Involving Young People in Shaping Their Care and Support in CAMHS Inpatient Unit

The Melville Inpatient Unit is part of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) based at the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People in Edinburgh. Staff have been working hard to make sure young people feel included and their voices are heard in the care we provide and the planning of future services.

Nursing Recruitment – taking young people's views seriously

A new process has recently been trialled to involve young people in decision-making during staff recruitment in the Unit.
As part of the weekly 'Melville Meeting' - a therapeutic community space where staff and young people come together to reflect on life and relationships on the ward – young people were asked: "If you could ask applicants for nursing posts one or two questions, what would they be?"

After a few days of thoughtful reflection, the young people presented two powerful questions:

1. "Working in a Young People's Unit you will witness a wide range of emotions day to day. What distraction techniques or skills would you bring to help us (the young people) through these difficult times?"
2. "As patients, we struggle to feel listened to. How would you support us to have our views heard?"

These questions were included unedited in the formal interview process and became a standout moment for applicants. Many interviewees reflected that being asked these questions prompted deeper consideration of the lived experiences of young people with mental health difficulties. It challenged them to think beyond clinical skills and into the realm of empathy, communication, and relational care.
This initiative not only enriched the recruitment process but also reinforced the importance of listening to and learning from the voices of those we care for. It is testament to the power of collaboration and the belief that young people are not just recipients of care - they are active contributors to its design and delivery.