

Intergenerational coffee mornings to promote health and wellbeing

What did we want to achieve?

To break down the stigma and barriers between people with dementia and younger people with mental health needs and improve outcomes for both age groups.

What we did:

- People from both Cherry Ward and Indigo Ward attend a weekly coffee morning at Oasis Café in Bowmere Hospital.
- Coffee mornings included quizzes, activities and discussions on ideas for future sessions.

Results:

- Coffee mornings have developed communication skills and problem solving abilities amongst both groups of service users.
- Attendees have felt a sense of purpose and community service. The events have also led to increased sense a personal and social identity, building.
- Older adults have experienced positive effects of interacting with young people. Young people have increased confidence and self-esteem after spending time with older service users.
- Older people said they enjoyed teaching the young people about historical events and introducing them to their favourite songs and past-times. One gentleman expressed that he does not get to see his grandchildren often and so looks forward to the weekly coffee mornings.

- Young people have created genuine relationships with their fellow service users, asking after those unable to attend and creating 'Get Well Soon' cards for those who are unwell. This has greatly improved the wellbeing of the older adults.

Next steps:

- Complete literature review to establish current practice within this field and to support the development of the session.
- Use review to inform development of coffee mornings and produce action plan for future sessions.

