

MEDIA RELEASE

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Joy to the wards at Christmas

Young people from Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)'s mental health inpatient ward at Coalville Community Hospital have been getting in the festive spirit by visiting older patients on other wards, bringing them mince pies and homemade Christmas cards and singing carols. It's the culmination of a year-long collaboration between the wards, known as the Working on Wards (or 'WoW') project, which has proved beneficial for both patient groups.



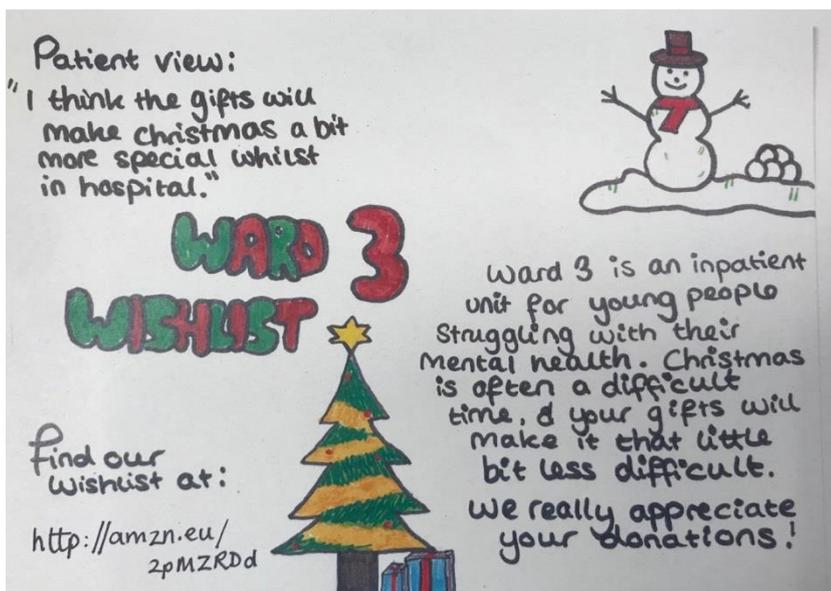
Ward 3 at Coalville Community Hospital is LPT's specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) inpatient ward, supporting young people aged 13 –18. The unit provides assessment, treatment and diagnosis of conditions including psychosis, depression, anxiety related disorders, behavioural disturbances, eating disorders and learning disability associated with mental health.

Staff from the ward and from the hospital school set up the WoW project at the start of the year with the meaningful activity co-ordinators who organise therapeutic activities for patients on Wards 1 and 2. Many of the patients supported by the meaningful activity co-ordinators are older people recovering

from stroke. Since January, the co-ordinators have been visiting Ward 3 each Monday morning to discuss with the nursing and hospital school staff the therapeutic activities they have planned for the week. Together they explore how the young patients could be involved. For example, patients from Ward 3 have visited for 'tea and chats', have joined in with reminiscence groups and taken part in gardening activities.

Ward 3 sister, Danica Izycki, explains: "The idea for the WoW project came from the Channel 4 series 'Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds', which highlighted the advantages of the very young and the old spending time together. Similarly, in the Netherlands, some university students live alongside elderly residents in a nursing home, to mutual benefit. We've found that the WoW project has really helped build the young people's confidence in relation to social anxiety. It enables them to take small steps to prepare for life after discharge from hospital. In particular, they love looking at old photos with the older people and learning about their lives. It's often the highlight of their week."

One of the young people involved in the project for the first time this week said: "Taking part made me feel happy and the lady was really nice. I would love to continue to take part in the project while I am here at ward 3 as it really lifted my mood. It's nice to put a smile on the faces of the patients from the other wards." An elderly patient on Ward 2 said: "I really enjoyed the young people visiting as it really cheered me up and made the morning go quicker. It really made my day!"



The young people on Ward 3 have created a [Christmas wish list](#) of resources that would support their therapeutic programme, and bring some much needed cheer at a time which can be very difficult for them. Any donations would be very gratefully received.

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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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