

# The Shared Experience Library



**A digital resource that brings together  
service user, carer and staff stories**

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## What is the Shared Experience Library?

The Library is a digital collection of service user, carer and staff personal stories. HPFT staff can view a list of available stories and request to use them at a training session, conference, event etc. This means staff can hear and understand the experiences of service users, carers and other staff in a meaningful way. Listening to and learning from experiences can lead to positive change and continuous quality improvement.

If you would like to contribute to the library, we are looking for people to share their story.

## How will my story be shared?

Your story will only be shared by the Experience Team with your consent. This could be with the Executive Board, Governors, service users, carers, staff teams or the general public.

The Experience Team will support you to present your story in your preferred way. It could be interview style, with questions and answers that you plan in advance. You might attend an event in person to tell your story yourself. Or you might prefer to make a video, or write a narrative that can be presented on your behalf.

You can choose not to be known and your identity will never be shared unless you would like us to. We will ask you for your permission every time we share your story and check that you are comfortable sharing it in that setting.

If you attend an event to share your story in person, we will reimburse you for your time and your public transport or mileage costs.

## How will my story be stored?

Your story will be stored digitally in a password protected file that is only accessible by members of the Experience Team. Your story will be removed if you request this and this will be reviewed every three years. We will hold your story but you will remain the owner of your story.

## What happens after my story is shared?

After sharing your story, the team will give you feedback, including what they will do differently as a result of hearing your story. We will also ask for your feedback about the experience, including what worked well and any suggestions you may have for improvements. The Experience Team conducts an annual evaluation of the stories programme and your feedback will be included in this and any future planning.

*“The whole process was very seamless and I’ve gone on to share my story a few times now, which has been really cathartic for me.”*

Amanda Berry,  
Expert by Experience

## Board Stories

One of the ways you can share your story is by attending a HPFT Board meeting. Each month the HPFT Board and Council of Governors set aside time at the beginning of their meetings, for a service user and/ or carer to speak about their experiences of receiving HPFT services. A member of the Experience team will support you to prepare your story and you will be reimbursed for your time and expenses.

*“I recognise the challenges and the importance of talking about how we are feeling - we all know people who have been affected by mental health issues at some point in their lives. I also find the stories to the Public Board from our service users, carers and members of staff really important for helping us all to gain a greater insight and understanding about the realities they are experiencing on a daily basis”.*

Sarah Betteley, HPFT Chair

## Contact Details

### Experience Team

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

Email: [hpft.havingyoursay@nhs.net](mailto:hpft.havingyoursay@nhs.net)

**There are many other ways you can be involved, such as recruitment panels, workshops, councils etc.**

To find out more, contact the Service User and Carer Involvement Team, email: [hpft.involvement@nhs.net](mailto:hpft.involvement@nhs.net)

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