Teamwork Makes a Difference

Service re-design with children & families
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The Surgical Short Stay Group, part of the service re-design structures for Glasgow’s New Children’s Hospital, reviewed surgical services with the aims of optimising the quality of care, smoothing the patient’s journey and improving efficiency.

From the outset we were committed to including groups that don’t usually have a voice in re-design such as play specialists and family support workers but we also wanted to put children and families at the heart of the review and not just consult them on the final proposals.

Process
This approach meant establishing an open, fluid process that had direction and clear milestones but which was also able to adapt to and include the issues raised by children and families. Patient-centeredness was achieved by:

1. Including family and patient representatives in the multi-disciplinary membership of the group
2. Consulting widely as ideas started to emerge from the planning group – surveys, interviews and on-line surveys were used to inform and test out early ideas before proposals were developed
3. Supporting children and families to participate in a multi-disciplinary meeting to chart the patient journey. Families, teenagers and children as young as 7 took part in charting the patient journey. They made up nearly 30% of the total group, helping professionals to understand what it was like to be on the receiving end of hospital care

Outcomes
Children and families shaped and endorsed proposals to establish a comprehensive Pre-admission Service and a 23-hour Surgical Admission Unit.

They brought new insights to the review process, particularly about the patient experience and the wider context of care e.g. education, family support, play services. This provided clinicians with a clearer view of the reality of current services and overcame fears that patients would not want change. The process developed strong working relationships with clinicians, where both sides respected each others views.

As a result, this process:
Demonstrated the value of including children and families in re-design.
Provided clinicians and staff with the confidence that their proposals were appropriate to the needs of children and families.
Established children and families as integral to next stage of consulting on and implementing the review.

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