

Sensory Awareness Training for Adult and Older People Inpatient Service Teams across the Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Trust

572 of our inpatient staff have received training on sensory awareness and the effect that sensory input can have on the body to support relaxation, emotional regulation, grounding, and de-escalation. We have chill out rooms on 28 of our inpatient wards.

We now have 20 adult wards equipped with chill out rooms and eight older people wards with either a chill out room or a mobile kit which can be set up in a bedroom. Chill out rooms are multi-sensory spaces with a range of furniture, lighting and audio options to provide a space with loads of flexibility to be adapted to suit individual preferences. The rooms are used by service users to support relaxation, mindfulness, managing anxiety, managing frustration, easing symptoms, supporting sleep, instead of prn medication, and for enjoyment. They are also used by staff for break times, time out following a distressing incident, post incident reviews. On our older people wards they are also offered to carers, either for the visit to take place in the room or for the carers to have some time and space if their visit has been a difficult time. The 28 wards were provided with equipment and a training package around sensory awareness, equipping the staff to get the most use out of the rooms but also to introduce sensory strategies which can be utilised anywhere to help someone in distress.

Chill out rooms are also going into our forensic wards and some specialist wards.

For more information, please contact: Gail.kay@ntw.nhs.uk