The views and needs of parents and carers of young people accessing a child and adolescent mental health inpatient service

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SERVICE RELATED PROJECT
Presentation Aims

- Background
- Service Context
- Research aims
- Method
- Preliminary findings
- Reflections
Background

- **Scharer (2000)**
  
  Grounded theory exploring relationships between parents and nursing staff when a child was admitted to a psychiatric inpatient service. Findings: parents expect to be blamed by staff for child’s difficulties. Empathic understanding from nurses led to enhanced parental engagement with the service.

- **Scharer (2002)**
  
  ‘Qualitative description’ of 38 parents of children under the age of 12 who had received support from psychiatric inpatient service. Findings: parents identified need for information and emotional support.

  Parents identified need for emotional support, information and communication when a child admitted into hospital for physical health problems (e.g. Bruce et al, 2002; Sarajarvi et al, 2006).

- **Gross and Goldin (2008)** Support groups for parents of young people residing within the unit. Described this as “family friendly practice” (p 459).
Service Context & Research Aims

- Adolescent inpatient unit 14-18 year olds (mixed)
- 8 bed unit
- Minimum stay is four weeks. Average length of stay is 61 nights.
- Parent and carer support group facilitated by a clinical psychologist and a social worker
- New intervention applied by the service so there had been some inconsistencies within the group over the past 12 months

Research aims:
- To broadly explore views and needs of parents
- To consider parents evaluations of the support offered from the adolescent inpatient service
Method

- Recruitment: Telephone calls followed by information pack sent by post. 11 parents requested further information
- Four parents of three adolescents (one father, three mothers)
  - Had all attended at least one session of the parent and carer support group
  - Young people had been discharged from the hospital for at least four weeks
- Semi-structured Interviews (44-64 minutes long)
- Three interviews took place in building adjacent to the unit one at parent’s home
Preliminary Findings

- Data analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
- One superordinate theme:
  - “A tough but necessary journey”
- Comprised of 4 sub-themes:
  1) Identifying and accepting that help was needed
  2) Dealing with Loss
  3) Reflecting on the journey
  4) Valuing knowledge
Conceptual Diagram of Themes

“A Tough but Necessary Journey”

1) Identifying and accepting that help was needed

2) Dealing with loss

3) Reflecting on the journey

4) Valuing knowledge
Reflections

- Start early – no seriously!
- Plan B – take time to think about this
- Contracts and annual leave
- Peer support & self-care is essential

DO NOT.....
Thank you for listening

Any questions?
References


