

JUNE 2010

Bedfordshire **LINK UP**

Bulletin
ISSUE 20

Bedfordshire Local Involvement Network (LINK) in partnership with Central Beds and SEPT.

Notes of Mental Health Discussion Day held on Wednesday, 26 May 2010 at Chalgrave Memorial Hall, Tebworth, Bedfordshire.

Below is the feedback from the interactive sessions and questions from participants to panel members on the day.

Participants addressed the following areas:

1. **What key priorities and issues should stakeholders focus on?**
2. **What do Mental Health services mean for you and what needs to be done differently?**

How can we better understand the needs of service users and communicate with them?

In the main, discussions focussed on:

- **Carers**
- **Users of Mental Health Service**
- **GPs**
- **Reducing the stigma**
- **Accessibility**
- **Communicating and Listening**
- **Housing**
- **The Role of others**
- **Terminology**



Carers

- Users and Carers needs are very different
- There is a lot of onus placed on carers; they often end up as the co-ordinator with little support
- Carers needs should be considered
- Little information given to carers
- Carers want the person/people they care for sorted out first
- Some support not available – not known about or easily accessible
- Identify carers and give them a voice and to ensure they do not become ill/sick during their time as carers
- More support/recognition and a voice for the carer and their family network

Bedfordshire Local Involvement Network

Supported by Voluntary Action Luton. 15 New Bedford Road. Luton. Beds. LU1 1SA. Tel: 01582 733418 and speak to a member of the LINK Support Team. www.bedfordshirelink.org.uk

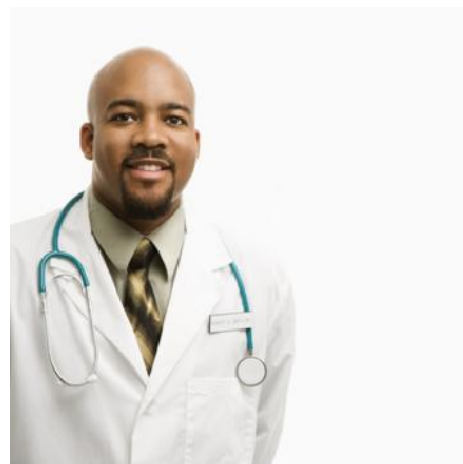
- Better communication with carers regarding their entitlement to a carers assessment
- Care plan is essential – ensuring that carers are involved in the needs of the ‘cared for’/ patient
- Crisis number that carers/service user/members of the public can call
- Ensure that carer is responsible for administering whatever care plan has been put into place
- More thought given to transition from child to adult – parents looking after children who are now adults with mental health illness

Users of Mental Health Services

- What is a mental health issue – issues now different to 30 or 40 years ago
- Service should not dictate to service user
- Don't pay lip service
- Comprehensive care plans written, but often not followed through!
- Listen to people in the community about what they want, what do the carers want, what do service users want. Find out the issues!
- Monitoring and support of those that are not acutely ill but need checking on – early intervention
- Timely intervention essential from the right personnel
- What is considered a mental health issue in one culture is different in another
- It is time to ensure that the provision is shaped by the public and users
- Support services needed outside 9 – 5pm

GPs

- Training for GPs essential
- More holistic approach needed
- Improving access to Psychological therapies (IAPT)
- GPs to also focus on mental health issues
- Information sharing with service users
- Liaison services between mental health services and GP; providing services in GP surgeries
- Consider needs of carers
- Are GPs aware of mental health issues and services?
- Development of patient panels in GP surgery



Reducing the stigma

- Mental health should not define you
- Too many labels which lead to prejudice and creates barriers
- More money should be spent to reduce stigma
- Don't pigeon-hole people – see them as a whole
- Appropriate intervention at the right time
- Not enough resources
- Personalised budgets not easy to understand and may not always work

Accessibility

- Access in rural environment; look at the needs of service users in each geographical area
- Monies to be allocated according to mental health need, rather than population size
- Lack of commissioning services for Aspergers – gap in service provision
- Raise awareness of services available
- Joining up of services
- Consistent approach, ensuring there are pathways into care
- Transport – criteria for access/eligibility for patient transport

- More help for children with special needs – study done by PPI Forum in 2006 – lack of therapy and support still not there
- Therapies useful – more should be available/ accessible

Communication / Listening

- Services need to be proactive in communicating, assisting stakeholders to interpret and manage information
- Clear and simple information
- Listening and acting on information – feedback and responding to feedback
- Use of peer support
- Building relationships
- Trying to understand and communicate well
- Sharing information
- Co-operation between different organisations
- Listen! Be heard, doing something about it
- Service providers need to be well informed of services provided
- Ensuring service users know where to access information, ie. Service directory for Bedfordshire
- Using existing information system ie. Telephone directory, internet pages



Housing

- Everyone entitled to suitable housing.
- Supported living
- Housing is a priority. Improved housing will improve well-being and health which in turn improves a person's quality of life
- Aftercare important



The Role of others

- Role of volunteers and charities important
- Role of LINKs
- Role of voluntary organisations in influencing statutory organisations.
- Peer support
- Encourage and empower service users to self-manage their care
- Monies to be allocated according to need – more resources into these services
- Joining up services
- Self-management, Expert Patients Programme set up. "Caring in Confidence" Course now running
- Sharing the weight.

Terminology

- Often inappropriate with clinical abbreviations and jargon particularly in policy documents
- Simple terms and plain English needed

This feedback will be circulated to all those who plan and deliver mental health services in Central Bedfordshire and to all the participants who attended the event on 26 May 2010.

Thank you for your contribution to the event.

CJ Bonser/4 June 2010

What's on in the LINK?

The LINK team is busy on your behalf, representing the people of Central Beds and promoting the good work that is going on to support NHS Health and Social Care in the county.

During the next few months we will be promoting Beds LINK and look forward to meeting some of you at these events.

Tuesday 22nd June 2010

Beds LINK Board Meeting

Barton Village Hall

1030 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.

Friday 2nd July 2010

Mental Health & Learning Difficulties Working Group Meeting

Stocksfield Room

Rufus centre, Flitwick

10.00 a.m.—12.00 pm

Wednesday 14th July 2010

LINK promotion outside ASDA Biggleswade

Volunteers welcome

10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

Come along to this promotion and find out about the work of the LINK

Thursday 15th July 2010

Primary Care Working Group Meeting

Stocksfield Room

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

10.30 a.m. —1.30 p.m.

New members welcome

Tuesday 16th July

Acute Services Working Group Meeting

Stocksfield Room

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

Saturday 31st July

Linslade Canal Festival

11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Games for children and promotion of Beds LINK working programmes for Social Care, Mental Health & Learning difficulties, Primary Care and Acute Care and Ambulance Users Group

If you would like any more information about the above meetings or events, please call

BEDFORDSHIRE LINK SUPPORT TEAM on

Tel: 01582 733418

Or email

Beds-links@valuton.org.uk