focus on to make the most difference.
- Five critical priorities for the year.

Members helped to shape these plans and the yellow boxes include examples of members' feedback from the borough focus groups held at the start of 2009. There was broad agreement with the critical workstreams and continuing to focus on the four must do priorities this year.

A set of targets has been agreed for each priority. Progress on the plans will be monitored by governors at the quarterly Council of Governors meetings.

The full plan will be added to our website www.oxleas.nhs.uk

Four must do priorities for 2009/10:

1. Support families and carers

Target by end of 2009/10:

- Carer's details on RiO (our electronic care records system) for 60% of service users
- Carer's assessment offered to or received by 50% of carers
- All inpatient teams to be trained in family inclusive practice

Carers save the trust a fortune. Start acknowledging their value. Include them in dialogue and assessments

Greater awareness of advocacy services needed - especially independent services

Increasing support for carers and improving contact for carers

Family inclusive practice work seems the best way of changing our clinical mind set

2. Provide information for service users and carers

Target by end of 2009/10:

- All teams have an up to date information leaflet
- Mental Health Act compliance demonstrated through recording of Section 132 on RiO
- Modern matrons ensure that all newly admitted patients and their carers are given appropriate information

A dialogue with user/carer rather than just an info pack

Older people usually prefer written information on leaflet rather than online

Improving is really to do with staff's behaviour

Look at ways of ensuring service users complete questionnaires or quality audits (especially after leaving a care situation)

Going well

3. Improve care planning

Target by end of 2009/10:

- All service users have a care plan and crisis plan on RiO (our electronic records system)
- 90% of service users covered by the new Care Programme Approach (CPA)
- CPA Review at least every six months
- Delayed discharges below 7.5%
- Appropriate staff trained in new CPA and risk management
- Specialist input into new trust risk management guidance and training programme from CAMHS* and ALD* services

Original care plan 3 pages, wholly inadequate - missed diagnosis and medication and risk... Could not seem to get point across that care plan is key to client's future treatment and wellbeing

Greater clarity of the service offering needed for the service users and carers. Not just leaflets but personal involvement in care planning

Improving communication between departments involved in patient's care

Greater involvement of carers

Person centred approaches and thinking

4. Improve relationships with service users and carers

Target by end of 2009/10:

- Local governance groups learn from complaints and issues raised to PALS*. Action plans monitored
- 20% Reduction in complaints and PALS issues relating to staff attitude
- 95% of complaints resolved
- PET* used in all inpatient services and improvements made based on feedback



*PALS = Patient Advice and Liaison Service

*PET = Patient Experience Tracker (a handheld electronic device for service users to give feedback on the care they are receiving)

Specific feedback

Members also raised several other issues relating specifically to one service area. The service directors will respond to these in future issues of Exchange.

Questions

If you have any questions about our Annual Plan email exchange@oxleas.nhs.uk

*CAMHS = Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

*ALD = Adult Learning Disabilities

Five critical priorities for 2009/10:

1. Promote clinical quality

How will we do it?

- Review the trust's clinical structures
- Implement the 2009/10 quality and safety improvement plan
- Improve our reporting on quality to the Trust Board and Council of Governors

Measuring quality often difficult as data doesn't tell the whole story! Sometimes it is about looking after the cat, driving the relatives home and making sure the fridge is full

Out of hours phone line and advertise it to all

24 hour crisis line

Should always be 24 hour care, 7 days per week

More focus on supervised community treatment in view of changes to Mental Health Act

More auditing and customer care training needed

2. Promote social inclusion

To increase service users' opportunities for employment (paid and unpaid), training, education and community participation.

How will we do it?

- Increase to 70% the number of service users with their employment status recorded on RiO (our electronic care records system)
- Increase to 15% the number of service users who are supported into employment or training
- Increase by 20 the number of service users undertaking voluntary or paid employment within the trust

I find the necessary information difficult to access but I would expect that once this is happening (how?) that there will be an extraordinary improvement/ understanding

Garden/allotments available where people could get experience

Oxleas could do more to create part-time jobs for service users

Extra support needed for people returning to work - mentoring

Tackle issue of stigma and discrimination

Promote access to social groups and clubs... Educate social groups and clubs to accept Oxleas patients

Address issues for people with a learning disability

Social inclusion opportunities for older people are limited

3. Increase access to psychological therapies

How will we do it?

- increase by 10% the number of service users receiving psychological therapies
- Put in place trust-wide standards for caseloads and expected throughput of the different psychological therapies

Support increase in psychological therapy and more CBT therapists

Accessibility of CBT and other therapies for all not just those in severe need

Ensure that service users admitted to hospital have access to services - feels as those they are isolated

Be mindful of art, music and dance therapy. Evidence base - NICE

Agree that increasing access to psychological therapies is important

Access to different levels of psychological therapy at secondary care level

4. Establish common care pathways across trust services

To put in place a more standardised service and link together clinical quality, service outcomes and finance.

How will we do it?

- Implement national care pathways work
- Implement New Care Programme Approach*

Not enthused - heard it all before Numbers - who has said when / juggle statistics

Implement new systems recommended by the working group for young onset dementia

*New Care Programme Approach (CPA) refers to new national guidance for care planning which prioritises those most in need.

5. Community provider services

Work with local commissioners regarding future provision of community health services such as district nursing, health visiting and therapies.

Discussions around this are ongoing with the Board of Directors, Council of Governors and primary care colleagues.

Our values in practice

Eighth wonder of the exam world

To continue looking at our values in practice we spoke to Caroline Owusu-Bennoah who recently came eighth in the world in an accountancy exam.

Finance Management Trainee, Caroline, was one of 60,000 plus people to sit the Integrated Management paper in a recent Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) exam.

Part of the NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme, Caroline's achievement was summed up by her Finance Manager, Paul McAuliffe, who said: "This is a tremendous achievement and I think Oxleas should be proud to be associated with this standard of excellence."

Caroline, who is originally from Ghana, lives with her husband and four-year-old son in the borough of Bexley. She joined the trust earlier this year and wants to make a career in management accounts.

She told Exchange: "I would like to continue working within a health service environment and have really enjoyed working at Oxleas."

Caroline was one of four students that were honoured for their outstanding performances in the recent CIMA NHS Student Excellence Awards in March, staged at the University of Warwick.

Paul Gillot, Public Sector Account Manager at CIMA presented each winner with a certificate for their outstanding achievements. He said: "This ceremony celebrates the hard work and dedication of CIMA students and also highlights the high level of commitment by the NHS in the training of its students. These exceptional NHS students are on their way to becoming the financial leaders of tomorrow and I would like to wish them all every success for an outstanding future."

Our values are important to us

Learning



Caroline Owusu-Bennoah at Pinewood House

Exchange visits one of the trust's innovative Early Intervention teams

Battling psychosis with the Greenwich Early Intervention team

When psychosis strikes in young people the dedicated members of the Greenwich Early Intervention (EI) team are on hand to help.

The team, which is based at Bostall House, Goldie Leigh, works with people aged 18 to 35 who have experienced their first episode of psychosis. It aims to get involved as early as possible during the critical period of the illness to provide support, advice and evidence based treatments to service users and their families.

This includes education about psychosis, coping strategies, medication, individual and group based therapies, support with drug and alcohol problems and support to return to work or education.

Under the passionate leadership of Clinical Psychologist and Team Manager, Sara Hirst, the team has more than doubled its caseload during the last five months. A local girl herself, Sara comes from Greenwich and went to primary and secondary school in the borough. She told Exchange: "What I am most passionate about is the recovery and empowerment of service users."

"The EI team became operational in 2007 with the remit to work with people under 35. Research shows that people usually have their first psychotic episode at an early age. Service users will often hear voices, which can cause great distress, and they may feel very frightened and paranoid. They may fear they are going to be attacked and may develop unusual beliefs. These beliefs can become very fixed, making it difficult to function well or maintain relationships. With the right kind of support people are able to challenge these beliefs and understand their experiences."

What is psychosis?

Psychosis is when people experience some loss of contact with reality. The person has difficulty telling the difference between what is real and what is imaginary. Common experiences include: confused thinking; false beliefs; hallucinations; changed feelings and changed behaviour. Three out of every 100 people have an episode of psychosis at some point in their lives.

Other Oxleas teams

Oxleas also runs EI teams in Bexley (at the Bexleyheath Centre) and Bromley (at Newman Road).

"Our team spend time carefully assessing individuals. We also spend time with family and carers to try to examine whether a service user's distress is linked to any past or ongoing difficulties like anxiety or depression. Once an initial assessment has been done we decide if we can help. Then there is an intensive assessment and treatment phase in which the service user will be seen twice a week and their family supported."

"Psychosis education and relapse prevention techniques help people spot the signs of psychosis early on and prompt them to seek help when they need it. This gives sufferers ownership of their condition and they begin to learn about it. It becomes less scary. Psychosis can be horrendously scary – especially for those who hear voices."



Staff from the Greenwich Early Intervention team. From left to right: Efosa Amadasun, Amanda Collins, Leanne Kalemaj and Sara Hirst

Sara and her team often like to see clients in a non NHS setting like a community centre or a café and often in the person's home. This can help people feel more at ease. However, she and the EI team do have one item at the top of their wish list. Sara again: "It would be great if we had clinical space to see service users which we don't presently have at Bostall House. I hope that this is something we can achieve in the future with the team developing to include social workers and psychiatrists."

"I have been very impressed by the commitment and motivation of staff in the 18 months or so we have been together. The challenges we have faced have helped us develop a strong sense of identity as a team, and a real commitment to our service users."

●●▶ Exchange talks to Baeti Mothobi, governor in the service user/carer constituency

A woman of substance

She is a carer – her son is an Oxleas service user. She escaped the Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe. She is an elected Governor of the trust and sits on the User Carer Council. She is without doubt a woman of substance.



Governor Baeti Mothobi at her Belvedere home

Baeti Mothobi was born in 1942 to parents from Botswana, her home was close to the border with Zimbabwe. She first came to the UK when she was 22, to take up a job in midwifery in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. But she always had a hankering to go back to Africa and put her healthcare skills to good use there. With that in mind she took up a London post where she learned about tropical diseases.

In 1982 she went back to work in Zimbabwe. Over a period of 20 years Baeti

built a fine career, rising to the position of Chief of Health Education. However, as the administration became increasingly corrupt, Baeti found it harder and harder to function. In her own words she had a "disagreement with the government". As a result she lost her job and had her passport taken away.

A divorcee, Baeti had to find an income. She said: "I worked with my hands for a few years: sewing, knitting and crocheting. Whatever was required. I dabbled in the insurance industry for a while to try and offer life cover to those under threat from AIDS."

Then in 2003 she had a letter from the UK about her pension. She visited the British High Commission in a successful bid to get travel documents and a passport. She returned to Britain and now lives in Belvedere.

Baeti was elected as a User/Carer Governor three years ago. She said: "My role as a Governor entails influencing policy and also making sure that the trust is accountable for everything that it does. I believe that unless you are involved you can't know what is going on."

She continued: "The User Carer Council (UCC) plays an important role. We visit acute wards and other facilities and look at how staff work with clients. We inspect the general conditions of wards: the food, the hygiene, the bathrooms etc. Are there paper towels in the toilets? Is there soap? What does the place smell like?"

Recent visits have been to Oxleas House, Ferryview, Woodlands, Green Parks House and Memorial Hospital. Generally Baeti is impressed with trust premises and staff. She said: "I have found that trust staff are talking less and listening more. I am

impressed that the trust has statistics about complaints and that it is going out of its way to actually address complaints.

"It is good to see UCC observations are being acted upon. Recently we commented upon the diet and presentation of food. It has since improved. That sort of listening is so important.

"Between 2004 and 2009 the changes have been marked. I put a lot of this down to the leadership of Chair, Dave Mellish, a man who is comfortable in any situation or company and Chief Executive, Stephen Finn. They have both had a big influence and helped make positive changes."

However, not everything in the Oxleas garden is rosy according to Baeti. A few experiences have left her somewhat underwhelmed. Like the time she and another governor turned up to inspect facilities at a high profile Oxleas building. Baeti takes up the story: "Staff were rude and abrupt in the reception area. We were treated terribly. They virtually ignored us." At other sites Baeti described a day unit shower room that appeared to be used as a storage area and an inpatient area where hygiene was an issue.

On a positive note Baeti said generally the trust is performing well: "Personally, I have noticed the change in my own son. He has responded well to being treated like an ordinary person. Oxleas is making improvements in service delivery. Institutions like the Carers' Forum have helped so much. We (carers) are now listened to and catered for. Before there was nobody to listen to our concerns, but now there is and our voice is being heard.

"You get the feeling that the trust is a caring organisation that works hard to treat and prevent mental illness in families."

Help to quit smoking

The second annual National No Smoking Day event held at Oxleas House on 11

March was a resounding success bringing together staff and service users from across the trust.

The day promoted initiatives to helping patients and staff to quit smoking and promoted a healthy lifestyle. It was an opportunity for patients and staff alike to have their carbon monoxide levels monitored and for people to sign up to quit smoking.

Wellbeing nurses showcased activities which looked at patients' physical health. Patients were given advice on healthy eating.

There are plans to build on the success with future events and

promote awareness of the link between mental health and smoking.

For more information contact Rosemary Oji Boukanga, Staff Nurse on Avery Ward by email: rosemary.oji-boukanga@oxleas.nhs.uk

●●▶ Help to stop

For help to give up smoking call your local stop smoking helpline:

- Greenwich: 0800 587 5833
- Bexley: 020 8298 6161
- Bromley: 0800 587 8821

Or go to www.smokefree.nhs.uk



Staff and service users at the National No Smoking Day event at Oxleas House in March

●●● Exchange talks to Angela Clayton-Turner about brain donation and appearing on BBC TV news

A need for good brains

She recently appeared on a BBC TV news item about the need for more people to donate their brains to medical research.

Oxleas Governor, Angela Clayton-Turner, has first hand knowledge of mental illness both professionally and personally. In the 1970s Angela worked as a physiotherapist at the former Cane Hill Hospital in Croydon and her husband Ted has dementia and now lives in a care home.

Born in Staffordshire 69 years ago, Angela has been a governor since Oxleas became a foundation trust in 2006. She was educated at the prestigious league table topping King Edward VI High School for Girls in Birmingham.

Now a Bromley resident, Angela, an enthusiastic member of the Oxleas User Carer Council, says she finds making site visits very informative and a good way of contributing to ensuring the quality of Oxleas services. She told Exchange: "One of the things I like about the trust is its openness and sense of partnership – to me mental health trusts are a different ball game from other trusts. People involved in the trust really seem to care."

"I am specifically interested in working in any way possible to help those with dementia – especially young onset dementia. My husband Ted has had dementia for 14 years."

"When Ted was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease at the age of 57 we were fortunate that he remained well enough for me to continue working until I reached retirement age. Freed from work commitments I contemplated what positive responses I could

make to this devastating disease. First off, with the support of the local statutory services, I compiled an information handbook for the younger person with dementia in Bromley and their families and friends.



Bromley public governor Angela Clayton-Turner

"At the suggestion of Ted's consultant we joined the newly formed consumer network of the Alzheimer's Society research arm, Quality Research in Dementia. This gave us both an opportunity to become involved in research activities in relation to dementia – good for both our brains!"

"However, sadly, Alzheimer's disease progresses and by 2005 Ted was in the advanced stages of the disease and I had to take the difficult decision that I could no longer care for him at home. Since then I have become more involved in the research

activities of the society. Last Autumn I gave a presentation to newly appointed staff of the 'Brains for Dementia Research Brain Bank' project about the feelings involved when deciding to donate your brain.

"I was then asked to write up my presentation for publication in the Journal of Clinical Ethics. Ted and I have both donated our brains which is why I was asked to do an interview recently for BBC News at Ten for an item focussing on the need for healthy brains to be donated for comparison purposes."

"Dementia affects 700,000 people in the UK and currently there is no effective treatment. Brain tissue from regularly assessed individuals provides the very best resource for scientists working on understanding dementia. This is why the Brains for Dementia Research project has been funded jointly by the Alzheimer's Society and the Alzheimer's Research Trust."

"Not many people realise that brains from people without a memory impairment are needed just as much to act as a comparison. People with a diagnosis of dementia are assessed every year and people without dementia every two years. Assessment builds a profile of how the brain is functioning over the years and can be done over the phone. "For me, brain donation is a way of trying to ensure that dementia is conquered so that future families no longer have to deal with its devastating consequences."

Donations are accepted from people aged 65 and over. If you would like further information, please contact Kathryn Lord on Tel: 020 7848 0297 or email: Kathryn.Lord@iop.kcl.ac.uk

●●● Honour for Oxleas' Noel Naughton

Erith Centre based Head of Occupational Therapy, Noel Naughton, has recently been honoured by the Bexley Business Education Partnership (EBP) for his role as an NHS Ambassador with local young people.

Noel, 48, has worked for Oxleas since 1988. He received a framed certificate for his work at health and social care conventions in the borough – where Noel uses his charm and considerable powers of persuasion on young people that might be thinking of a career in

occupational therapy. Noel said: "I tell them about OT and how rewarding it can be. There's a lot of variety in the work which can help enable those with mental ill health to get on the road to recovery and back into work."

A native of County Clare in Ireland, Noel now lives in Rochester. The Celebrating Employer Engagement 2009 certificate was presented to Noel by Bexley Councillor John Waters, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing.



Cllr John Waters (left) presents Noel Naughton with his certificate

●●● Ruth McDermott

Exchange was saddened to hear the news that Occupational Therapist, Ruth McDermott has died aged 49. Ruth worked in local mental health services including the Upton Day Hospital, Greenwich Older People's Services and the Bracton Centre for over 27 years.

Catronia Toms, Lead for Occupational Therapy and Social Inclusion paid tribute: "Ruth will always be remembered by friends, colleagues and service users as a loyal, kind hearted, hard working, organised and friendly individual. We have all appreciated the opportunity we had to work with her."



Ruth McDermott

Please send us your letters and news stories. You can contact the Communications Team at: exchange@oxleas.nhs.uk or call 01322 625754 or write to us at Communications, Pinewood House, Pinewood Place, Dartford, Kent DA2 7WG.

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