

Priory Hospital Church Village

Patient story

Emma* was referred to Priory Church Village, following a change in her presentation in the community. She had an existing diagnosis of autism but was presenting differently and there was a possibility of a psychotic episode. Further assessment was required to differentiate between signs of psychosis or changes relating to her autism.



Her family was very wary of an admission into hospital due to previous negative experiences, however they were actively engaged in the admission process, aiding their daughter's smooth transition from home to hospital.

On admission Emma displayed a range of behaviours including physical aggression and self-injury. Her mood fluctuated frequently from elation, overactivity, agitation and aggression to being inconsolable. As the assessment progressed it was clear that Emma had an affective disorder with some psychotic symptoms including hallucinations and delusional ideas.

Her management plan needed careful consideration due to her autism and the multidisciplinary team agreed that treatment with antipsychotic medication would initially enable them to manage Emma's symptoms, whilst delivering rehabilitative and psychological treatment.

A Positive Behaviour Support plan was also introduced, alongside staff training and detailed case

management meetings, to ensure team members fully understood the ways of working with Emma.

Emma's episodes of tearfulness and aggression began to decrease over the months and incidents markedly reduced in frequency and severity.

Emma particularly benefited from the improved staff knowledge and understanding of her perception of the environment and the use of a positive support approach.

Emma began to re-engage in activities, and self-injury was so infrequent that community leave became more regular and escorted leave was reduced to one member of staff facilitating.

It was agreed that Emma's section 3 (under the Mental Health Act 1983) should be rescinded and plans were made for her return to the community, resulting in Emma moving to a specialist community provider for autism.

Against predictions by the commissioning team, the placement requirement was reduced and the team was commended for their interventions.

*Name changed to protect identity