



**Co-produced children and young people's  
mental health training for hospital staff**

**Change the Future**

# Introduction

Trainer: *"Could you tell me what you're hoping to get from today?"*

Staff: *"Do you want the honest answer? Or the one I'm expected to give?"*

Trainer: *"The honest one"*

Staff: *"I'm here because when I know there's a patient on the ward due to their mental health I turn and walk the other way."*

# Background

Healthcare professionals working in hospital settings report a lack of confidence and competency in caring for children with mental health needs and research shows children and young people have overwhelmingly negative experiences of presenting to hospital due to their mental health.

**We Can Talk** is designed to support sustainable changes in practice, hospital culture, and relationships between acute hospitals and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to improve patient experience, reduce risk and improve outcomes for children, young people and their parents / carers.

**We Can Talk** co-produced (with hospital staff, young people and mental health experts) a competency framework for hospital staff in children and young people's mental health and developed, piloted and evaluated a one-day training day linked to the competencies. All **We Can Talk** training is co-delivered with a young advisor with experience of presenting to hospital due to their mental health.

# Training

The one-day **We Can Talk** training is delivered on-site by child and adolescent mental health and hospital staff and a young advisor. The training is appropriate for any member of hospital staff (porter to paediatrician) who encounters children and young people (up to aged 25) in their job role.

The training includes engaging delivery (not 'death by PowerPoint'), real life examples and case discussions, group work, opportunities for questions throughout and the voice of children and young people coming through clearly.

- Morning session focuses on understanding emotional and mental well-being and developing the link with existing practice as well as additional knowledge around common mental health problems and self harm
- Afternoon session explores young peoples experience of presenting to hospital due to their mental health and helps staff develop their skills to communicate effectively about mental health concerns and risk

Download our evidenced based educational framework [here](#)

# Impact

More than nine hundred acute hospital staff across nineteen hospital sites have attended the one day **We Can Talk** training with 99% reporting it would make a difference to the way they do their job

"What I will take from this is talk and listen to young people, 'Better to say something rather than nothing.'"

"Made an extremely difficult topic easy to discuss and empowered me to realise that we ALREADY do a lot to assist CYP with mental health issues"

So far organisations involved in the project have also reported:

- Reduction in the use of RMNs to 'special' children and young people
- Improved management of CYP awaiting assessment
- Reduction in 'conflict' between wards and with local CAMHS
- Improved quality of referrals to CAMHS

Research has also shown that if young people have better experiences in hospital when attending due to their mental health they are more able to cope on discharge and are more likely to attend follow-up appointments with community CAMHS.

# Role out model

The **We Can Talk** project team is supporting partnerships between acute hospital sites and local CAMHS. Project leads from acute and CAMHS work together to develop the project locally.

The project team supports each partnership to deliver the project locally across four phases:

- 1) Engagement
- 2) Training
- 3) Utilising Data
- 4) Sustaining Change

Support for project leads in each partnership through bespoke training days as well as regular telephone/e-mail/on-site outreach across each geography to support all phases of the project and to develop the skills of the team locally to deliver the training, lead the project and sustain the change.



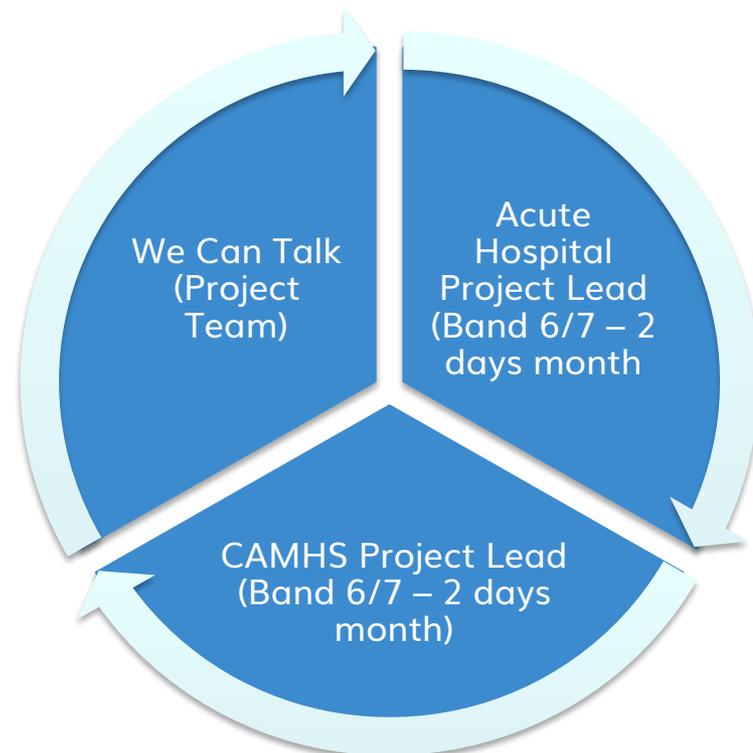
# Sustainability

**We Can Talk** has received funding from NHS England, Health Education England and STPs to deliver a sustainable model in 20 hospital sites across London and the South East.

This includes funding to NHS trusts for Project Leads from acute and CAMHS and the **We Can Talk** project team costs.

Each partnerships receives:

- Analysed report of the CYP MH staff survey
- Five one-day trainings for up to 175 staff
- Impact assessment of training dates
- Engagement of local young people to co-produce resources
- Four Project Lead training days
- Skills to deliver the **We Can Talk** training post-project without further funding to the project team



# Next steps



January to March 2019 – Raise awareness about the project and impact to date

March 2019 – identify and meet with local areas interested in rolling out **We Can Talk**

April 2019 – develop/scope proposals with interested areas (priority on geographic area bids)

May to June 2019– identify and secure funding

September 2019 – next phase of **We Can Talk** expansion begins

# Contact

To arrange a time to speak with the team about joining the next phase of **We Can Talk** please e-mail:

[future@wecantalk.online](mailto:future@wecantalk.online)

Robin Barker  
Project Lead

[robin@healthyteenminds.com](mailto:robin@healthyteenminds.com)

Kate Martin  
Development Lead

[kate@commonroom.uk.com](mailto:kate@commonroom.uk.com)

Grace Jeremy  
Engagement Lead & Young Advisor

[grace@commonroom.uk.com](mailto:grace@commonroom.uk.com)



For more information please visit:

[www.wecantalk.online/](http://www.wecantalk.online/)

Twitter: [@WeCanTalkCYPMH](https://twitter.com/WeCanTalkCYPMH)  
[#WeCanTalk](https://twitter.com/WeCanTalk)

# Principles

All children and young people who attend hospital have emotional and mental health needs and some attend specifically due to concerns about their mental health.

After looking at the research and speaking with children and young people and mental health professionals we agreed there were key areas that all staff should be able to understand and support in relation to children and young people's mental health.

Most importantly, we heard that children and young people want us to talk to them about their mental health and not ignore the elephant in the room.

We want to let you know that **We Can Talk** about a lot of different things. So we wrote a list.

# Principles

**We Can Talk** and listen about your emotional and mental health needs in a clear and non-judgmental way

**We Can Talk** about how we will look after your physical **and** emotional needs while in hospital

**We Can Talk** about how to help manage the challenges of being in hospital by using distraction and relaxation techniques

**We Can Talk** about your problems and we can find the right person to help

**We Can Talk** about how to keep you safe while you are staying with us in hospital

# Principles

**We Can Talk** or we can communicate in another ways that might work better for you, by writing, drawing, using signs and pictures etc. We're flexible.

**We Can Talk** about self harm and other big issues that might be worrying you

**We Can Talk** in private and will always talk with you about information that needs to be shared.

**We Can Talk** about difficult or awkward subjects in a way that is not as difficult or awkward as either of us thought it would be

**We Can Talk** to you and your parents / carers about helpful places to access additional support or information around your mental health



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