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Media Release

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See it my way - living with stroke

Hospital staff heard first hand what it is like to suffer from a stroke, as patients told their stories in the latest in an acclaimed series of listening events.

Two patients, a relative and a member of staff spoke about their experience of strokes and the impact it has had on their lives at the 'See it my way – living with stroke' event at the Royal United Hospital.

See it my way is a story telling programme which uses the stories of patients, families and carers, and staff to inspire and motivate staff. The programme was mentioned in the Government's response to the Francis report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry as an example of excellent practice.

One patient told staff that "it was nothing short of a catastrophe, utterly devastating" when he suffered a stroke and spoke about his long road to recovery, praising the care he had received from the RUH and in the community. Another patient said the nurses on the stroke unit had been "very, very special" and the doctors were "inspirational".

Staff also heard from Claire Fullbrook-Scanlon, Consultant Nurse in Stroke Care at the RUH, who spoke of her passion for nursing, and for caring for people who had suffered a stroke. She said in her nursing career she had seen many patients undergo the highs and lows of the recovery process. Claire said she had seen patients feeling isolated and depressed, but also marvelled at their achievements as patients did things such as spoke their child's name again, made a first cup of tea, walked their daughter down the aisle, or took part in a sponsored walk. She said stroke was "merciless as to who it affects" and said stroke care had changed from once being a low priority to the medical emergency it is now considered to be.

Head of Patient Experience Theresa Hegarty said: "Our speakers showed enormous courage to talk about their very personal experiences of living with stroke in front of a large number of our staff, and they really brought to life the impact a stroke can have.

"Staff tell us that these listening events are extremely useful as they enable them to take a step back and put themselves in the patient's shoes and see what it is really like for them."

Previous See it my way sessions have included living with dementia, life as a carer, living with breathlessness and being Deaf; this was the tenth in the programme, which began at the RUH in 2010.

Ends

