

## Football project helps to tackle depression

COMMUNITY psychiatric nurse Pete Sayers (pictured) has got his kit on to help men to cope with depression using the medium of football.

The It's a Goal! project, based at Macclesfield Town Football Club, targets men aged 16–35, one of the most difficult groups to engage about mental health issues.

Men sign on for sessions, known as a 'season of matches', that use football terminology to help them understand their thought processes. The project is so popular that men who benefited from it have formed a self-help 'supporters club'.

'Men often don't access services because they are put off by a clinical service,' said Mr Sayers. 'For the men there I am just Pete from the football club.'

The project is funded by the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation. More information can be found at the [www.itsagoal.org.uk](http://www.itsagoal.org.uk) website.



# NICE issues violent patient guidelines

## Seonaid Strachan-Bennett

MENTAL health nurses are expected to still be able to restrain patients in the prone position under new guidelines due to be published this week.

The long awaited guideline, *Short-term Management of Disturbed/Violent Behaviour in Psychiatric Inpatient Settings and Emergency Departments*, is expected to remain largely unchanged from NICE's second draft.

The draft proposals allowed the use of prone restraint and did not contain the three-minute maximum for this procedure that the independent inquiry into the death of black psychiatric patient David 'Rocky' Bennett has called for.

However the draft guidelines did urge restraint for the 'shortest possible time'.

The draft document also called for other measures – such as seclusion, physical intervention and rapid tranquillisation – to be used only after other strategies such as

de-escalation techniques had failed.

Other safety measures expected in the final guideline include having one team member responsible for the head and neck of any patient during restraint. This person should also take responsibility for ensuring that the patient's airway and breathing are not compromised.

The draft guideline called for all staff likely to be involved in restraint to receive training in life support, while all staff involved in rapid tranquillisation should

have pulse oximeter training.

The draft also set out pre-planning measures including an ongoing risk assessment to determine whether management of violence should be planned. This could include nurses agreeing advance directives on the management of violence with the patient that are included in care plans.

Also recommended in the draft guideline was a dedicated room on wards for reducing arousal and agitation, as well as a seclusion

room, and mandatory training for all staff involved in observing patients.

NICE's final guideline is also expected to cover management in A&E and could require every A&E department to employ at least one mental health nurse and train all staff to recognise signs of acute mental illness.

Emergency departments may also be required to have a designated room for treating people with mental health problems and a psychiatrist available within one hour.

## Nursing students turn to drink to cope with violent placements

NURSING students are turning to alcohol and smoking to combat the stress of facing violence and aggression on placements, according to research.

Paul Linsley, lecturer at the University of Nottingham, unveiled the findings at the RCN's annual European Mental Health Nursing Conference in Amsterdam.

He said all 257 students who returned a questionnaire reported having experienced some form of violence or aggression while on placement, including being hit, punched or scratched. One was held at knifepoint.

In-depth research on 18 of the students showed they played down the effects to nurses on their placements.

'Students reported as a consequence of this not only high levels of stress but as a means of coping there was an increase of drinking and smoking. They had to be seen to be coping,' said Mr Linsley.

He added the local ethics committee had initially refused permission to study students' coping mechanisms. Members thought that supernumerary status protected students from such experiences: 'It quite shocked them.'