



## 5 BOROUGHES PARTNERSHIP NHS TRUST

# MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE USERS' INVOLVEMENT IN STAFF TRAINING

### SUMMARY

**5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (5BP)** is based in Warrington, Cheshire, and specialises in Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Community Services. The Trust set up a Service Users and Carers Presentation Skills Group in November 2010, composed of mental health service users and carers. Members of this group are given the opportunity to contribute to the Trust's strategy for future care pathways and to critique and influence comprehensive training packages, before staff commence training. Thus their role has a major impact on the learning and development of staff. The group also provide support for each other as well as influencing decisions, addressing Trust values and attitudes, and focusing on topics such as stigma and mental health awareness.

Initially set up in the Trust's Education Centre this working group comprises carers and individuals suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression and anxiety, who have firsthand, experience of being a service user at the Trust at present. Members meet for two hours every month and unlike other working groups, which are predominantly staff orientated, this group is comprised of members who expressed an interest to join after signing up for the Trust Volunteer Scheme. As a result this group continues to go from strength to strength.

### KEY OUTCOMES

- The group won the 5 Boroughs staff recognition award in 2011 for service user and carer involvement. This profiled service user and carer involvement in devising bespoke training packages and joint working.
- It runs to a 70% regular attendance rate which is credit to its members and a measure of their commitment to the Trust.
- The group are extremely vocal in their decisions and have played a major role in various meetings across the Trust with individual members becoming involved in a range of activities i.e. some have joined the Trust Council, influenced policies, volunteered to support activities on acute wards, set up an eating disorder group, helped edit the hospital magazine, became involved in the later Life forum, and Valuing Carers Group, co-delivered training and had input on the design the new building as well as sharing their experiences through poetry and other creative means.
- An example output from the group was the redesign of a training package for staff from the primary care sector, entitled 'Mental Health Awareness'. The group not only decided on topics to be included e.g. stigma and varying mental health problems, but also included their own experiences of how these diagnoses have impacted on their lives and how it can be very difficult to cope with day-to-day activities. The staff receiving the training had very little mental health experience and felt that gaining an understanding of mental health problems directly from service users was invaluable. Qualitative feedback from the staff described these sessions as relative, poignant ways of informing their future practice.
- Additionally, the group have just filmed a short DVD entitled patient or service user. This will be utilised next month on staff receiving training in First Impressions.





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## For Workforce

- Staff feedback from evaluations regarding service user input, has been extremely positive. Staff state that this has added immense value to their training.
- Group members co-teach on the 'First Impressions' course which enables staff to have insight into the service users' perspective and helps to improve service delivery.

## For Service Users/Carers

- This project has enabled selected service users and carers to have the opportunity to become actively involved in key issues within the Trust and has promoted a sense of worth and inclusion.
- All group members shared their mental health journey with the others and found this a very powerful and essential part of being a member, as it has allowed them to bond as a group.
- One of the members stated she sees the group as "therapy" for herself and a vital component in her recovery mental health journey.
- It has encompassed all elements of expected service user participation and continues to promote involvement in a number of forums - ranging from health promotion to simply ensuring that the service users' "voice" is clearly heard and represented.

## BACKGROUND

The 5 Boroughs Partnership Trust was formed in 2002 and serves a population of approximately one million people. It has 3,500 staff employed across, Warrington, Halton, Wigan & Leigh and St Helens & Knowsley Boroughs. Geographically, like most mental health Trusts its catchment area is spread over a large area, including Cheshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester - with its corporate site based at Hollins Park Hospital.

## KEY AIMS

- Create a group of service users and carers who want to influence staff practice in their clinical fields by impacting on the training packages they receive.
- Create a climate in which service users feel confident to speak up regarding any issues they feel strongly about and influence best practice within the Trust.
- Enable service users and carers to become actively involved in key issues within 5BP, which will promote a sense of worth and inclusion.
- Assist service users and carers to become confident in presenting in front of others, through a process of exercises in a safe and secure environment where they can express themselves.

## HOW IT WORKS

There are currently 342 volunteers registered with the Trust Volunteer Scheme, who receive information regarding various projects. Many of these volunteers take part in groups including art projects, the Forensic Service Users and Carers Forum, catering focus groups and member engagement groups as well as the Personality Disorder Hub group, which involves service users in staff training. However there were no opportunities for those service users and carers, who were diagnosed with other types of mental health problems to seek training in co-presenting, and up until this point staff training packages were not critiqued by service users. Only a handful of volunteers in the past had taken part in staff training but without any formal training.

Therefore, in November 2010, the Presentation skills group for service Users and carers was formed to meet this deficit. All the members are very passionate about the projects they are involved in. Nominations came from other service users and carers who were also part of the Trust Volunteer Scheme.

A member of the lecturing team, who is a Registered Mental Nurse (RMN) expressed a keen interest in setting up this group and is now the sole staff member who provides email and telephone support. If additional support is required the equality and diversity team provide this.

The group meet every month for a two hour session at the Education Centre at Hollins Park House. Through the group they are also all involved in other projects, which commit them to ad hoc meetings at various 5BP locations. The group decides on a project plan for the next 6-12 months and they also decide when to open the group up to new members and when to close it.



## RESOURCES

The Equality and Diversity department support the group by providing refreshments at sessions and as each member of the group is also a member of the Trust Volunteer Scheme they are entitled to expenses for travelling and money for their time. However many of the group members do not re-claim this.

The project leads has weekly contact with several of the group members, and she gives additional support to those who ask for it. Her main method of offering encouragement and support is via email, which all of the group have access to, but if an individual wants to phone this is also encouraged if needed.





# GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY



North West

## KEY CHALLENGES

- The group had never met before or worked on joint projects. However, members worked together from the first session to overcome their fears and anxieties and to agree on the aims and objectives of the group.
- Group members are all currently under the care and treatment of 5BP and have varying degrees of mental health problems, which they are being treated for, preventing them from accessing full time employment. Therefore their attendance at groups may be irregular due to becoming unwell, or if they've had a change in medication, or other issues pop up. It is difficult to mitigate against this. However the group has had significantly high attendance rates despite this challenge, due to the project lead keeping in touch with members between sessions and the E&D team also providing support. This is invaluable as members don't feel that they are on their own and therefore feel less stressed.

## KEY LEARNING

- A commitment has been made to reduce stigma and inequality and to work with service users across the Trust to provide high quality, effective care. Service users in the group want to ensure this is happening and are therefore highly engaged.

## NEXT STEPS

- The group will be reviewed again in November 2013 and will continue to be consulted on new training packages devised for courses at the Education Centre.
- Two members have played a key part in devising training for the Acute Care Pathways Teams on Recovery and will continue to play a pivotal part, as they will be involved in delivering this package alongside the course Lead in the next few weeks.

- The group are currently writing a play which will be filmed and utilised in the First Impressions Course to link to Values and Attitudes, which they feel will portray a powerful message.
- To ensure sustainability the Trust will also continue to recruit new members, which will help support service delivery in an ever-changing NHS.

## SUPPORTING MATERIAL

**Appendix 1** – Service User Poetry

**Appendix 2** – Links to Art and Project work

**Appendix 3** –Info on 5BP Volunteer scheme

## CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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## FURTHER LINKS

The Sainsbury Centre For Mental Health – responsible for mental health service user movement [www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/](http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/)

Psychminded – website with plethora of information around common mental health issues with q & a section for service users – [www.psychminded.co.uk/](http://www.psychminded.co.uk/)

Rethink – Organisation which offers valuable point of contact / information and support for people living with mental health issues – [www.rethink.org/](http://www.rethink.org/)

Patient.co.uk – A website dedicated to offering support network information to patients in general and contains detailed information around mental health issues – [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

Department of Health (2005). Creating a patient –Led NHS. London : Department of Health.

