

## September 2016

# NEWSLETTER

---

Hello Fabulous Members!

**Welcome back to a special 1st birthday edition of Imagine, the Star Wards Newsletter dedicated to our members!**

In this bumper Autumn edition of Imagine you will find: Pointless National Holidays, Word from the Wards; Meet Sally and Getting Active, Autumn Activities, #MHcarehelps, And much more...

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 [www.wardipedia.org](http://www.wardipedia.org) (<http://www.wardipedia.org>) and in this newsletter so that thousands of others people can be inspired by and benefit from these.

---



## A Few Words from Geoff

Hello you lovely people. After a mere fourteen years at the helm of the Newsletters, our dear and lovely Marion has decided to hand them over to me to introduce. I think we can all agree that she has done an amazing shift and deserves a break! Not so Buddy, however, as she is staying on the editorial team to answer questions in the "Ask Buddy section". (What? – of course she writes them!)

After a year of the new newsletters, it is now wonderful to look back over the Star Wards family and see all that has happened over the past 12 months. And goodness, a lot has happened.

In the last year Sam has done a wonderful job of producing these newsletters, Nic has developed a fabulous new resource for Children and Adolescent wards and Marion and I have been working in the background making things tick over. Star Wards has also been fortunate enough to attract the incomparable Nina Martynchuck to provide us with expert CAMHS advice. A young woman with a heart as big as an ocean and a pretty good head as well. More about Nina later.

We also have plans for new resources and projects for the future and a Board of trustees busting with encouragement and keeping us on track. As if that wasn't enough, we have been blessed with fantastic sponsors and recently the "Incredible Ian's" (Ian Norman and Ian Noonan) of Kings College London have joined in with providing room space for Star Wards events which we are deeply grateful for.

Yet Star Wards exists for the staff and patients and the most humbling part of looking back over the last year is to see the wonderful work showcased in these newsletters. Full Monty's, projects, resources, activities, and just wonderful people at the heart of them. We constantly have new members join or old members reaffirm their commitment. In yet another very tough year the dedication and commitment never waver, even though it must be so hard. Star Wards is witness to the fact that you keep going, keep striving and keep achieving. How can we not admire and respect you? How can we not do everything we can to support you? You are wonderful and we all need to keep doing what you do so well.

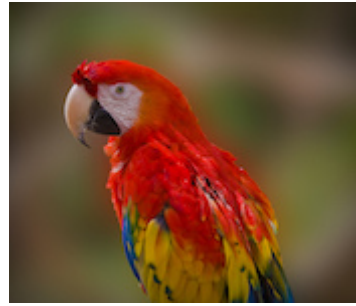
So here's to another year of you and us together, making things better. Fabulous.

*Geoff*

---

## Pointless National Days

Ahoy there, me hearties! There be nothing pointless about these beauties...



Here is a list of Pointless National Holidays for the Autumn Months of September, October and November that you could use; as a conversation starter, start a themed ward day or as part of your therapeutic on-ward activity sessions?



### **19th September**

International Talk Like a Pirate Day - [talklikeapirate.com](http://www.talklikeapirate.com)  
(<http://www.talklikeapirate.com>)

### **6th October**

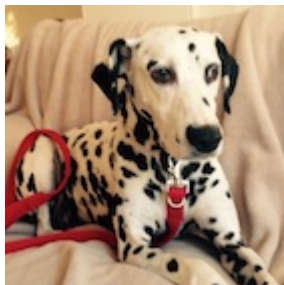
International Frugal Fun Day

### **13th November**

World Kindness Day (definitely more painful than pointless)

There are more examples of Pointless National Holidays on [www.wardipedia.org.uk](http://www.wardipedia.org.uk) (<http://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 (<mailto:sam@starwards.org.uk>).

We have even been told of local zany activities like the Taunton Scarecrow Festival that attracted wards in Cygnet Healthcare (<https://www.cygnethealth.co.uk/news/taunton-scarecrows/>). Are there other regional odd-fests you have taken part in? Let us know!



---

## Word From The Wards!

This rather cute looking pooch is called Sally. Sally loves to help out Amanda Williamson with her Counselling Sessions and this lovely picture of Sally is due to feature in our #AnimalMagic campaign. We love to hear good news about helpful pets here at Star Wards (Buddy particularly likes all dog related stories!)

Sally is a rather lucky dog as this tweet to Geoff (@starwards) suggests:





**Fenella Lemonsky** @organiclemon · Jun 28, 2016

Replying to @Amanda\_Exeter

do you ever bring Sally into a session? You know @starwards started with Marion's dog buddy helping psych patients .



**Amanda Williamson**

@Amanda\_Exeter

Sally is a rescue dog. She was very stressed when we got her. Transformed through love and consistent care.

1 9:03 PM - Jun 28, 2016

[See Amanda Williamson's other Tweets](#)

---

## Autumn Activities

After a summer of sport that included, Wimbledon and the Olympics. Social Media sources such as Twitter were buzzing with updates and news about amazing and inspiring sporting stories.

The Fab Ellie Walsh from NAViGo Heath and Social Care CIC, shared with us all about an exercise group that could inspire us all to engage in a little exercise. The exercise group at Harrison House, saw plenty of smiling faces and brought everyone together including services users, doctors and nursing staff to name a few.

We'll let Ellie's Facebook post explain a little more about the class held at Harrison House:



## Instantly FIT Personal Training

about 3 years ago



Overcoming personal barriers is worth more than being the fittest or losing the most weight, that is what some of these guys did today.

Service users, doctors, nurses, management and staff also coming in on their day off and all enjoying the group. It was my absolute pleasure to put a class on at Harrison house. Let's hope it's the first of many. [NAVIGO Health and Social Care CIC](#) [#dreambig](#)

46

8

5

Your ward can often be very busy and finding time for therapeutic activities can be hard. Don't be daunted! Here are some thoughts on what can be done (and other members have done them all!)

### Celebrating Special Events

Here at Star Wards HQ we are celebrating the 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday of the Imagine Newsletter! It wouldn't be a birthday without a bit of a cake, sorry to tempt you with a picture!

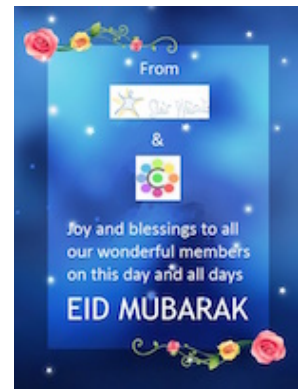


Patient & Staff Birthdays, Religious Festivals or a Pointless National Holiday, these are just a few examples of special events you can celebrate on your ward. You won't have to splash out on a lavish tea party (although you can do!) to put on a lovely celebration for everyone to attend.

In our 'A-Z of Ward Birthday Ideas' found on our Wardipedia site you have sent us a number of ideas that are cheap or even free to host! How about? Birthday Cards (made in an Art group), Sharing Jokes or a Sing Along.

'Patient Example'

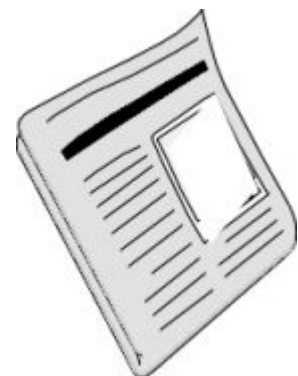
*'On my birthday everyone on the ward signed a card and we had cake with lunch. It was nice to be thought about and I felt very special that day'*



For useful hints and tips about celebrating 'Patients Birthdays' on your ward, we have a dedicated Wardipedia page: <http://www.wardipedia.org/38-patients-birthdays/> (<http://www.wardipedia.org/38-patients-birthdays/>)

## Read All About It

If you or a patient has a flair for news reporting, a ward newsletter is a brilliant way of sharing all the good things happening on your ward. In a ward newsletter you can share all about any good news, showcase brilliant pieces of artwork, poetry or photos from ward activities.



No need to be daunted about starting a newsletter, a little knowledge of word documents goes a long way! For hints and tips about getting started, here is a link to our Wardipedia page dedicated to Ward Newsletters.

<http://www.wardipedia.org/26-ward-newsletter/>  
(<http://www.wardipedia.org/26-ward-newsletter/>)

---

## News From Star Wards HQ



## #MHcarehelps

Our inspirational Service User Consultant Nina, has researched and created a number of positive disclosure phrases you can use in the interactions with the patients you meet. Nina explains: "The shareable phrases can be used by children and young people who are receiving inpatient mental health care to help explain their hospitalisation to their family and friends," All of the Positive Disclosure Phrases can be found here; <http://www.camheleon.org/shareable-phrases/> (<http://www.camheleon.org/shareable-phrases/>)

Have you created your own or do you know someone who has? Please let us know! Share them with us at @wardipedianews or on our Facebook page 'Star Wards'.



## Inspiring interview with Nina!

Nina as well as getting creative with #MHcarehelps was recently interviewed for TalkRadio. Nina has been involved with our CAMHeleon our CAMHS project.



Star Wards

An Interview with Nina Martynchy...

SOUNDCLOUD

Share

[Cookie policy](#)

117

But the icing on the cake was on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September when Nina organised and hosted a free conference on eating disorders in North London which was well attended by young people, teachers and mental health staff. We are hearing that a journalist from Mental Health Practice attended and there may well be an article coming. Watch <http://journals.rcni.com/journal/mhp> (<http://journals.rcni.com/journal/mhp>) for that one! (and here we should give a big shout to the editor, Colin Parish, who has been a good friend to us – and wards!)

### **Lets Keep Reaching Out To Young People In Emotional Pain - by Nina**



"Having suffered from depression and anxiety for years, I can say from a personal point of view that assuming those with mental illness are just 'acting out' and not really suffering is as ridiculous as saying to someone with a broken leg 'just walk on it, I'm sure it won't be that painful!'. We would never say that to somebody with a broken leg, so what is so superior about a leg that it's allowed to be ill and



the brain isn't? There's still a long way to go until society reaches a level of understanding and acceptance of mental health problems that's on par with physical health." Read more here (<http://www.camheleon.org/lets-keep-reaching-out-to-young-people-in-emotional-pain/>)

## National Dog Day

To celebrate National Dog Day, Buddy recently tweeted a special message to all our Star Wards Members!



---

## Recent Blogs

**Delightful Durham! - by Geoff**



Whenever we give out a Full Monty award, we meet staff and patients who humble and inspire us. So, this July, when Geoff went to the beautiful cathedral city of Durham, he was expecting to be impressed. Geoff was more than impressed – he was blown away by the staff and patients at the Cambian Appletree Unit. Read more here (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/delightful-durham/>)

### **Sharing News and Experiences About Ward Life - by Sam**



"It's nice to be back behind the keyboard talking about my experience of life on a ward. In this blog I want to mull over some thoughts about sharing news and ideas with other staff members and patients in your ward community." Read more here (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/sharing-news-experiences-ward-life/>)

---

We're All Ears!

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

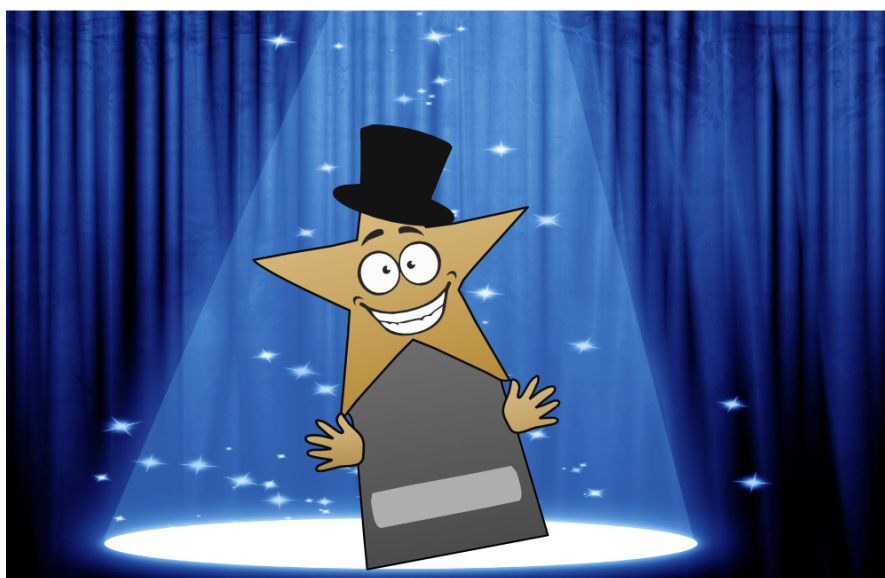
Please do get in touch, you can even write to us with a Guest Blog of your experiences of mental health wards or Star Wards.

**Click here to contact us (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/contact-us>)**

---

Ask Buddy!

*Therapeuticness amidst busyness? Life after Full Monty?*



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.



Buddy really enjoys receiving your questions! She has the waggy tail to prove it. Because this is a special birthday edition, we have not one but two questions and answers!

**Question:**

Hello Buddy,

What would you suggest for us to aim to achieve following our successful application for the Full Monty 3 Years ago? Is there a further award for us to aspire to?

**Answer:**

In terms of Star Wards, the subsequent step following Full Monty (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/apply-for-full-monty-award/>) is to continually sustain and build on each of the 75 ideas (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/?wpdmdl=7>). We don't have any plans right now to develop a further Full Monty award, mainly because of how comprehensive the 75 are. So, it's really about keeping them going and enhancing them, continuing to have regular Star Wards planning sessions with ward staff and patients and celebrating achievements however "big" or "small". Keeping Star Wards on the agenda and seeing it as a continuous journey.

You might be interested in Ward Stars (<http://wardstars.org/introduction/>) which is our development scheme for support staff. It consists of 7 further certificates which link in with the initial 75 ideas and our website Wardipedia (<http://www.wardipedia.org>). We have also recently launched CAMHeleon.org (<http://www.camheleon.org/>) which is an inspiring best practice website for CAMHS wards. Although the 9 areas of improvement (called the 9 COLOURFUL Themes (<http://www.camheleon.org/camheleons-structure/>)) are in the context of caring for young mental health patients, a lot of it can be adapted for any setting, as with all of our resources.

More than anything, I want you to know that what you do each day on the ward is awesome! It's

good to have aspirations but do please remember to celebrate the seemingly small things as and when they take place. Often the 'small' things make all the difference to the people you care for.

*Buddy (and friends!) x*

**Question:**

Hello Buddy,

Staff on our ward find it difficult to provide an hour or two to provide a therapeutic activity during a shift. Buddy can you offer us any advice about how we can be therapeutic even though we are really busy?

**Answer:**

When I have visited wards, I've noticed how busy but how brilliant the staff are!

The really important thing to remember is a therapeutic activity can be as short and sweet as a cup of tea and a chat or how about a stroll around the ward garden? If you are able to offer these small windows of therapeutic time with your patients, they will really appreciate that moment of calm in the whirlwind of ward activity.

The brilliant part about therapeutic activity on a ward is anyone can provide it! You may be lucky to have a dedicated activity coordinator on your ward, this can be a Housekeeping Hero, an enthusiastic member of the Nursing staff or an Excellent O.T staff member. If you're ward doesn't have one, asking for a volunteer member of staff (or even a creative patient) may help you to identify activities that are short in length, and frugal for your ward budget, they may be able to help the ward day become a breeze for your patients.

Hopefully that gives you a few ideas to provide therapeutic activity for your patients. As a site which is totally dedicated to life on the ward, Wardipedia is chock full of ideas and suggestions, so please check that out also - it's for you.

*Buddy (and friends!) x*

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 (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/star-wards/joining-star-wards-faqs/>).

Please submit your questions to Sam (mailto:sam@stawards.org.uk) (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!



---

Categories: Blog (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/category/blog/>), Newsletters (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/category/newsletters/>), Star Wards News (<https://www.starwards.org.uk/oldsite/category/starwardsnews/>)

Share on :

Copyright 2017 Bright