



Appendix A

Day Opportunities Strategy
Mental Health

Consultation Process & Feedback Report

April 2011

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Executive summary – key messages



1. Service users

- It is a place to come and meet others who have similar problems
- It keeps me well

2. Carers

- Day services provide respite and support for carers too
- A base should be kept open as not all will be able to move onto community
- African & Caribbean and Asian communities benefit from having a service specific to their community as language and stigma can be issues
- Two workers will not be able to meet the demand

3. Staff and Community Services

- It is a bridge between acute services and the community
- There are not enough community resources out there
- Self directed support needs to be more established
- Direct payments/ personal budgets will not meet everyone's needs
- Day services work with wider community to reduce stigma

Introduction



- This report captures the responses received from service users, carers and staff to the refreshed Day Opportunities Strategy's (to include mental health services) and its plans to transform the day service provision for mental health (Community Networks Service)..
- In the refreshed Day Opportunities Strategy, Community Care proposes to decommission buildings-based services and to support people to access more mainstream and community-based activities in order to encourage greater independence, choice and control.
- The proposed change to the Community Networks Service is to replace the current service with two new Community Development Worker Posts (CDWs). These two workers will provide signposting and support service users to enable them to access local community resources.
- A series of consultation events were held between 22nd of February and the 25th of April at a variety of Council venues. This included the three sites where Community Networks are currently based. See Appendix 1 for summary list of consultation events.
- Representatives from Brent Council and Brent Mental Health Services management team were present at all of the events.

The Day Opportunities Strategy



- Brent Council wants to make it easy for vulnerable people to take part in more varied activities so that they can have more of a say in how they work, learn, practice their faith and enjoy leisure and social activities in their local community.
- The council believes that people who have a social care need have the right to lead their lives like everybody else, with the same opportunities and responsibilities, and to be treated with the same dignity and respect.
- Brent's Adult Social Care Day opportunities strategy has been refreshed to include Mental Health. It presents an overall vision for day services for people with Mental health needs.
- This consultation is a discussion with day service users, carers and staff on the council's proposal to transform the day service (Community Networks) it provides in partnership with Mental Health. The council wants to make sure that the day services meet the needs of service users, now and in the future.
- The proposal reflects national policy, which says that services for vulnerable people should be tailored to their individual needs and based in the community, rather than in day centres and similar buildings.
- These services will be delivered by the same organisations that everyone else uses and people can pay for them using their personal budgets. Personal budgets are paid to service users and their carers.

The Day Opportunities Strategy contd.

- Experience in other parts of the UK shows that this will improve services by promoting choice, control and independence. It also helps to make services more financially sustainable for the future as public spending becomes more tightly controlled.
- The current day centre services will need to change because they are delivered from and in specific buildings rather than in the community. This offers little choice for individual users or carers.
- To achieve this change, Brent Council intends to:
 - Improve access to colleges, employment services, leisure activities and other services as well as commissioning new ones
 - Engage and involve users, carers and staff in everything we do.

Consultation Process

- Eight consultation events were held, each for approximately 2 hours, with service users carers and or staff to hear their views on and concerns about the proposed service re-design outlined in the Day Opportunities Strategy.
- At each event there was a **presentation** of the proposed plans for by Alison Elliott. This was followed by a **facilitated discussion** on what was being proposed.
- The facilitators asked service users, carers and staff to express their views at the session and also answered any queries.
- All attendees were given the details of a designated lead for collating the feedback should they wish to submit verbal or written feedback outside consultation sessions.
- Copies of the Day Opportunities Strategy were available at the events.
- Service user, carers and staff responses were **captured** by scribes.
- In addition to translators, **advocates** were present to assist service users in expressing their views at some of the events.
- All of the feedback has been collated into this summary document. Please see Appendix 2 for a summary of all items of feedback received.
- Key themes have been pulled out and collated into the executive summary, those specific to services user, carers and staff. A more detailed summary of all feedback follows on from this.

1. Service users feedback

Key themes

- It is a place to come and meet others who have similar problems
- I would be lonely and stuck at home if I did not have this place to come to
- It keeps me well
- I get practical support like benefits advice and direct payments
- It is on my doorstep and with my own kind of people

2. Carers feedback

Key themes

- Day services provide respite and support
- Carers have needs too. These will be negatively affected if the service is closed
- A base should be kept open as not all will be able to move onto community. There is a quartile who need more intensive support.
- African & Caribbean and Asian communities benefit from having a service specific to their community as language and stigma can be issues.
- Current staffing levels are not enough as it is. So how will two workers be able to meet the demand?
- Is this really cost effective? People will relapse and this will cost more

3. Staff & Community Groups feedback

Key themes

- It is a bridge between acute services and the community.
- Two staff not enough as service users need intensive support given complexity of their needs.
- Need skilled staff like employment specialists and benefits advisors
- There are not enough community resources out there to replace Day services . Community services cannot do what CNS does. They are also being cut
- Self directed support needs to be more established to support this proposed change.
- Direct payments/ personal budgets will not meet everyone's needs
- There is still a lot of stigma in wider community. Day services work with agencies to reduce this

Consultation event for service users & carers



22.02.11

Key themes:

- Speed of Change – The changes proposed are happening too quickly in the context of the many other health and social care changes.
- Respite - Day services provide respite for service users and carers. This will be lost if the proposal goes ahead.
- Most vulnerable - A certain percentage of service users will be able to move onto the community. However, there is a core group too vulnerable for what is proposed. This group needs a base.
- Lack of alternatives - Where will people buy services from if Community Networks is decommissioned as many local resources are being cut?
- Relationships – There is a need for continuity of staff and services as service users have difficulty forming relationships.

Consultation event for staff



22.02.11

Key themes:

- Cost effectiveness – The savings generated by proposal will not be cost effective as it will cost more for council in the end as the impact is felt by wider community.
- Capacity - Two Community Development Workers is not enough to deal with the numbers.
- Gap in Services – There is a need for something in between for transition from acute inpatient to community Mental Health Services. Few organisations and or community facilities are capable or equipped to provide this.
- Carers – A reduction in service will have a negative Impact on carers and families and will increase pressure on families.
- Culturally sensitive provision -There is a need for locally based and culturally sensitive services.

Consultation event for service users & carers

Brent
one council

18.03.11

Key themes:

- Service users were not happy with the proposal. They need this service as people are vulnerable
- My son has not been seen for months by community services so losing this will make situation even worse
- People will be more isolated at home and then get depressed
- The service is the main route for people to access things like colleges
- The service provides support and respite for carers
- The service provides support and security for service users
- Signposting is not effective nor enough
- The motivation given by Community Networks is very much needed
- The community offers more for 60 plus adults
- Service users do not want to lose culture specific services. They are the only ones for mental health

Consultation event for service users & carers



02.04.11

Key themes:

- The numbers using this service show how important the service is. Brent has a high incidence of need and this will not reduce
- This is the last community place in the local area for the Gujarati community
- Community development workers are not enough. We need a base
- The proposal is not really saving money as Kingsbury Manor does not cost a lot to run. Has a cost benefit analysis being done? Or have other avenues of funding been explored?
- Not confident that Community development workers will have skills and knowledge needed to work with our relatives
- Some people are incapable of going out into community. They need a place to come to
- You need to provide more for carers. If Kingsbury Manor closes it will place an extra burden on them
- Direct payments may not pay for what is needed
- What services are there out there like Kingsbury manor for our relatives. We need a directory

Consultation event for service users & carers



02.04.11

Key themes:

- It provides carers with safety and support
- People will break down without outlet and hospital admissions will increase. These types of services are much cheaper than hospitals
- Without it I will fall sick again
- This is the only mental health centre for black people in Harlesden
- It is good to have something like this on the doorstep. Mixing with other cultures does not work as it creates clashes
- What evidence is there that this proposed change is more effective? Has there been any research done?
- What services are there out there in the community?

Consultation event for service users & carers



04.04.11

Key themes:

- The service helps me meet other with same problems. It is reassuring that I am not alone
- It keeps my daughter safe and reduces pressures on me
- I need a base as otherwise I have no where to go to meet with others. This is the only support I have
- Using transport can be an difficult for me so this suits me as in my local area
- Could we share a building with others?
- I need a place like this as it motivates me and helps build up my courage. There are also people available to advise me
- Lots of community activities are being cut so there is less to do in community
- When people come out of hospital there is no where to go if this is gone
- Who will help me with my direct payments and benefits?
- Two staff is not enough, we need a place like this

Consultation event for service users & carers

Brent **one** council

12.04.11

Key themes:

- If service users have no where to go carers will be overwhelmed
- Concerns were raised about the skills and abilities of the new workers being proposed
- We need a base – could we share services across boroughs?
- Carers will get burnt out. Community Networks provides a service not just for service users but also for carers
- Action is needed to change the stigma and society

Consultation event for service users & carers



25.04.11

Key themes:

- The bottom quarter of client group need more hand holding. They will not be able to access mainstream activities
- Carers cannot cope without community networks. They will need help if it is closed
- It is important not to forget people isolated at home – the forgotten ones
- There will be more demand on services in the future. Has this being factored in?
- Community networks is not valued by the Council
- There is a stigma in the community towards our relatives
- Employment posts are needed rather than community development posts

Feedback from Mr B.
Chair of Kingsbury Carers Group
(23.02.11 & 29.04.11)



Key Themes:-

- Consideration needs to be given to those in lower quartile because there are no facilities for them in the community.
- There is a need for a specific small community networks unit for five days a week that is needs led and culturally sensitive
- Due to the stigma community groups do not want to work with this group
- The financial burden needs to be spread evenly amongst community and not targeted at most vulnerable in society
- Compromise – support the most needy by combining services
- BACES is now going to charge for all disabled and learning difficulties courses used by service users. This needs to be highlighted as an additional cost

Feedback from Jane Rennison

Lead for OT & Social Inclusion for CNWL NHS Trust

(16.03.11)



Key Themes:-

- Disappointed as the proposal effectively removes service
- The proposal underpins recovery and social inclusion but falls short of support for service users to access and sustain engagement with the local community
- The day service also builds relationships and influences mainstream providers. Not enough to point in their direction
- Qualitative work is not possible with just two workers
- The proposal reduces the opportunity to sustain specialist functions i.e. employment

Feedback from Rita Ram
Manager Asian Community Networks Team
(17.03.11)



Key Themes:-

- All Brent Council employees, under Mental Health, should be considered as part of this consultation. Posts in other teams are similar in role and grade to community network workers

Feedback from Brent Employment Specialist Staff (26.03.11)

Key Themes:-

- Service users struggle to access and sustain paid employment. 50% of current service users in paid employment were supported by Employment specialists
- No employment specialist posts will lower the number of service users gaining paid employment
- These posts raise expectations and hope amongst other staff
- The loss of this specialist role will impact negatively on relationship between Mental Health Services and mainstream community

Feedback from Ms. VL Service User (31.03.11)



Key Themes:-

- The day service is extremely beneficial for service users who have just come out of hospital
- It helped me massively with reintegration back into community after being hospitalised
- I feel service users will struggle with transition without this service

Feedback from Mr. J RA
Service User
(13.04.11)



Key Themes:-

- Staff at community networks have been of great help to me. Making my illness more bearable
- I want to remind you that this is a front line service for people with chronic illnesses
- Please downsize and not suppress Community Networks

Feedback from Ms. B, Service User

(13.04.11)



Key Themes:-

- Community networks have been a lifeline
- They have kept me well and motivated over the years
- Prior to attending I was at home for 10 years with no real outside contact and no proper Christmases and holidays
- I have made countless friends
- It provides one to one practical support
- Please think about the vulnerable. This is meant to be about inclusion but a move would exclude

Feedback from Brent User Group BU (18.04.11)

Key Themes:-

- Community networks has demonstrated considerable success in enabling individuals to access and use direct payment
- Intensive support is needed to support people in their recovery. Many have experienced low expectations and length periods in services
- People with mental health needs often experience social care provision as most helpful and practical aspect of their support
- Day service is a bridge between acute services and move towards recovery
- Brent does not have a robust self directed support system. This will make it difficult to access direct payments and personal budgets
- There is a lack of community and voluntary sector provision. This is also being affected by cuts
- Two staff is not enough
- There is a misunderstanding about use of direct payments to buy community services.
- A base provides practical support, somewhere to go for emotional support, information and signposting and contact with familiar/ similar people

Feedback from Sybil Brown

Community Networks Benefits Advisor

(19.04.11)



Key Themes:-

- 55 service users seen by benefits advisor over last 9 months. Income maximisation for this group is approximately £35k
- Work flexibly i.e. meet with them in their homes
- If monetary issues in order for service users this can lead to stability in their lives which in turn support families and council
- Without a welfare officer/benefits advisor service users miss out on full entitlement to state benefits. Ongoing changes in the system will lead to more demand for this type of support

Feedback from Judy Jones

Lead Social worker for Brent Mental Health

(28.04.11)



Key Themes:-

- Many users are too vulnerable to be 'directed ' into mainstream services
- People need support otherwise they become isolated, withdrawn and unwell
- Families get concerned and feel the burden of care is all on them
- Care coordinators would not be able to provide this support
- I do not think the community development workers are sufficiently user/user outcome focused .The focus is more on networks
- Self directed support is not yet sufficiently developed by staff nor in systems to enable access to funding
- Alternative culturally accepting activities would need to be in place if community networks, unique services, were to go
- Brokerage also needs to be in place

Feedback from Geoff Smith, Loud and Clear (email)

- This change could be ideal for those who are ready to take on roles and responsibilities by engaging with their communities but, for others, it might be more difficult.
- Centre based sessions can operate as springboards into the wider community and enable those more vulnerable individuals to develop their skills and gain confidence in a safe, supported environment.
- The prospect of accessing mainstream services could be a daunting one for some service users, especially to begin with. It is likely that on-going, regular support for the individual will be vital during these initial stages and beyond.
- It is also hard to envisage how one to one support can be maintained to an effective level given that the plan is to reduce a current staff compliment from twenty four to two.
- Will Community Mental Health Teams be offering more support via this process and, if so, do they have the current capacity to manage such a change? Are the plans to commission new services to support people to access mainstream and community services of significance in this instance?
- To ensure success, it is likely that time will be needed to invest in networking with and accessing resources from new agencies. Will this work commitment have implications for the CDW's remit and their availability for clients during the initial stages of this process?