

HOSC/54/10

Committee Health Overview and Scrutiny

Date 3 December 2010

Mental Health Day Care Services in South East Essex

Report by: Graham Redgwell, Secretary

Details of a service variation in South East Essex are attached. It is clear that service users have been consulted with widely and that the Trust has taken current best practice into account in revising the type of service provided.

The Committee is invited to note this change but may also wish to forward it to the South Area Forum for information.

**Mental Health Day Care Services in South East Essex
Briefing for Essex Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

The current situation

The PCT has been commissioning Rethink, a leading mental health membership charity, to provide mental health day services and befriending services across Southend, Castle Point and Rochford. Services are provided to people with a diagnosed functional mental health problem aged over 18 and who have accessed secondary care services. Referral is from secondary mental health services.

The services currently commissioned are:

Rise at Rethink: This service provides a drop-in style service, where service users can come in and chat about any problems and meet with other service users. Activities are also provided for them. Additionally there is an element of community bridge building work that supports people to access community facilities over a limited period of time. This day service is provided from 3 buildings that are leased by Rethink purely for the provision of this service. For Rochford district, this is provided from Rumsey House, Locks Hill, Rochford. For Castle Point, this is provided at the Little Gypps Centre on Canvey.

Rethink Good Companions: The befriending services are run through Rethink Good Companions and are provided in the community. Volunteers who are previous service users and volunteers from the community befriend service users and engage in a wide variety of activities with them, ranging from cinema trips, sports activities (watching and participating) to a chat over coffee.

The contract with Rethink was due for review this year, and the PCT has taken this opportunity to look at the services provided, and to ask service users for their feedback on current services and what they would like in the future.

Through engagement with service users we have found that many of them have been using the service provided by Rethink for a significant period of time. When the contract was set up, the intention was that service users would be encouraged and supported to work towards recovery and moving on into community facilities and paid/voluntary employment - leading to service users leading independent lives. However, it became clear that the service they have been receiving has focussed on maintaining the status quo, rather than focussing on recovery and moving on.

The proposal

It is proposed that mental health day care services are changed to reflect current best practice and to focus on recovery and moving on to generic community facilities in such a way as to make services sustainable given the current outlook for public sector spending. The proposal includes some funding for projects which are to be set up and run by the service users.

Two meetings have been held with service users, which were very well attended. All service users have also been invited to complete a questionnaire asking for their feedback on current and proposed future services. The new proposed service

has been developed in line with service user feedback and evidence based best practice. At the meetings both service users and volunteers expressed a great deal of enthusiasm for the new proposal to provide personalised services, whilst maintaining the areas they wanted to keep.

As a result of this feedback we have given a commitment that current front line staffing levels, hours of work, and current grading and salaries will not be reduced. However, some staff will have to change the way they work in order to deliver the new model of care.

It has been recognised that some service users still need to have somewhere to go for continuing support from staff and peers, and this provision will continue. However, planned activities will be more focused and purposeful in future. We will also provide a new grant funded "move on" service, where service users can plan, manage and run their own activities to improve recovery outcomes by allowing them to group together to pursue a shared interest managed by themselves in the community. This sets up a self managed scheme to move on from the intensive therapy period. This can include (but is not limited to) a fishing club, sports teams, craft clubs (with the intention to sell the goods they make to ensure sustainability). This proposal was particularly welcomed and a working group has already been set up by service users to take this forward. Some service users also highlighted their wish to contribute through a Service User Community Volunteering Scheme.

We will be inviting feedback from the service users at regular intervals to ensure the service provided meets their needs.

