

MEDIA RELEASE

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Art project brightens lives as well as walls

Between July and October this year, service users working with the Young People's Team, which is part of Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)'s Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), met weekly to create art work to brighten up the clinical spaces at Westcotes House in Leicester. Their work was celebrated at a special 'unveiling event' on 21 November.



The Young People's Team, led by consultant clinical psychologist Dr Jeanette Bowlay-Williams (pictured far right), works particularly with vulnerable young people in care and those who are involved with the youth offending service. Having secured funding from LPT's charity, Raising Health, the team approached local charity Soft Touch Arts to lead the three month project. Soft Touch Arts uses arts, media and music activities to engage with and change the lives of disadvantaged young people. They have worked with ten young service

users aged 13 and above in weekly two-hour sessions to create a range of pieces loosely themed around 'diversity' and difference.

At yesterday's celebration event, young people and their families joined staff members from CAMHS for a short presentation followed by a tour of the artwork now on display around the building. Senior leaders from LPT also attended, including chief executive Dr Pete Miller (pictured centre), himself a specialist children's psychiatrist.

Emily Cumberpatch (pictured third from right), the community psychiatric nurse who has been co-ordinating the project said: "The young people have really enjoyed getting involved. They've talked about how much they valued being trusted to work on the pieces, as they don't often have the opportunity to use specialist art equipment such as spray paints and craft knives. It's had a really positive effect on their self-esteem."



Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) provides community health, mental health and learning disabilities services for the one million people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We have a budget in excess of £275 million and employ approximately 5,500 staff. For more information visit: www.leicspart.nhs.uk.

Raising Health is our registered charity (number 1057361) which raises funds to support LPT's excellent care initiatives, equipment and innovations which go above and beyond core NHS provision, to enhance the experience of our patients, service users and staff. www.raisinghealth.org.uk

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