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Working with mental health service users and carers to understand perspectives on medication adherence

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Background: Usage of the British Mental Health Act (1983) (both hospital detention and supervised community treatment) continues to rise year on year (Health and Social Care Information Centre, 2015). The demographic groups most likely to be represented in compulsory treatment continue to be from Black and Asian backgrounds at 56.9% and 50% respectively.

Aims: To gain an understanding of factors that improve mental health medication adherence in Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) group mental health Service Users (SUs). To co-produce common understanding of factors optimising medicines adherence, develop, implement and evaluate an educational intervention with mental health professionals.

Methods: This project describes Phases 1 and 2 of a 3 stage study that focused on analysis of case studies involving Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) service users, carers; lay and professional with experience of medication adherence issues.

Findings: Initial findings from Phase 1 were analyzed, using a staged, qualitative coding approach (adapted from grounded theory) by a group comprised of professionals and service users (SUs). Emerging themes indicate that professional communication, including SUs as part of the team and understanding the role of family are important. Phase 2 is working on a co-produced educational workbook for practitioners. A consensus workshop is planned, comprising professionals and service users who will review findings from phase 1 and work together to produce the main factors considered influential to enable professionals to work more effectively with service users and families in optimizing medication adherence. Further work will pilot and evaluate the educational intervention with practitioners.

Conclusions: These initial findings suggested that service users and families could feel that there was some conflict between themselves and the professionals regarding medication decisions. They would welcome greater involvement.

Biography

Iris Gault joined Kingston & St. George's in 1995 following a variety of roles in nursing practice and education with Belfast City Hospital, Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospitals and the Carshalton and Croydon College of Nursing. She holds a BSc (Hons) in Social Sciences during which she evaluated mental health hospital day care, and an MSc in Sociology (Social Policy) in which she explored community psychiatric nursing attitudes to supervised discharge. She has also completed a PhD and is currently Associate Professor and Team Leader in Mental Health Nursing and year three lead for BSc Nursing (all fields). Her PhD and research interests are in mental health service user and carer perspectives on medication adherence.

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