



Your **voice** in shaping
Mental Health Services in Cumbria...

Best Life Wellbeing Network:

**Cumbria Mental Health and Emotional
Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017 Survey**



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Best Life Independent Advocacy is a project run by People First.

Rationale for the Best Life Wellbeing Network Mental Health Survey

This response follows a request from the Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to the People First Best Life Wellbeing Network (BLWN) to conduct a survey on its behalf to identify how Mental Health Services are performing and how they could be improved.

The results from this survey will be fed into the Cumbria Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017 and used to develop and improve Mental Health Services throughout the county.

Methodology

The survey was designed to examine the current experience of mental health services of primarily users, but also practitioners and other interested parties. It also provided an opportunity for them to express their priorities and ideas for improvements to the services.

Surveys were available in hard copy paper format and also online using the Survey Monkey website (www.surveymonkey.com). Surveys (and the online link to the survey) were then distributed through a wide variety of sources:

- The Best Life Wellbeing Network newsletter, via email.
- The People First website.
- The Healthwatch Cumbria website and newsletter.
- Healthy Cumbria Newsletter
- Social Media: People First Twitter and Facebook accounts, Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust Twitter account.
- CVS Newsletter.
- In person at the Mental Health Capacity Act Conference, local third sector organisations (Mind, The Alzheimer's Society, Making Space, Croftlands Trust), psychiatric wards, CMHT's, day centres and the reception desks at all three People First offices.
- Posted direct to some contacts, those without internet access, with an enclosed stamped addressed envelope.
- Some were completed via telephone calls.
- Best Life Wellbeing Network 'Tea and Chat' meetings, People First 'Have Your Say' meetings, Cumbria People First Meeting.

The Best Life Wellbeing Network team also carried out six engagement meetings which were publicised also using the above sources. These were held in Penrith, Carlisle, Kendal, Barrow-in-Furness, Whitehaven and

Workington. Attendees to the meetings could fill in surveys and the BLWN Team facilitated discussions around the topics brought up in the survey. A presentation was provided by a representative from the CCG at these events to set the context for discussion.

Where respondents included qualitative feedback key themes will be highlighted in this report. A full copy of all qualitative feedback from the questionnaires is included in appendix 1, and the feedback from the engagement meetings is included in appendix 3.

Acknowledgements

The BLWN team would like to thank all those that took the time to complete the questionnaire, and to everyone who attended an engagement meeting.

We would also like to thank all of our colleagues in the Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust and those in the Third Sector who have given us their support and assistance, including Tom Bell (CPFT), Jozi Brown (CVS), Kate Norman (CPFT Communication Team), Chris Mitchell (CPFT Governor) and Sylvia Atherton (PETS).

Response Rate

Total respondents 262

- 118 online
- 144 paper

*N.B. Questions 1b to 3e were presented so as to allow the respondent to choose **multiple options** as they wished (please see survey attached as appendix 2). Therefore percentages reflect this and will not total 100% when added together.*

Question	No. Responses	Response Rate
1) Have you experienced any obstacles in accessing mental health services?	255	97%
2) Which one service do you think should be a priority?	250	95%
3.) Which areas would you like to see an improvement at the following services?		
A) GP Services	241	92%
B) First Step	199	76%
C) CMHT	223	85%
D) Crisis Teams	214	82%
E) Inpatient Services	200	76%
4.) What do you think is working well in the mental health services you have experienced?	170	65%
5.) Do you have any ideas about improvements that could be made to mental health services in Cumbria?	203	77%

Emerging Trends

Perceived Access to Mental Health Services

- 64.7% of those responding had experienced obstacles accessing mental health services
 - Of those respondents the most frequently reported obstacles were **accessibility** (31%) and **lack of information** about mental health services (27.1%).

Prioritised Service for Improvement

- 95% of respondents prioritised one service they thought should be improved.

- **Community Mental Health Teams** were the most frequently prioritised service by respondents, with 36% of respondents prioritising them for improvement.
- The least prioritised service was Inpatient Services, with 8% prioritising it for improvement.

GP Services

- 92% of respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see at GP Services.
 - 61.4% would like to see **improved mental health awareness from staff.**
 - 52.3% would like to see **improved appointment availability.**

First Step Services

- 76% of respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see at First Step Services.
 - 59.3% indicated that they would like to see **improved waiting and referral times.**
 - 55.3% indicated they would like to see an **improved range of therapies and treatments.**

Community Mental Health Teams

- 85% of respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in Community Mental Health Teams.
 - 62.3% indicated they would like to see **improved consistency of service.**
 - 57% indicated they would like to see **improved waiting and referral times**, 52% indicated they would like to see **improved staffing levels and availability**,

Crisis Teams

- 82% of respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in Crisis Teams.
 - 56.1% indicated they would like to see **improved staffing levels and availability.**
 - 55.6% indicated they would like to see **improved response times** and 47.2% would like to see **improved consistency of service.**

Inpatient Services

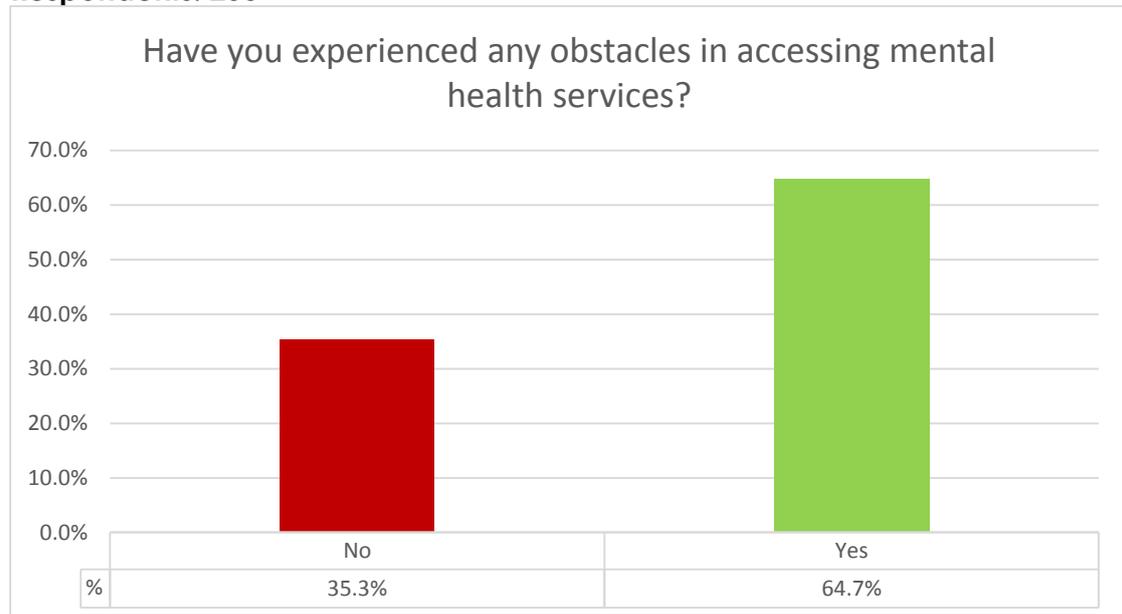
- 76% of respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see at Inpatient Services.
 - 60.5% indicated they would like to see **improved bed numbers.**
 - 52.5% would like to see **improved availability of structured activity.**

General Trends

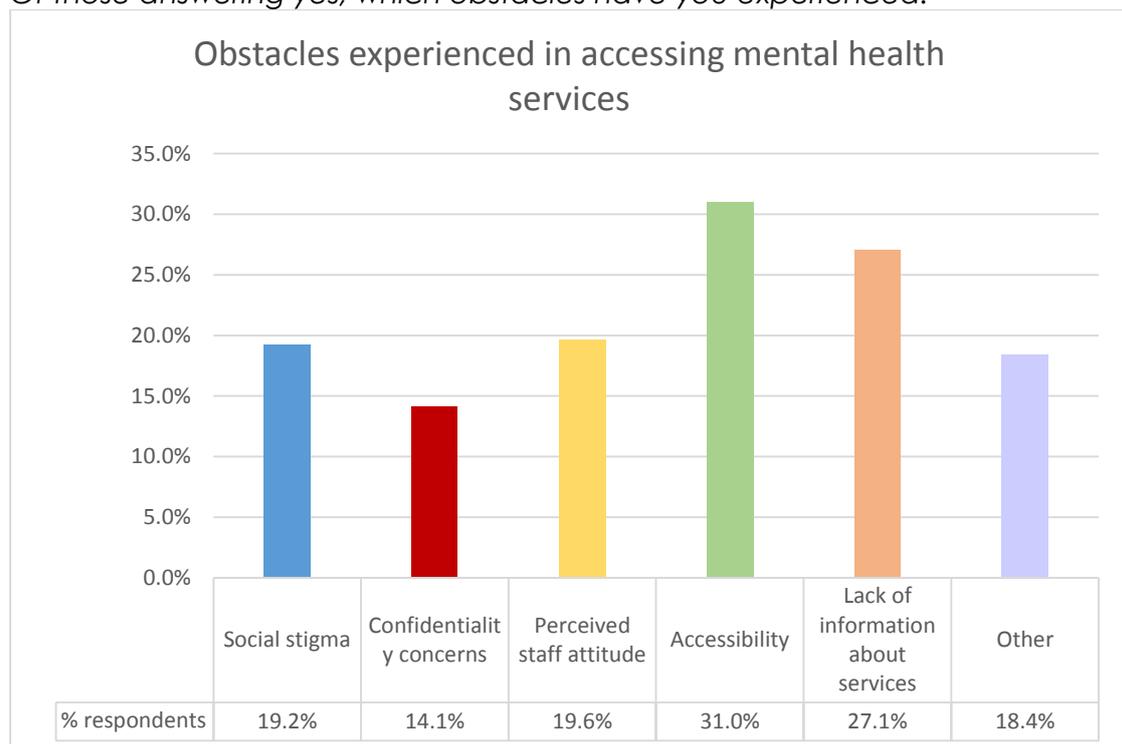
- Across all services there was a general trend of respondents indicating they would like to see improved communication at services.
- Few respondents indicated they would like to see improved confidentiality. It was the least frequently chosen area of improvement in all five services listed.

Have you experienced any obstacles in accessing mental health services?

Respondents: 255



Of those answering yes, which obstacles have you experienced:

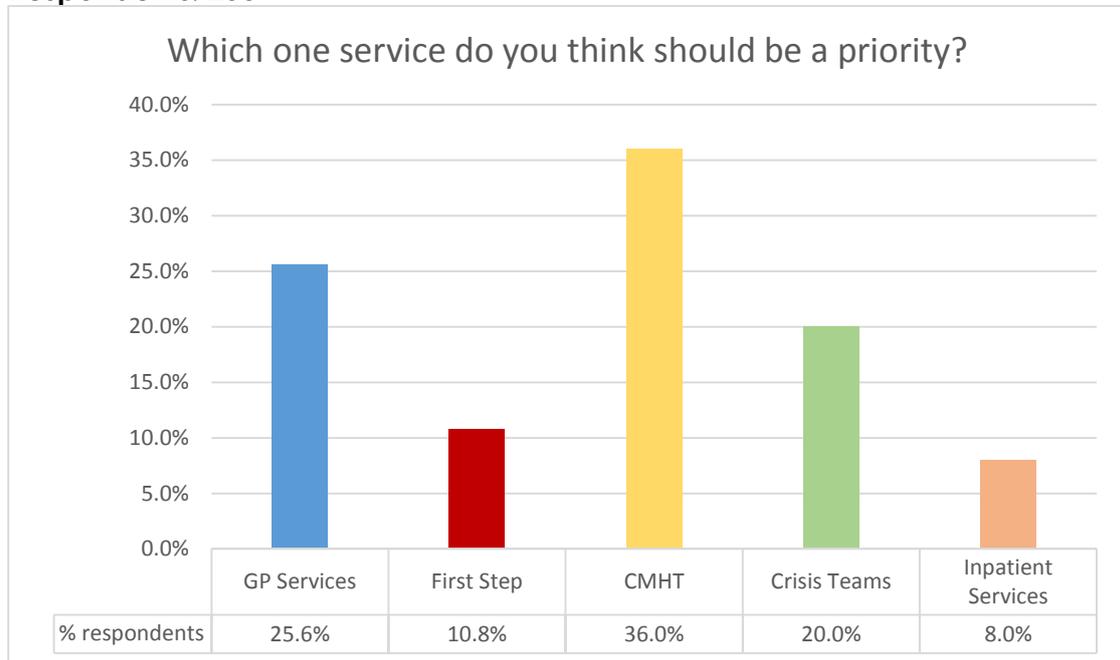


Where respondents indicated 'other' the most frequent issues reported were:

- Long waiting times.
- Poor communication between services and service users or their carers, and within and between services.
- Lack of clarity about service eligibility leading to delays in accessing the appropriate service.

1.) Which one service do you think should be a priority for improvement in the Cumbria Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017?

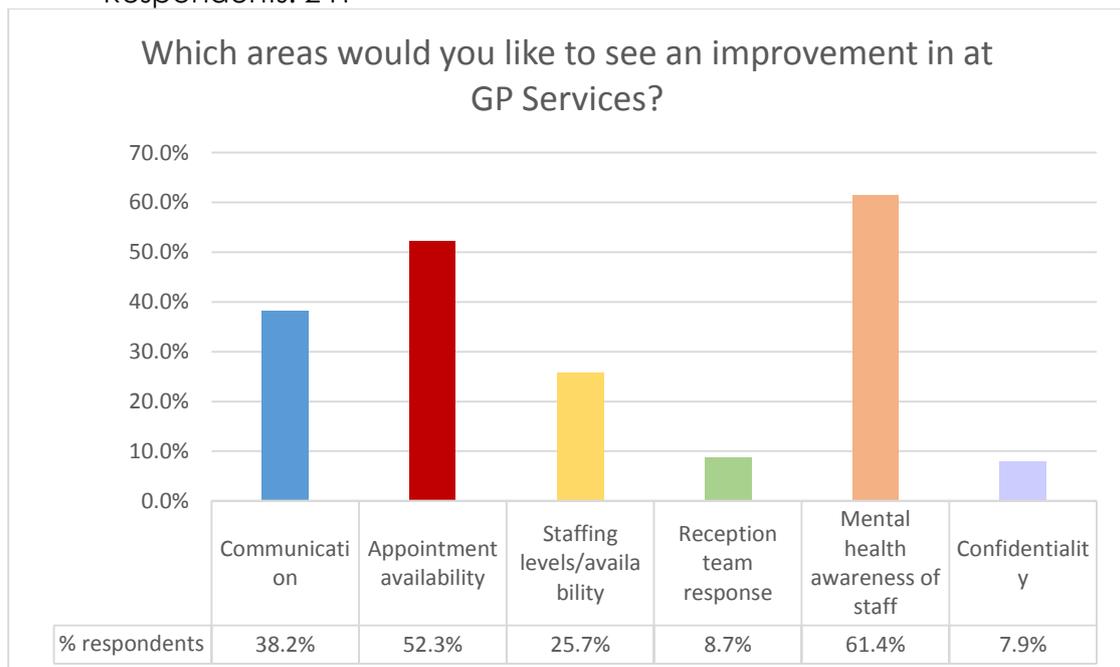
Respondents: 250



2.) Which areas would you like to see improvement in at the following services (respondents may choose more than one option).

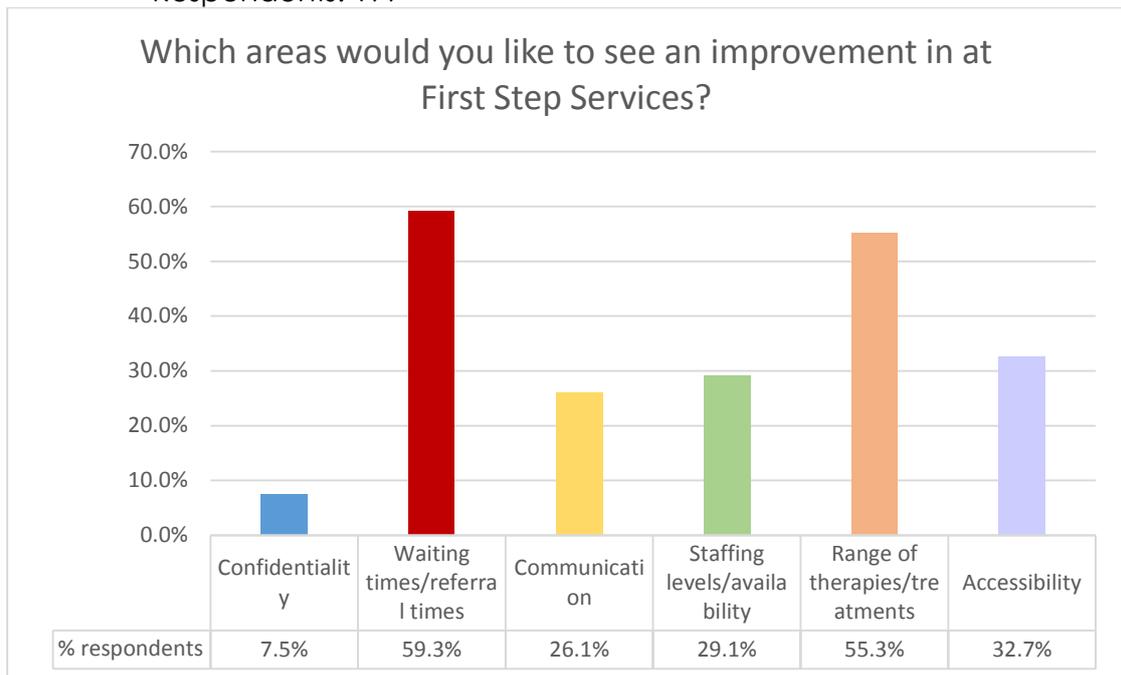
a) GP Services

Respondents: 241



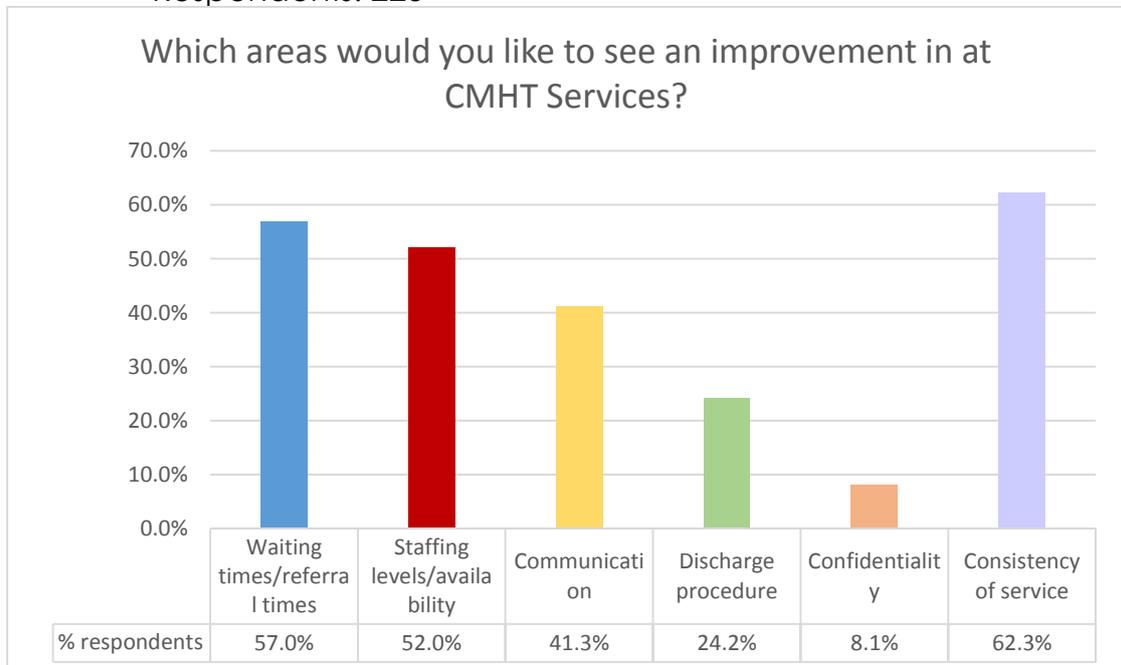
b) First Step

Respondents: 199



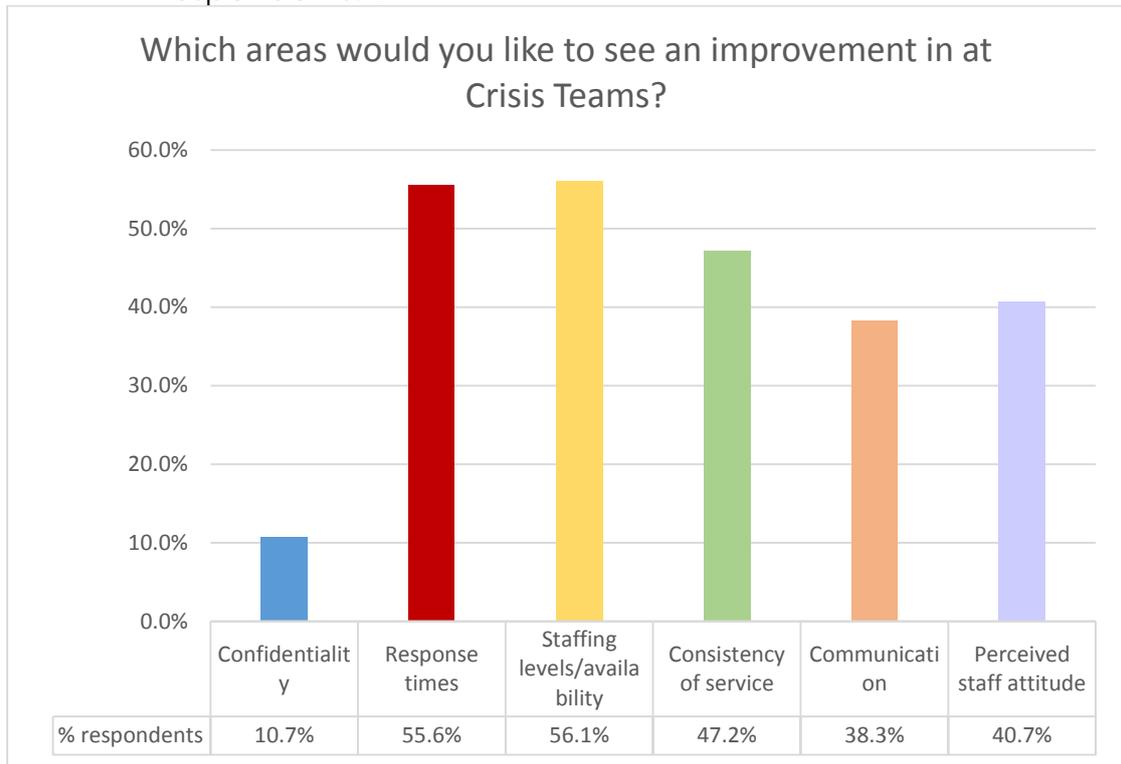
c) Community Mental Health Teams

Respondents: 223



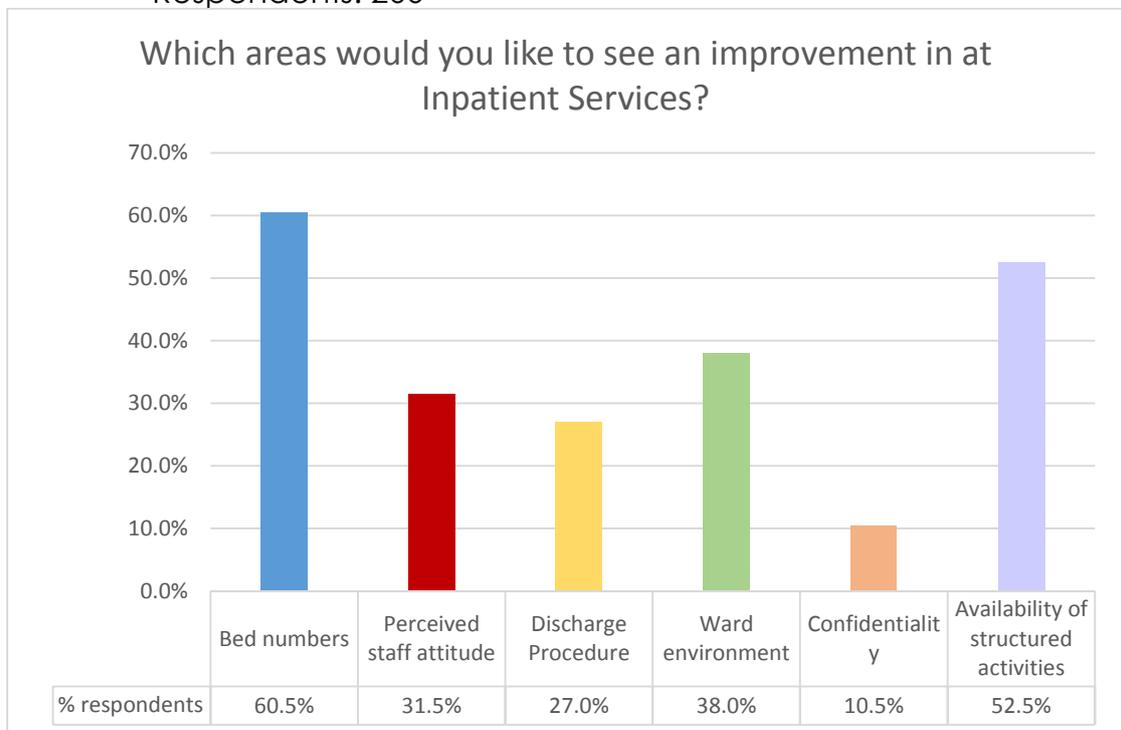
d) Crisis Teams

Respondents: 214



e) Inpatient Services (i.e. psychiatric wards/units)

Respondents: 200



4) What do you think is working well in the mental health services you have experienced?

The most frequent comment about what is working well in mental health services was praise for the dedication and care provided by the staff across all mental health services. This was followed by praise for the support provided by Day Centres and Third Sector organisations.

5) Do you have any ideas about improvements that could be made to mental health services in Cumbria?

The most frequent comment related to a call for more staffing across all community based services, closely followed by appeals for improved communication and better joint working between all services and support networks.

Other suggestions included:

- More activities and support groups in the community.
- More beds available for those in crisis, either on a psychiatric unit or at a halfway house type unit, to prevent people from going out of area or experiencing long delays in being admitted.

Engagement Meetings

The Best Life Wellbeing Network team carried out six engagement meetings in Penrith, Carlisle, Kendal, Barrow-in-Furness, Whitehaven and Workington between the 2nd – 6th June, 2014. The BLWN Team facilitated discussions around the topics brought up in the survey. Feedback from the meetings is included in appendix 3. *(Please note that feedback about services not covered by this survey i.e. CAMHS, is not included but has been passed on to the relevant party).*

Key Messages from Engagement Meetings

Perceived Access to Mental Health Services

- The obstacles in accessing mental health services identified at the engagement meetings tended to reflect those identified in the survey.
 - **Accessibility** – difficulties arising due to operating times of services; transport issues; referrals to inappropriate service causing delays.
 - **Long waiting times** for First Step, CMHT, and appointments with psychiatrists.
 - **Lack of information** about mental health services in GP surgeries.

Prioritised Service for Improvement

- The services most frequently identified by attendees at the meetings as the service they thought should be improved.
 - **Inpatient Services** – including Out of Area
 - **Community Mental Health Teams.**

GP Services

- Attendees at the meetings indicated that they would like to see the following improvements at GP Services.
 - **More information available in surgeries**
 - **Improved mental health awareness from staff.**
 - **Improved appointment availability and longer consultation times.**

First Step Services

- Attendees at the meetings indicated they would like to see the following improvements at First Step Services.
 - **Improved waiting and referral times.**
 - **Improved range of therapies and treatments.**

Community Mental Health Teams

- Attendees at the meetings would like to see the following improvements in Community Mental Health Teams.
 - **Better communication with service users and carers** – including information sharing, and responding to messages left on answer machines.
 - **Improved waiting and referral times.**

Crisis Teams

- Attendees at the meetings indicated they would like to see the following improvements in Crisis Teams.
 - **Improved staffing levels and availability.**
 - **Improved communication and perceived staff attitude.**

Inpatient Services

- Attendees at the meetings would like to see the following improvements at Inpatient Services.
 - **Improvements in bed numbers**, including more beds in “halfway house” type facilities.
 - **More specialist beds available within Cumbria.**

General Trends

- Across all services there was a general view from attendees that they would like to see improvements in waiting times and communication at services.
- Carers would like to see improvements in the sharing of information to enable them to better support the person they care for.