



Investigation into Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust

Findings of the public hearings and investigation

Right First Time

Easy Read Summary

9 September 2021

Stage 2 Investigation into Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust



In February 2020, NHS Improvement published an independent report about some of the work of Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust (SHFT).

The independent report said that a further investigation should find out more about whether and how SHFT had learned from previous investigations.



The hearings were held in public. They were held online because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Panel heard from service users, family members and carers using SHFT services. They heard from senior managers and staff working in SHFT.



They found that there were some differences in the views between staff, service users and carers about how good SHFT was at responding to and learning from complaints, investigations and about the progress that SHFT is making.



The Panel found that SHFT had improved but that more improvements were needed.

The Panel looked at 6 areas and made recommendations about each area.



Asking whether a new process is needed for complaints and investigations.

The Panel recommended:



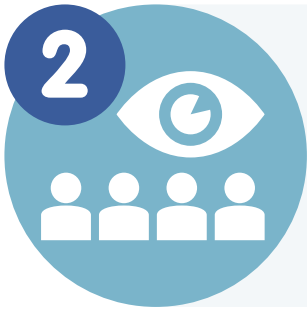
During an investigation SHFT should offer to meet with people to talk about the complaint. People may need extra support during the complaints process. SHFT should help with this.



SHFT should use a consistent framework for complaints and investigations and have staff who are trained to carry out investigations.



Some Serious Incidents will need to be investigated by an independent investigator.



Looking at how complaints and investigations are handled.

The Panel recommended:



SHFT should aim to get things right first time, every time.



Investigations of complaints should focus on the needs of service users, family members and carers.



The complaints process should be made clearer. A leaflet should be made to explain the complaints process.



Investigation reports should be written clearly. They should have recommendations that can be measured.



Asking how the Trust should communicate with service users, families and carers.

The Panel recommended:



SHFT should produce a Communications Strategy and a Carers Strategy with service users, families and carers. They should show how SHFT will support service users, families and carers.



SHFT should regularly ask for feedback from service users, families and carers.



If a mistake has been made, SHFT should be honest and open, and apologise.



Looking at how well action plans to improve care are working.

The Panel recommended:



The Triangle of Care has been started at SHFT. This means service users, professionals and carers working together. It improves safety, supports recovery and helps well-being.

All staff should be trained to understand and use the Triangle of Care. A patient experience dashboard should be started to measure how well the Triangle of Care is working.



Written reports about improvements should be made public.



Finding out how Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is checking these improvements.

The Panel recommended:



The CCG should continue to regularly check SHFT's work. This role will be taken over by the new Integrated Care systems (ICS) which will replace CCGs in 2022.



Asking about whether and how SHFT has improved and whether more improvements are needed.

The Panel recommended:



SHFT needs to continue to change and improve. The Panel said that the present management team knows there is a need for more improvement.



There has been more engagement with service users, families and carers. This should continue and develop.



The changes have not been seen everywhere at SHFT and some areas need more improvement.



Staff, volunteers, service users, families and carers should all be part of the Quality Improvement projects to help SHFT to improve.



SHFT should share learning from investigations across the Trust. There should be training for all staff to help them to learn.

Summary

In the last 2 years, SHFT has improved their engagement with service users, families and carers. But this has not happened everywhere in the Trust. This engagement needs to continue.



The Panel said that SHFT need to 'get it right first time, every time'.

The Panel has found that SHFT is improving. However more change is needed. This will enable it to improve the care it offers and the experience of service users and carers.



SHFT will work on the recommendations made by the Panel, with the support of the CCG and the new ICS . This will enable SHFT to continue to improve the quality of care.

The recommendations have been made public and the full report can be read here

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/south-east/publications/ind-invest-reports/southern-health/>