



UPDATE ON CREATING A NEW INDEPENDENT MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILL HEALTH AND CARERS

BACKGROUND

Health and Social Care Commissioners, the funders of services in Surrey, wish to support service users, carers and families to be better involved in the development of local mental health services. This is a key priority in the integrated commissioning strategy for Emotional Wellbeing and Adult Mental Health (2014 - 2017), which was published at the end of 2014.

The Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Partnership Board has supported the development of an Independent Mental Health Network, as a clear way for people to influence the commissioners who fund services, and to have their voices heard and be acted upon.

The idea behind the new Network is to make sure that the service user and carer voice and experience is at the heart of planning, delivery and evaluation of health and social care services. Through genuine partnership working, the Network will make sure that people who use mental health services, their carers and families are able to directly influence commissioning of mental health services to improve services for people.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR

- A workshop attended by more than 70 service users and carers was held in September 2015 to help shape a new Voice or Network
- In October 2015 a survey was undertaken to seek more views on what form the Network should take
- 21 people volunteered to form a Shaping Group to take the ideas from the Workshop forward, and the Shaping Group met three times between November 2015 and February 2016



WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR (Continued)

- In March 2016, the new Network Shaping Group joined up with the pre-existing Surrey Mental Health Group to form the new Mental Health Network Coordinating Group. There the Group agreed:
 - ⇒ What the Network will look like and how it will work
 - ⇒ A process for electing their Chair and Co-Chair, and
 - ⇒ A form which people can use to raise issues they want the Network to address

WHAT THE NETWORK LOOKS LIKE AND HOW IT WILL WORK

The main elements taken from the more comprehensive document are:

Network membership

The Independent Mental Health Network is open to all people who have experienced mental ill health, and their carers and families in Surrey, as well as Commissioners of mental health services. This includes those with other needs, impairments or disabilities who experience mental ill health. The Network is inclusive of existing groups that give people with mental health needs, their carers and families a voice.

Coordinating Group

There is now a Coordinating Group that will work with the rest of the Network on the design of adult mental health services in Surrey. This Coordinating Group is open to anyone who has experience of mental ill health and carers.

The Coordinating Group will reach out beyond existing networks to other people who have experienced mental ill health and carers/families, to make sure that the Network is inclusive of those who do not attend existing groups. It will be responsible for making sure there are consistent messages going out to the rest of the Network and for addressing responses back from Network members

Network aim

To directly influence the strategic level of commissioning in mental health services to achieve better outcomes for people.



At their meeting on 13th May 2016, members of the Coordinating Group elected **Eleanor Levy** as their Chair, and **Janice Clark** as their Co-Chair.



MEETINGS

The Coordinating Group will meet bi-monthly, but feedback will also be sought from members unable to attend meetings. The next meetings are planned for:

- Friday 15th July
- Friday 16th September
- Friday 18th November

The Coordinating Group will agree and set up sub groups and time limited task groups as required to achieve Network objectives.



The Coordinating Group is pictured here at their meeting on 13th May.

GOVERNANCE

The Independent Mental Health Network will sit alongside the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Partnership Board and will be represented on the Partnership Board by the Chair and Co-Chair of the Coordinating Group, and information will flow between these two groups. The Network will be the recognised independent avenue for the voice of people with experience of mental ill health, their carers and families to be heard by commissioners and by wider stakeholders involved in mental health.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE NETWORK

The Network will receive funding from NHS and Social Care Commissioners. The estimated costs of running the Network were agreed by the Coordinating Group and Commissioners on 13th May, and include funding for a part time Network Coordinator to support the Chair, Co-Chair, the Group and members, and to provide training and equipment and to fund meetings and events, including travel costs.

NEXT STEPS

1. Considering issues raised by Network members

The Coordinating Group has already started to identify issues and concerns about mental health services, and some of these are already being taken forward, e.g.:

- Non-compliance of some Therapy Services (IAPT) with the service specification.
- Attitudes of professionals and the wish to establish equal partnerships between individuals, their carers and professionals.
- Early intervention in mental health, working with Healthwatch on a new project.
- Pathways from GPs to specialist mental health services.

Once the Network is properly resourced, Network members will also be encouraged to raise their issue or concern using the new form.

NEXT STEPS (Continued)

- 2. Appoint the Network Coordinator** to start to reach out, involve and communicate with more people, using a range of accessible ways and means.
- 3. Develop a Work Programme** which includes new priorities as well as ongoing involvement in monitoring service delivery and representation on key Boards and Groups.
- 4. Agree a name for the Network**

18 suggestions were made at the workshop last September, and the Coordinating Group will discuss how to choose a name and logo at their next meeting. (In the meantime the Group are continuing to use the term “Network” and the original logo shown on page 1).

CONTACT DETAILS

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

The Network and Coordinating Group will continue to be supported by Surrey Coalition of Disabled People, who will employ the Network Coordinator, and by Action for Carers Surrey.

Commissioners are also keen to continue to support the Network and its development, and are committed to responding promptly to issues raised by the Network, and to involving the Network in all of their work.

Until the Network Coordinator is appointed, further information about the new Network or to register an interest in being a member of the Network or Coordinating Group please contact Carol Pearson:

Email:

carol.pearson@surreycoalition.org.uk

Tel: 01483 456 558

Text: 077809 33053

Surrey Coalition of Disabled People

Astolat

Coniers Way

Burpham

Guildford

Surrey, GU4 7HL