

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

DAY OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY
Mental Health

Margo Fallon

18.05.11

Title of service being assessed

Community Networks

Department and Section

Mental Health

Impact Needs/Requirement Assessments

1. *What is the name of the service/policy/procedure/project etc to be assessed?*

This document details the Equality Impact Assessment for proposed changes to Community Networks/day services directly provided by the Brent Mental Health Service in partnership with (under section 75 agreement) with Housing and Community Care Department of London Borough of Brent for people. This Strategy is part of the wider Adult Social Care transformation of Day Services for all care groups across Brent Borough. The Strategy has been refreshed to include Mental Health. The aim of this report is to outline how the proposed changes will impact on day service users taking into account their race, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation, age and level of disabilities. The proposed changes cover 3 directly provided day services:

- African & Caribbean Team - Based in Design Works in Harlesden
- Asian Team - Based in Kingsbury Manor in Kingsbury
- Kilburn Team - Based in Brondesbury Road in Kilburn

2. *Briefly describe the aim of the service/policy etc? What needs or duties is it designed to meet? How does it differ from an existing services/policies etc in this area?*

Brent Council Adult Social Care will enable vulnerable people to access more diverse community-based day activities so that they can choose more independently how they work learn and enjoy leisure and social activities.

Brent Council Adult Social Care 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 transformation programme is designed to make this a reality for the people of Brent. This strategy presents an overarching vision for people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, severe and enduring mental health problems and vulnerable older people.

Vision

National policy and local strategy advocate that services for vulnerable people should be personalised and community-based thereby promoting service user choice and control to help develop independence, and to build skills. The proposed new service model is consistent with this policy and will help to deliver improved outcomes for local vulnerable people by increasing their participation in mainstream and community-based services.

Benefits

Many services are currently delivered as a 'one size fits all', building-based model. These will need to change to ensure that a more flexible range of services are available to achieve outcomes for users and carers. These services will be delivered in the community as appropriate by a range of organisations and professionals, which individuals can access by using their personal budgets. This will deliver three core benefits: service quality improvements, financial sustainability as well as national and local policy alignment.

Drivers for change

Day opportunity services have been changing for the last 20 years. These changes have regularly been given fresh impetus by initiatives such as Direct Payments and *Putting People First*. However, the majority of day opportunity services in Brent are still provided by statutory bodies and some in the style of traditional building-based services. This means that day opportunity services are still a barrier to achieving genuine choice and control for people in Brent. Further s149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that public authorities have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations and that this must form an integral part of the decision making process. The move away from specific building based services designed to meet the needs of specific disabilities or for those from specific ethnic backgrounds should enhance the local authority's ability to fulfil this duty.

Service user context

National and local consultation has shown that two significant changes are needed to improve outcomes for service users and carers and give people genuine choice and control. Firstly, people need a wider range of options to choose from and these options must include both specialist (sometimes building-based) and mainstream (in and with the community) services. Secondly, in order to create this choice, Councils need to focus more on commissioning and developing new services in the community and less on delivering traditional building-based services themselves.

Because these services are focused on special buildings and are often block contracted, they make it more difficult for people to make individual choices about what support and services would best meet their own need.

Local authority context

Brent Council Adult Social Care is committed, as part of the Adult Social Care Transformation, to providing the day opportunity services people need.

Mental Health services in Brent have already begun the journey away from a building-based model and now successfully provide a socially inclusive 'community network' service. Users mostly access mainstream services in the community with some activities, such as independent living skills, being provided in a centrally-located rented space. This is a big change from the previous building-based institutionalised model, and user satisfaction has improved significantly through participating in mainstream services, ranging from yoga to college courses.

The outcomes from the Day Opportunities Strategy Consultation for Mental Health are attached to this document as appendix 3 consultation and process and feedback report.

3. Are the aims consistent with the council's Comprehensive Equality Policy?

Central to the work of the Community Networks Service is the concept of dignity, respect, equality and fairness and the backbone of this work is the right to independence, choice and control for people with a serious mental health.

These concepts and the aims of the draft Day Opportunities Strategy fulfil the Council's Action Plan for disability and Race Equality. The promotion of greater personal choice and independence, employment and well-being is in line with the Council's policy.

4. Is there any evidence to suggest that this could affect some groups of people? Is there an adverse impact around race/gender/disability/faith/sexual/orientation/age/health etc? What are the reasons for this adverse impact?

There is no evidence to suggest that there will be an adverse impact in terms of race/gender/disability/faith/sexual orientation/age or health because the approach is focused on addressing people's individual needs specifically. The consultation responses have identified concerns that those with a disability or from BME backgrounds may be adversely affected if the recommended option is accepted as it will involve the closure of one day centre service that currently caters specifically for mental health client with an Asian background and the closure of an administrative base for another services that supports BMHS clients from an afro- Caribbean background. Day centre provision will be available at an alternative site and alternative community based provision will be identified by CDWs with a specific remit to assist those with mental health conditions from BME backgrounds so to ensure services are tailored to these needs and minimise any impact that the move away from traditional building based provision may create. National evidence suggests that this approach has the capacity to bring significant improvements to people's quality of life by moving away from a limited selection of inflexible services to a diverse range of services and support that meet individual needs.

However, there will be a range of barriers that will need to be specifically addressed in the transition through strategic commissioning and effective implementation of the new service which includes shaping the market of providers and understanding what is currently out there. Below is a summary of the issues that have been raised to date as part of the consultation:

- Respite - Day services provide respite for service users and carers. This will be lost if proposal goes ahead. Carers in particular will be negatively affected by this if their needs are not taken into consideration

- Most vulnerable - A percentage of service users will be able to move onto the community with support. However there is a core group too vulnerable for what is being proposed. This group will continue to need more intensive support. They are at risk of being isolated at home and may become unwell.
- Lack of alternatives – concern that there are not sufficient alternatives in the community once community networks gone. Many local resources being equally reduced due to national downturn in finances so options available for service users diminishing.
- Relationships – continuity of staff and services is important as service users have difficulty forming relationships. This need will not be met by accessing a variety of mainstream community services
 - Cost effectiveness - Savings generated by proposal are not felt to be cost effective. Concern raised by all groups that it will cost more for council ultimately as impact of supporting service users will need to be picked elsewhere in health and social system. As anxiety expressed that service users will break down more quickly in the community without this intensive support
- Capacity - Two Community Development Workers is not enough to deal with numbers of service users requiring support with their mental health needs. More workers are needed
- Gap in Services – there is a need for some service to support people with transition from acute inpatient to the community. Few organisations and or community facilities are capable or equipped to provide this. Staff in the wider community do not have the relevant skills to deal with mental health needs
- Carers - Reduction in service will have a negative Impact on carers and families and will increase pressure on families. Carers will suffer i.e. no respite, loss of employment and lack of support
- Culturally sensitive provision -There is a need for locally based and culturally sensitive services. Two groups have been identified as needing local culturally sensitive services – Asian community and African and Caribbean Communities

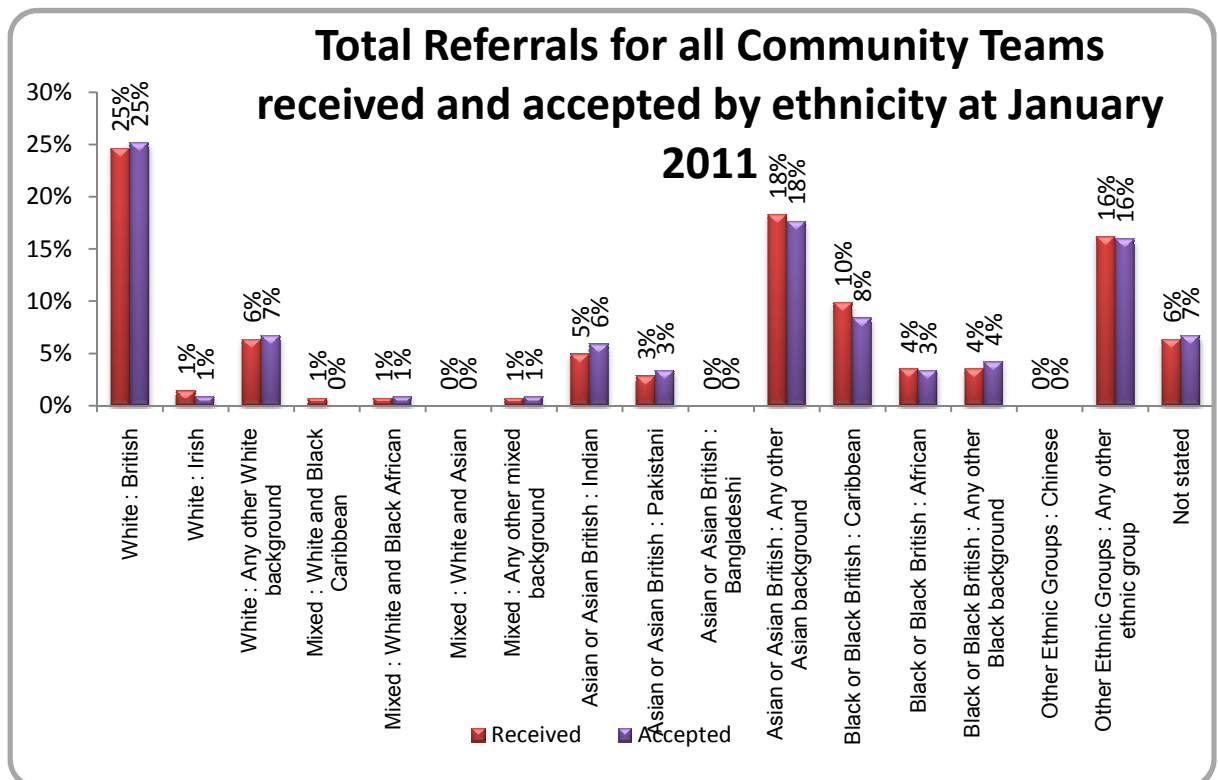
These issues will need to be tackled at three levels:

- *Social care commissioning* - identifying suitable community based solutions and working with those providers to ensure service users are supported and provided with day opportunities in their local community
- *Service redesign* - effective implementation of a suitable service to address some of the issues raised above.
- *Individual care and support planning* – enable people to actively participate in their own support planning or progress. Using self directed support Including direct payments and individual budgets

5. Please describe the evidence you have used to make your judgement. What existing data for example (qualitative or quantitative) have you used to form your judgement? Please supply us with the evidence you used to make your judgement separately (by race, gender and disability etc).

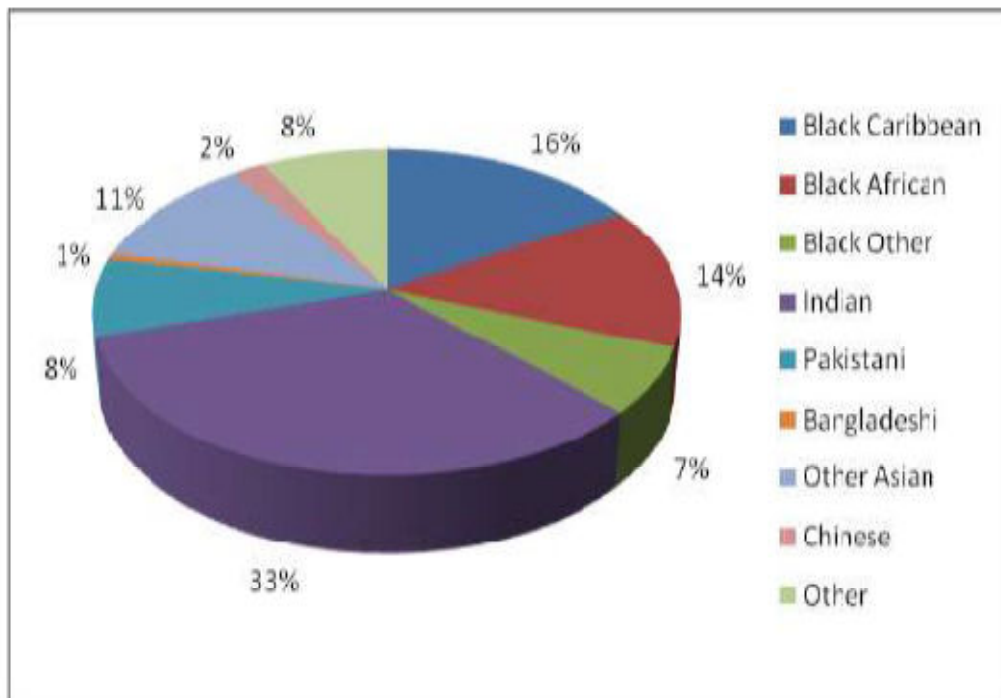
The evidence we have used to inform our judgements are the consultation, and previous service reviews and redesigns. The detail of the consultation is set out in the next section.

Current usage of Brent Mental Health Services Community based services



Source: Brent Mental Health Services

Profile of Brent’s Black and Minority Ethnic Population



Source: Brent Borough Profile updated January 2011

Information from previous reviews suggests a range of issues need to be addressed:

- Many service users have said that they want to try new things in the community. Some want to leave the mental health services completely whilst others would like to have a combination of community based opportunities and mental health provided day activities
- Some people from the Asian community would prefer a more cultural specific day centre environment. This in the main is because of language issues, sensitivity to culture and their desire to practice their faith together with other people from their own community

6. Are there any unmet needs/requirements that can be identified that affect specific groups? (Please refer to provisions of Disability Discrimination Act and the regulations on sexual orientation and faith if applicable)

Evidence from previous assessment and the consultation suggests a range of unmet needs/requirements:

- Some community provision is not geared up to support people with mental health needs e.g. they do not have the skills or understanding to deal with people with mental health needs.
- some people have difficulty in accessing college buildings and local colleges

- People can experience stigma in the local community and within their local BME communities

Again, individual reassessments and support planning for service users will identify any unmet need and requirements, and the process has been designed to record and address these issues wherever possible.

Discussions have been held between Southside Partnership (providers of 4 Community Development Workers (CDW) plus 1.5 CDW trainees in the borough) and Central and North West London Trust on developing access to Black and Minority Ethnic communities to improve access to culturally appropriate support and social inclusion. This will build on community links created by the Trust work as a part of the DH Delivering Race Equality Action Plan. This will support the development of more differentiated resources for people from black and ethnic minorities to include access to faith groups and responding to the specific issues within communities such as young South Asian people with mental health support needs. The more differentiated response will look to develop better links to key community groups covering areas not previously well served by existing day care, for example the Somali community and young Black men with a criminal and mental health history. Southside, Brent Council and CNWL will develop a joint work plan to support this development.

7. *Have you consulted externally as part of your assessment? Who have you consulted? What methods did you use? And what have you done with the results? How do you intend to use the information gathered as part of the consultation?*

There has been a comprehensive consultation process on the Day Opportunities Strategy (refreshed to include Mental Health) and the proposed changes to Community Networks.

Brent Council and Brent Mental Health staff spent approximately 2 hours at each event to listen to the views of key stakeholders on the proposed changes to Community Networks. After a presentation of the proposed plans by the Assistant Director for Community Care, there was a facilitated discussion on the proposed strategy and what impact it would have on individuals and service users groups. The facilitators asked service users to express their views to two themes:

1. What do you think about these changes?
2. What do you value about the Community Networks?

Service users, carers and staffs responses and questions were captured by scribes on flipcharts/ notes.

In addition to the participants advocates were present to assist service users and carers to express their views. Translators were also available when needed.

The above consultation commenced in January 2011. See Appendix 1 of Executive Report for a list of all consultation events

The above information has been collected and a summary report has been produced. See Appendix 3 of Executive report for this. Copies of the reports have been provided to carers and staff and all reports have been placed on the council's website

The information from the consultation meetings has been used to inform this report which will be presented to the Council's Executive Committee on 13th June 2011. Within the report a number of options will be put forward for implementing the Day Opportunities Strategy for Mental Health. The final decision on the future shape of the Community Networks will be for the members of the Executive committee to make at this meeting.

8. *Have you published the results of that consultation, if so, where?*

Copies of all consultation documents have been provided to staff, carers and service users as hard copies. Electronic copies have been distributed to these groups via email. Copies were made available on the Council's website. In addition, at each consultation event, key concerns and issues from the previous meeting and what other people have been saying were fed back.

Information has also been included in the Corporate Consultation Tracker.

A report to the Executive will be presented in June 2011 which will include detail and information from all the consultation events. The Executive report, and its appendices, will be made available on Brent's Website and hard copies will be available from the Council's Committee Services.

9. *Is there public concern (in media etc) that this function or policy is being operated in a discriminatory manner?*

Concerns have been raised about proposed changes to directly provided services, but these concerns are not related to the changes being discriminatory, and they have been set out and addressed in the Executive report. The national policy, local strategy and person centred planning which underpin these proposed changes should all ensure that support and services meet people's individual needs in the future.

10. *If in your judgement, the proposed service/policy etc does have an adverse impact can that impact be justified. You need to think about whether the proposed service/policy etc will have a positive or negative effect on the promotion of equality of opportunity. If it will help eliminate discrimination in any way, or encourage or hinder community relations.*

The proposed changes will not have an adverse impact on equalities if the issues raised in section 4 are addressed as described by the three levels of action. The

proposed changes will support reduced discrimination against people with mental health problems through promoting social inclusion. The proposed changes will also encourage persons with protected characteristic, particular race and disability, to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low thereby satisfying the objective set out in s149(3)(c) Equality Act 2010

11. *If the Impact cannot be justified, how do you intend to deal with it?*

N/A

12. *What can be done to improve access to take up of services?*

Access to day services funding (as with all social care services) will be on the basis of service users meeting the Eligibility Criteria as set by Brent Council in line with 'Prioritising Need' Guidance issued by the Department of Health.

Increasing access to community based services will require strategic commissioning work with community based providers, for example:

- Colleges will need to adapt their curricula and offer improved access to their courses with the aim of users being able to study something that gives them a better chance of securing employment and becoming more independent in a mainstream classroom setting
- Specialist service providers and community providers ensuring their services are more culturally appropriate. Increasing access to services will also rely on flexible payment mechanisms, for example, a Direct Payment, a council managed fund or an Individual Service Fund. These options, and easy access to them, are being developed through a separate, but aligned project – Adult Social Care Customer Journey.

Access will be improved through ongoing education and training of staff in systems and principles of Self Directed Support.

13. *What is the justification for taking these measures?*

Improved outcomes

People will be able to access a wider range of purposeful day services better aligned to their needs, which will lead to more fulfilling and independent lives in the community. Greater choice, independence and inclusion in the local community will achieve improved results on outcomes for service users as identified in *Putting People First*

Increased Staff motivation

Staff motivation and performance are also expected to increase while delivering day services in a more effective way. An integrated team with increased skills and knowledge, trained in new ways of working is expected to drive service improvements.

Increased user satisfaction

Local user surveys and national best practice examples show that most users are keen to take part more in mainstream activities where possible. User satisfaction is, therefore, likely to increase through a wider variety of activities which are conducted for example at mainstream facilities or with a wider group of people. Having a higher degree of ownership and choice of day activities is also likely to improve quality of life for day services users.

Financial sustainability

Providing more community-based day services will also allow the Council to provide financially sustainable services.

Increasing independence

This strategy is focused on giving people the support they need to lead more active and independent lives. Service users will be supported to access services provided within the community – leisure, employment, learning and social activities. The more independent the individual is the less support he or she will need to access mainstream or community-based activities. Highly independent users may be able to access mainstream services without much support, while others may need some organisational and preparatory support. Less independent people can go out into the community as part of a supported group, while some will need one-to-one support.

Estate consolidation

The proposed strategy brings opportunities to reduce the number of council-owned buildings and/or provide a wider variety of services from them. Increasing the community element of day services will mean fewer people will use the buildings, while in addition a wider range of activities could be offered from them across client groups and the wider population. Buildings could be used by more than one or all client groups and the wider population.

Local and national policy alignment

Personalised and community-based day services are in line with local and national policy, focused on service quality improvements, financial sustainability and local planning.

Reduced mental health stigma

People with mental health problems should face reduced discrimination and social isolation through being supported in accessing mainstream education and employment opportunities and their subsequent gains in self-confidence will have beneficial effects on reducing the risk of relapse.

14. Please provide us with separate evidence of how you intend to monitor in the future. Please give the name of the person who will do this on the front page

The KPIs and reporting cycle will set a clear baseline against key indicators:

- Age
- Gender
- Language,

- Faith
- Monitor direct payments and take up of personalised budget by the above group
- % of users securing employment and type of employment
- % of users accessing cultural specific services through brokerage and market stimulation
- % of increase in women only service
- Improvement to quality of users lives
- Regular Reports to go to Mental Health Local Implementation Team will be produced as well as to the Council Disabilities Forum

This post will then be responsible for ensuring that where possible services and support is identified and developed to meet unmet needs.

15. What are your recommendations based on the conclusion and comments of this assessment?

Implementation of *Option four* as described in Executive report

Should you:

a. Take and immediate action?

Any actions that will be taken will be in line with the results from the consultation and Executive Decision in June 2011.

b. Develop equality objectives and targets based on the conclusions.

Reporting targets on equalities objectives are already in operation. However, this work needs to be extended to include targets around faith, transgender; sexual orientation and ethnic take up of services through the baseline. The information then needs to use for effective future planning of the service.

c. Carry out further research

As directed by Executive

16. If equality objectives and targets need to be develop, please list them here

In addition to the indicators that already exist:

- A key element of the Day Opportunities Strategy and the draft plan for Community Networks is to increase uptake of personalised budgets and improve access by people with mental health needs to community resources.

17. What will your resource allocation action comprise of:

- The strategic commissioning team will focus on supporting the development of new services
- The staff resource costs will go into supporting service users to use personalised budgets effectively to ensure that their individual needs and outcomes are met

