



June 2016 NEWSLETTER

Hello Fabulous Members!

Welcome back to the latest edition of Imagine, the Star Wards Newsletter dedicated to our members!

This is a real bumper Summer edition of Imagine in it you will find: News from Bronte Ward and Kentmere Ward about receiving their 'Employee of the Month' and 'Full Monty' awards, Angling for Health Project, Animal Magic Update, Summer Activity Ideas, Loads of News from Star Wards HQ and an Ask Buddy question about 136 Units.

Do you have an inspirational idea you would like to share with our community of Star Wards Members? Please get in touch! We'd love to showcase your great practice on our website Wardipedia and in this newsletter so that thousands of others people can be inspired by and benefit from these.



A Few Words from Marion

Here comes the summer! When the sun shines Buddy and I love to lollygag in the garden and when it, inevitably, rains we people-watch young men in France kicking a ball around, or young women in Wimbledon bash a smaller ball across a net. Ah, the young, full of energy, vim and vigour.

Here on planet Star Wards, we have also been thinking of the young having just launched our fabulous and well-received resource for CAMHS wards - CAMHeleon.org. You may remember me telling you in the spring newsletter that we were working on new resources – well, thanks to the fantastic and dedicated work and talents of our very own Nic Higham – the first one is here! Painting a picture of CAMHS care at its best, CAMHeleon is colourful, chock full of ideas and a truly brilliant testimony to the excellence already out there. It's a very tough time for young patients and the heroic staff who expertly care for them each day. But as Leonard Cohen once reassuringly sang, "There's a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." We do hope CAMHeleon helps to make young people's hospitals brighter places.

Having given it time to settle in the "Webisphere", there will be press releases and all that malarkey soon – but I do want to say a massive and humble "thank you" to several truly wonderful ward people who have helped Nic with ideas, feedback and encouragement. So please step into the spotlight (or sunlight to push my luck with the summer theme) and take a bow all you lovely ward staff: Lisa Harris, Tracy Graham, Jane Saddington, and Allie Carr and team. Thanks also to the Anna Freud Centre, Kate Martin from Common Room and the truly remarkable Nina Martynchuk, who have all endorsed, supported and greatly enhanced the project. Phew! These are all wonderful people who have not only done great work but are happy to share and give of their time, talents and experience. Like we like to say on occasions – ward staff are wonderful. But YOU know that already!

I hope you enjoy this newsletter. We've been busy blogging, creating, researching and campaigning for you and below are a few fruits of our enthusiastic labour. Do watch out in the coming months for even more stuff from us to help, honour and support you and your patients.

On that note, come on Buddy, time to stop the lollygagging and put away the sun screen. There's more work to do!

Love Marion

Pointless National Days

*Take Buddy's lead
and join her on these pointless national days..*



'What's that Buddy?' 'Yes! Get your best lead on, it's take ['Your Dog to Work Day!'](#) (24th June).

This is just one of the examples of Pointless National Holidays you could use; as a conversation starter, start a themed ward day or as part of your therapeutic on-ward activity sessions?

24th June

Bring Your Dog to Work Day

1st July

International Joke Day

15th July

Cow Appreciation Day

9th August

Book Lovers Day

Here are more examples of Pointless National Holidays on www.wardipedia.org.uk, or have you created your own National day on your ward? Please share them with us! Get in touch with Sam– [here](#).

Word From The Wards!

Animal Magic

Bring your Dog To Work Day (Friday 24th June 2016) is a day dedicated to raising money towards the special work of charities that make a difference to the welfare of animals. Here at Star Wards, we have heard lots of special stories especially from our 'Animal Magic' campaign about the furry companions, both canine and non canine who brighten the day of the patients they visit on wards.

It has been brilliant to still receive your photos towards our Animal Magic campaign, we would like to introduce to you to; Thor, Bongo, Millie.



We love to see your Animal Magic photos, send these to sam@starwards.org.uk, post them to our Facebook Page 'Star Wards' or tweet them to us @wardipedianews using the hashtag #AnimalMagic. You can find tips and hints on having animals on your ward on our [Wardipedia page](#).

Kentmere Ward's Full Monty!

Well a massive congratulations is in order to the patients and staff of Kentmere Ward (Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust)! Our Nic recently visited picturesque Kendal to present them with their much deserved Full Monty Award. Nic wrote a [blog](#) all about his visit to Kentmere Ward, in which he commented about how he was really struck by the sense of community on the ward and the connection between staff and patients. A lovely spread of cakes and biscuits was accompanied by a tour of the wards art room and their 'tree of hope' Our Star Wards award dedicated to the commitment, accomplishments and hard work of ward staff is called the 'Full Monty' award.

If you apply for the award, there will be no inspections! We encourage self-evaluation of the progress and amazing work already being carried out on your ward towards the implementation or, adaptation of the 75 Star Wards Ideas. Find out all about Kentmere's Full Monty [here](#) or more information about the 75 Star Wards Ideas and the ['Full Monty' award](#).



Bronte Ward's Big Well Done!

We were delighted here at Star Wards to see a post on our Facebook page from Sarah Holtom. Sarah posted a picture of a letter written to the ward activity champions and coordinators of Bronte Ward (Manchester Health and Social Care). They had won the Trust 'Employee of the month award'! It was lovely to read all about the 'dedication, motivation and enthusiasm' of the staff who work on Bronte ward. Sarah was kind enough to send us pictures of their work and as you can see they have been facilitating fab activities for their patients including; a tea party for Manchester's Inspirational Women Day and Art Projects to make their ward look really bright and colourful.



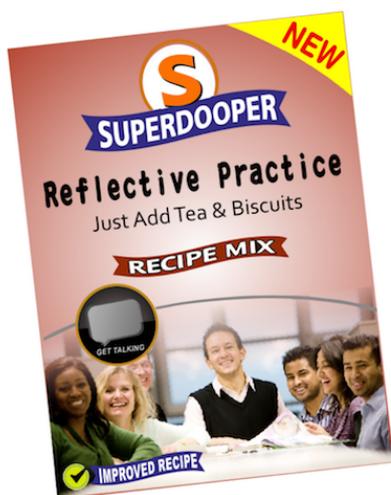
Angling for Health

Carolyn Green and Bev Green (no relation) from the Derbyshire NHS Foundation Trust were recently in contact with us here at Star Wards about a fantastic project called 'Angling for Health'. The fishing based project is being run within their community based units which specialise in recovery and rehabilitation for adults with mental health illnesses.



'Angling for Health', started as a small therapeutic activity that has grown in popularity, in resources and provided great opportunities for staff such as; funding or training and for patients such as; prevention of relapse and continued interest in a therapeutic hobby. Bev was kind enough to send over a link to us to the Angling Trust website where there is a blog from Andrew Holbrook, a Health Care Assistant who started the project and outlines the amazing progress the project has made.

If you would like to find out the steps to starting an Angling project for your ward [here is Andrew Holbrook's blog](#).



Schwartz Rounds

If you have never heard of Schwartz Rounds, here is a brief overview. First of all, they have nothing to do with herbs and spices; they are a forum for hospital staff from all backgrounds to come together to talk about the emotional and social challenges of caring for patients. Working on a ward can be challenging as well as rewarding. Having the opportunity to share all the positives (and negatives) of working on a ward in a safe therapeutic environment allows staff to support each other through sharing experiences and thoughts. The Kings fund championed Schwartz rounds until 2013 and further information can be found on the "Point of Care Foundation" [website](#). We do know that mental health trusts in Sussex and Derby are putting them into action!

There are loads of different types of this forum happening, as a staff member you may have heard of; 'Peer Supervision', 'Reflective Practice Groups' and the good old, natter over a cuppa! As a patient on a ward, you may have seen 'Community Meetings', 'Morning Socials' and 'Focus Forums'.

Summer Activities

Your ward will be a hive of activity, at a time when wards can be busy places to be, finding time for therapeutic activities can seem like a big task. No need to be daunted! Here are a few examples of activities that you can try that are easy to start and fun to do!

Outdoor Games



With the European Football Championships and Wimbledon just around the corner. Heading outside for a bit of physical activity or a game of something fun can really break up the day on your ward for staff and patients.

As the summer sunshine arrives and the temperature rises, you won't need to have a playing field for a ward garden to get everyone! Often the most fun forms of Outdoor Games involve a few people and one or two pieces of equipment such as; a Frisbee or a Ball. If you feel adventurous, you may have local sports halls or venues that will offer taster sessions of games such as Outdoor Bowls or 'Green Gyms'.

For useful hints and tips about 'Outdoor Games' for your ward, we have a dedicated [Wardipedia page](#).

Bird Watching



After being inspired recently by our website Wardipedia, it felt like a great time with summer on our doorstep to share with you the simple, yet interesting activity of bird watching. When you think of people engaging in Bird Watching you may imagine camouflage clothes and a pair of binoculars. However, you may not even need binoculars to engage in Bird Watching on your ward.

Adding a bird box to the side of a tree or fence, nearby to your ward is a great way to encourage birds to your ward for you to view. A brilliant idea to add to this is to give out, or stick up, with a tick list with pictures of common birds that you may be able to see in or around your wards garden.

Patient Example

'I became very interested in the birds that came to feed at the bird table in the ward garden. I decided to make sure there was enough food for them every day. It opened my eyes to how beautiful birds are'

Useful resource! [This is a link](#) to the Bird Watching Tick Sheet taken from the RSPB 'Big Birdwatch' campaign.

News From Star Wards HQ

CAMHeleon - Our Newest and Most Colourful Resource is Live!



As Marion has already said above, CAMHeleon.org is a new CAMHS ward best practice website which has been developed by Star Wards. The site focuses on the things that really make a positive difference to young inpatients, identifying small changes that have a big impact. Its overall objective is to support ward staff in enabling young people to make the most of this time away from their usual lives. CAMHeleon.org is informed and inspired by research into many aspects of young people's wellbeing and how CAMHS wards can best provide and support these collaboratively.

Brief Encounters Update



You may have seen our booklet Brief Encounters or viewed it digitally through the Star Wards website. Brief Encounters is a booklet that captures the intense and necessarily swift interactions between ward staff and patients. It includes tips and hints for those interactions and is available to download, please follow this link: www.starwards.org.uk/brief-encounters-pub/

Star Wards visit to Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

On April 8th, our Geoff was a guest speaker at the 'Nursing In Our Trust Conference' held by the Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Here is a tweet he shared about the day, he also shared photos of the day with inspiring quotes such as...'Don't assume a colleague knows they are good at their job, if they do something well, make sure you tell them! It could be the pick up they needed.'

Star Wards visit to Cygnet Healthcare

Our Geoff was also a visitor to the 'Cygnet in Context' conference on April 20th hosted by Cygnet Healthcare. The conference was filled with a variety of interesting presentations given by a number of speakers from different job roles. Geoff was there to introduce 'safewards' (our sibling project) but he tweeted about one presentation in particular from Self harm UK. Read more about safewards at: www.safewards.net

Ward Stars Make Star Wards

Our Nic a few months back wrote an article for the British Journal of Healthcare Assistants about the work three organisations have been doing to embed and develop 'Ward Stars', Star Wards achievement and development scheme for Mental Health support staff. Here's a taster quote and a link to find out more about the article.

"We developed Ward Stars for two main reasons. The first is that without HCAs, there wouldn't be any health care. The second was—at the time of its design—there wasn't anything like it for this extremely valuable group of workers. Ward Stars is therefore aimed at providing a structure for the recognition, training and professional development of HCAs."



More: starwards.org.uk/article-ward-stars-make-star-wards

Latest Star Wardsy Blogs

My Friends Are My Rock, by Nina Martynchuk

My friends are, and have always been, my 'rock'. Over the past seven years, which has included a year-long hospitalisation for Anorexia, moving schools and five foster placements, my friends have always been a source of support and stability in my life.

<http://www.camheleon.org/my-friends-are-my-rock/>

Buddies for Young People's Wellbeing, by Nic

Friends and loved ones can make a big difference to young people facing mental health challenges; they can be a vital influence in helping someone get the treatment and services they need. Parents, carers, teachers, friends or fellow students are usually the first to recognise that a young person may be having significant problems with their emotions or behaviour.

<http://www.starwards.org.uk/buddies-for-young-peoples-wellbeing/>

Let's Keep Talking About Young People's Mental Health, by Nic

We know that mental health has been overlooked in the past. This is mostly because of stigma and people not appreciating just how many people are affected and how devastating that effect is. But, thankfully, we are talking about it now and that's most certainly a very good start. Somewhat unbelievably, it's taken society a long time to come to the view that mental health deserves the same priority as physical health. The converse is starting to seem ridiculous. We're waking up to the fact that mental wellness is a massive concern for society at large. We shouldn't however, beat ourselves up for failing to appreciate these truths before. That won't get us anywhere, and would be bad for our mental health.

<http://www.camheleon.org/lets-keep-talking-young-peoples-mental-health/>

We're All Ears!

**As part of our Community Newsletter,
we would like to connect with you!**

Please do get in touch, you can even write to us with a Guest Blog of your experiences of mental health wards or Star Wards.

[Click here to contact us](#) or email geoff@starwards.org.uk

Ask Buddy!



We love this feature; it allows our wonderful current (or potential!) members to ask 'Buddy' a question!

Buddy's paws are ready to tap away and provide you with an answer to those questions you have about Star Wards on your ward. If we cannot find an answer for you we may be able to find you a fellow Star Wards community member (there's over 600 of you!) that may well have an answer. Despite her body language in the picture to the right, Buddy really enjoys receiving your questions! She has the waggy tail to prove it. Buddy recently received a question on [Facebook page](#), our Facebook members and Geoff helped answer the question for Buddy.

Section 136 Units



Question:

Hi Buddy

I work a lot in s136 suites or units, in my opinion I have not always found that they are the most calming places to be. It would be great to have your advice on how we can make them more therapeutic places to be for staff and those individuals who come to those suites or units?

Answer:

This question is a good one. Can we think of a Star Wards response to 136 suites to help them be "calming places"?

It would be easy to go into a huge discussion about section 136 of the mental health act, the role of the police in mental health, and the various reports and discussions that have centred around both the use of the section and the resulting difficulties and concerns. It is a temptation I will resist manfully (or dogfully)! This is not because the discussion is unimportant but because it takes us away from the central question of how can we help the 136 suite be a more "Star Wards" Space. If, however, you are interested in some thoughts on standards etc. a good starting point is the article by Michelle Hampton "Raising standards in relation to Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983" ([link](#)). It also has some advice about the physical environment.

So, how to make it more "Star Wards"? Star Wards takes its starting point, not as a 136 suite, but a ward. Wards are communities of people, staff and patients, while 136 suites are separate areas where assessments of an individual's needs take place. Wards are "long term" for groups of people and 136 suites are short term for small numbers of people and, mostly, for a one single patient. But there are lots of "Star Wardsy" (and other) ideas that can help a single person at a time of extreme anxiety.

Here are some of my other ideas:

What about "self soothe" boxes" that have featured in CAMHS wards and we spoke about in the [December newsletter](#)? Sure, the person cannot make on beforehand, but what about staff making one – like the "calm down box" in the [Safewards intervention](#). And the box could have other things - What about a "freshen up kit" with baby wipes, toothpaste and toothbrush, deodorant, and fresh tee shirts?

What about music? What about smells? What about refreshments for EVERYONE - water – and how about a little fridge with juice/cordial, water and ice?

What about some laminated posters of peaceful scenes?

What about a small, cheap mobile phone for the patient to use if needed?

I can see all this in a large box (except for the fridge) for ease of use and accessibility, with a list and a simple process of maintenance and ordering. Why not have a dig around in Wardipedia.org - there's loads more ideas there.

The icing on the cake here is to get people who have been through the “136 suite experience” as prospective patients to give their ideas and suggestions.

Oooh – I can feel an initiative coming on. If anyone out there wants to have a go at making a “Cool 136 suite”- lets be hearing from you!

If you would like to find out Buddy’s suggestions to this question or alternatively we also have a FAQ section about Star Wards, so be sure to check that out as well on our website.[click here](#).

Please submit your questions to [Sam](#) (being a bit of a celeb, Buddy doesn't always get a lot of time to check her email so Sam lends a hand).

We’re thrilled that you’re a Star Wards member and we want you to know how deeply impressed we are by all the creative, therapeutic work you do. We hope you’ve found ideas in this newsletter which you’ll want to introduce today!

Love,
Marion,
Nic, Geoff
& Sam

