**How to put together a person who has used services story \***

**What makes a good person who has used service story?**Such stories are a powerful way to bring experiences to life. They’re written in an easy and accessible style and allow someone to tell their story in their own words.

It is important it doesn’t read like a ‘patient history’ or clinical handover. This needs to be a human story that everyone can relate to. Person who have used services stories should be as concise as possible (no more than 250 words) while providing a good insight to someone’s experience. The story should include some direct quotes/words from the patient to make it as personal as possible.

**Example:**

***Title: Can we use an example from small change big impact? – I have amended and made up the quote so we would have to get in touch with the OT who submitted the story to get an ok!***

Ella \* has Huntington’s disease this causes involuntary movements which led to unsafe sitting posture and falls from her armchair. When engaging with activities involuntary movements were exasperated, which led to Ella having limited engagement and interest in activities.

**The Change**

I completed a seating assessment which identified her postural management needs aiming to enable her to join in with activities again. A specialist seat purchased and we modified her wheelchair which enabled a functional sitting posture.

**The Impact**

Ella was able to engage in a weekly music group in the ward lasting over an hour and in community activities for the first time in several years. No further reported falls from seating position. Improvement in mood and meaningful interactions.

Ella said ‘the new seat made it much easier to join in the music group and other activities. As the new position helped with my involuntary movements I could join in much better and enjoyed the sessions much more.’

**How to capture a person who has used services story**The most effective way is to speak to the person directly. It shouldn’t take long to get a good picture of the patient’s experience.

**Questions to ask:**

1. Can you tell me a bit about when you became unwell/accident/operation?
2. What happened when you arrived in hospital/at the service/centre?
3. How were you feeling?
4. Can you describe your life before you became unwell/the accident/operation?
5. How has the help from an occupational therapist made a difference?
6. What activities do you value most in your daily life?
7. How has the occupational therapist helped you carry these out?

**Nudges or prompts**

* What do you remember most?
* Was there anything that surprised/worried/pleased you?
* Tell me more about....
* You said this [ xxx], can you help me understand that a bit better please?

**Getting consent**
It is essential you gain written consent from a person before you use or share their story. It should be clear how and where you intend to use the story, e.g. in promotional materials, website etc. Please note, if the patient is under 16 years, you need written permission from their parent or guardian. Please consult your employer’s communication department if you have questions or concerns.

If the person is not comfortable to use their own name, you could agree to use a pseudonym to protect their identity. This must be indicated within the text you are publishing. (i.e. \*name has been changed to protect identity)

Please send your story to practice.admin@rcot.co.uk. One of the professional practice team will contact you before publishing any information.

**Thank you for taking this time to produce a story.**