

# Entry for the 2015 RAID Awards for Working with Challenging Behaviour: **Arkwright Ward, Kemple View Hospital.**

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## **Introduction**

Arkwright Ward is located within a low-secure psychiatric hospital for male patients. It offers a 10-bedded ward for older patients with physical health and/or cognitive needs in addition to their mental disorder and offending histories. We also care and treat for patients mild to moderate symptoms of dementia, aiming to manage risk whilst providing excellent standards of care.

The team on Arkwright work with service users who display a wide range of challenging behaviours. The following provides an outline of work with one service user, 'Mr G' to highlight how the team work effectively with challenging behaviour with the aid of the RAID principles.

Mr G is a 59 year old man diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder and possible frontotemporal dementia who has been continuously detained since 2004. In December 2014 he was admitted to Arkwright where he could receive specialised care to meet his complex physical and mental health needs. Following a rationalisation of his medication there was no clear evidence of dementia but he continued to present with a severe treatment resistant schizoaffective disorder. During a recent change to his medication he became increasingly challenging with physical and sexual assaults. He required short periods of seclusion as a last resort. Now his mood stabiliser and psychotropic medications are at a therapeutic level Mr G is showing signs of improvement. He continues to be dependent on nursing staff to meet his daily living skills.

## **Identifying the Red & Green**

Mr G continues to display several challenging or 'red' behaviours. Those identified included:

- Injury to self
- Violence
- Sexual assaults
- Speaking in a derogatory and sexually inappropriate manner to staff

In order to promote and strengthen Mr G's positive, or 'green' characteristics we identified the following:

- Communicating his needs verbally
- Behaving in a respectful way towards staff
- Talking about himself and his life in a positive way

## **Strengthening 'The Tube'**

The Arkwright Team understand that the quality of the relationship between service users and those who care for them is extremely important. We worked to learn more about Mr G, his life history, his likes and dislikes, and looked beyond the challenging behaviour to know his personality. By reading about Mr G's past but also engaging him in conversation, showing an interest in him and his life, the team were able to build a rapport with him. We understood that any behaviour was an attempt at communication and commenced a communication passport so we could try to establish patterns and learn what he was wanting to communicate. Soon we began to see more verbal communication and warm, humorous interactions from Mr G.

The often emotionally charged nature of this work has placed significant demands on the team. The team responded to these demands in a proactive manner by attending reflective practice groups. During these monthly sessions, the team shared examples of effective practice and openly reflected upon aspects of caring for Mr G that had proved challenging, using creative problem-solving to generate solutions to overcome these challenges. Some examples include introducing a routine to promote sleep and circadian rhythms and keeping a tool box of things that Mr G enjoys so that staff always have ways to promote green experiences.

More recently a formulation of Mr G's behaviour has been developed within reflective practice groups based upon close observations and the completion of 'ABC' charts. The sessions were attended by all nursing staff and members of the MDT. This has allowed staff to have a shared understanding of the factors that may contribute to and maintain the behaviour but also the positive ways in which we can respond to these challenges.

### **Flooding with Green & Imploding the Red**

Having identified the green characteristics and behaviours to strengthen in Mr G, the team worked to 'flood' his environment with green experiences including the development of a memory box to facilitate reminiscence with Mr G – something which he had been noted to enjoy. A one page profile has been completed showing things Mr G likes and dislikes, including information on how best to support his wellbeing.

During their meaningful interactions with Mr G, the nursing team began to build up a picture of his interests and sourced various resources containing his favourite films and entertainers. These have proved to be an additional way in which to positively interact with Mr G.

It was recognised that some of the challenging behaviour may be Mr G attempting to gain some sensory input. Sensory items were made available for Mr G to use in order to replicate sensations for him in a safe and therapeutic manner. Sensory items can also support in calming restless or agitated behaviour, reducing stress and tension and enriching quality of life.

In order to enrich Mr G's environment we promoted his access to fresh air in the landscaped garden, encouraged as much time as Mr G is comfortable with in communal areas, and engaged him in a variety of activities of his choosing.

With regard to imploding Mr G's red behaviour, a detailed positive behaviour support plan has been developed which allows observing staff to retreat from the room when challenging behaviour occurs if it is safe and caring to do so. This management plan allows the focus to be very much upon the recognition and promotion of Mr G's positive green behaviours.

## **Evaluating Progress**

Mr G has made significant progress in terms of his challenging behaviour although continues to present with new challenges at times. The team continuously monitor and review progress by exploring the frequency and severity of behaviours recorded in incident report forms; clinical note entries; and communicating regularly as a team in order to reflect on progress and areas for development. We actively encourage and consider feedback from external professionals with regards to Mr G's care and treatment. For example, when Mr G was recently reviewed by the external falls team they stated that the Arkwright team was "going above and beyond what a care home would do". The Arkwright Team continue to adopt a relentlessly positive approach to any challenges that are presented to us so that we can provide a rewarding environment and effective care and treatment for our service users.