

Commentary on South West London Mental Health Trust  
Quality Accounts 2015- 2016


Healthwatch Richmond welcomes the Quality Account (QA). The narrative is informative and gives a good overview of the Trust's drive towards improvement in quality. It is written in an accessible way. We welcome the Trust acknowledging that although there are many areas of good work, there are also areas that need to be targeted for improvement.

Unfortunately, the layout of the report requires the reader to compare and cross-reference sections to gain a full picture of the account. We also found that there is little supporting evidence within the body of the report to demonstrate what the Trust achieved against its targets.

It is very disappointing that at the time of being asked to comment on the QA, none of the vital data or evidence of performance in relation to the 2015- 2016 priority targets was available. As such, Healthwatch Richmond is unable to make an informed judgement on whether the Trust achieved the goals it set out to achieve or if the priorities going forward are relevant or based on failings in the previous year. Also, there was no information available to us regarding the Trust's performance against its CQUIN targets.

We acknowledge the Trust's honesty regarding the requirement notices and breach in regulations issued by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The Trust is currently awaiting feedback from the last inspection by the Chief Inspector of Hospital's inspection team from the CQC.

Healthwatch Richmond is pleased to read that within the Community Mental Health Survey by the CQC in October 2015, the Trust was voted best in London for overall patient experience and in the top 20 per cent in the country, in several areas that look at user experience. We have noted that 73 per cent of community patients said they had a good experience while using the mental health community services, but it would have been beneficial to have the previous years data to make a valid comparison.

With mental health services under increasing public scrutiny and high demand, it is reassuring that SWL MHT has redesigned its urgent care pathway and looked at innovative ways of providing support in the community, including the Crisis House and Cafés, Psychiatric Decision Unit and Housing Discharge coordinators. 

Healthwatch Richmond is pleased to read that the Trust is taking its *Duty of Candour* very seriously and supports staff to raise concerns. This is particularly welcome due to the vulnerability of some of those accessing the mental health services. The introduction of local guardians at all sites is also very reassuring. We look forward to learning about the success of this initiative.

Healthwatch Richmond is concerned there is little information regarding the serious incidents referred to in the report, despite the Trust stating it has made significant improvement in incident reporting. There is no data regarding patient safety incidents reported to the National Reporting Learning System (NRLS) or level of harm.



There is no comparative data to support the statement that there has been an improvement in incident reporting or to indicate if serious incidents have increased or decreased. There is also no information regarding any lesson learnt from such serious incidents.


We are pleased to see that, going forward, the Trust has pledged a zero tolerance approach to suicide, which is very reassuring considering in 2015-2016 they reported nine 'suspected' suicides and nine attempted suicides. To a layperson, the term 'suspected suicide' may be confusing. Does that mean the matter has yet to be resolved by a coroner's inquest? Clearer narrative would resolve issues such as this.

We welcome the challenges and priorities going forward in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children and look forward to reviewing the progress made. Again comparative data would have been beneficial, in order to make a calculated and informed judgment on progress.

We are pleased to see that the Trust has benchmarked itself and evaluated current practice against the findings of the Francis Inquiry and Winterbourne review. It is reassuring that a review was undertaken following the Southern Health NHS Trust investigation, which provided assurance to the Board that systems and processes embedded are sufficiently robust.

We are pleased to learn that the Patient Experience Team received positive feedback this year, particularly for their listening skills. They were shortlisted for two national awards at the Patient Experience National Network Awards (PENNA) 2015 - 'Team of the Year' and 'Turning It Around When It Goes Wrong'. The team was a finalist in the first category and runner up in the second. They are to be commended on this achievement, particularly because the Trust received 504 complaints during the year, compared to 421 in the preceding year. We recognize that this increase may be an indication that patients and carers feel more comfortable making complaints than previously.

Healthwatch Richmond conducted a survey of parents and schools about experience of CAMHS services in 2015 and made some recommendations for improvement. We were pleased that the Trust accepted these suggestions and made efforts to implement changes to take account of the views expressed.

Although the report on the last CQC inspection will be published later in the summer, we want to emphasise the importance of progressing with the range of service improvements outlined in the QA draft report. The provision of Mental Capacity Act training to staff is key to ensuring patient-centred care. The Trust recognises this has been a challenge and has introduced a new e-learning package in addition to face to face training for staff. We welcome MCA leads in place in each directorate to support development and achieve full compliance. 

We look forward to reviewing the outcomes of the most recent CQC visit when the report is available.

