

Hamish Rosser, 2nd Year Medicine

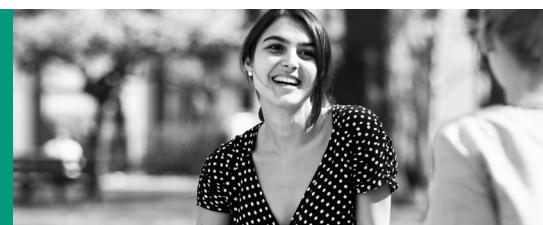
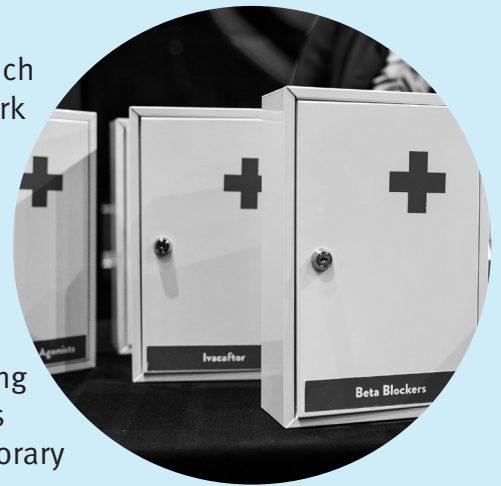
The Charity:

For 50 years, [St Mungo's](#) has been at the forefront of efforts to tackle homelessness. Each night their 17 outreach teams go out to help people sleeping rough to move away from the streets, and they provide over 2,800 people a bed and support. The Ealing branch hostel caters to clients with medium to high support needs and has a minimum stay of 3 months. Most of the adults housed by the branch suffer from substance abuse issues, often as a means to self-medicate in the face of severe mental health conditions such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and clinical depression. The hostel provides a safe space for these individuals to regain some stability in their lives and access to counselling services they may need.

The Project:

My project's aim is to strengthen links between St Mungo's Ealing branch and Ealing Hospital. Homeless people are disproportionately affected by poor mental health, respiratory and infectious disease and are often discharged before adequate housing can be arranged for them thus further exacerbating their health needs. This can make it very difficult for rough sleepers to break out of the homelessness cycle, and my Charity Insights project addresses this by increasing awareness of homeless health amongst Ealing Hospital's healthcare professionals.

As part of my project, I also visited Surrey Council Offices, which provided me the opportunity to see how local government work closely with charities to support public health initiatives. The office's public health consultants are responsible for the planning and delivery of policies and interventions that aim to influence the population's health. Taking inspiration from Surrey Council, as well as existing initiatives at Ealing Hospital, I decided to launch a poster campaign to increase awareness of homeless health in the hospital. By urging Ealing hospital staff to record the living situations for rough sleepers attending hospital, we hope to improve referral rates to temporary housing, food kitchens and advice services.



Highlights:

- Developing working relationships with the St Mungo's outreach team and gaining an insight into the challenges faced by the Ealing branch hostel.
- Joining a member of the outreach team for a night shift with the goal of maintaining and creating relationships between St Mungo's and Ealing and Southall's homeless population.
- Discussing with Ealing Hospital's designated Recovery Intervention Service Ealing (RISE) nurse how communication between the hospital and St Mungo's could be improved.
- Meeting the Head of Infectious Disease and Tropical Medicine at Ealing Hospital to understand more about the treatment of rough sleepers, such as fighting homeless tuberculosis in the borough.
- Presenting my poster campaign proposal at the weekly Acute Medical Unit multi-disciplinary team meeting, which was well received by the ward's staff.
- Conducting analysis to determine which wards were most frequently attended by Ealing's rough sleepers, which allowed me to design, print and display my posters in the Acute Medical Unit, A&E, Cardiology, Respiratory, Gastrointestinal and Infectious Disease wards.

