



COMMUNITY HEALTH ACTION TEAM - CHAT

Meeting held on 8 March 2007 at Translation and Interpreting Service (TIS)

DABD were to have given a presentation on the subject of working and benefits. However, in the event, they did not attend. **ACTION: Tulip to re-arrange.**

Hilary Colston led a discussion on meaningful day opportunities, employment, training, education and volunteering. There was a wide-ranging discussion and a range of views expressed by service users. Some suggestions for action were made.

- Some concern expressed at risk of breakdown when returning to (stressful) work
- Service users best placed to assess how much work they are able to do
- Working may be unrealistic for some
- Importance of volunteering opportunities emphasised
- Importance of ongoing support at work emphasised
- Need to take things slowly, one step at a time
- There should be one or more service users on the Board of the Primary Care Trust (PCT). **ACTION: Local Implementation Team (LIT) Representatives and Tulip to raise at March LIT meeting.**
- There should be service users on senior management group of the Council and North East London Mental Health Trust (NELMHT). **ACTION: Local Implementation Team (LIT) Representatives and Tulip to raise at March LIT meeting.**
- There remains a great deal of stigma and discrimination among the general public
- The Borough employers (voluntary and statutory) need to expand opportunities for service users to be offered real employment, especially as Support, Time, Recovery (STR) Workers.

- Need to expand the numbers of service users who are training and coaching professional mental health and social care workers - might be able to have a routine induction for all workers, hearing service users' experience and stories
- Would like to see expanded opportunities in Barking (Jessie Dixon Centre too small and not fit for purpose) for arts, crafts, IT etc
- We could use community venues - church halls, community centres - where stigma is less
- Service users would like some help with thinking about setting up a social firm. **ACTION: Tulip to get someone to come and talk to CHAT**
- Service users need for opportunities for supported employment, traineeships etc as a stepping stone to full employment
- Need to know more about Direct Payments and Individualised budgets. **ACTION: Tulip to contact Tom Ovens about coming to talk to CHAT**
- We need to employ many more service users within the mental health system and NELMHT and the Council need to do much more
- We should arrange for service users to go and talk to Directors, Managers and staff in big, private, local employers, like Ford, to try and break down the barriers of stigma and discrimination and raise mental health awareness
- Service users encouraged to join HUBB in training and on courses at the South Bank University.

HUBB had produced a short questionnaire so that service users can say what sort of involvement they would like to have in improving the mental health system and in raising the profile of the service user voice - this could be involvement in meetings, consultations, recruitment and so on. **ACTION: Service users interested in greater involvement to complete questionnaire and return to HUBB or Tulip.**

Tulip explained the work that KATALYST are doing and CHAT agreed to meet with Alan Leader at its next meeting. **ACTION: Tulip to contact Alan Leader.**

Next meeting will be held at 1.00pm on Monday 16 April - **VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**