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Overview and Scrutiny, Haringey Council

Scrutiny Review – Support for Carers by Mental Health Services within Haringey

This briefing is in response to an invitation from Cllr Adamou to attend a Scrutiny Review panel meeting on 15 December 2009 to speak and take questions regarding support to carers from mental health services in Haringey.

Overview of mental health services in Haringey for adults of working age

The following is a brief overview of mental health services in Haringey:

Two community mental health teams serving west Haringey based at Canning Crescent Centre and two serving east Haringey based at Tynemouth Road.

An acute care service based at St Ann's Hospital consisting of single sex inpatient wards and two home treatment teams providing an alternative to hospital admission for service users and their carers who need intensive support. Also consists of a day therapies service that provides structured day time activities for service users who are inpatients, as well as service users cared for in the community via the home treatment team.

Community Rehabilitation Service based at St Ann's focused on working with service users residing in residential care homes and in 24 hour supported housing schemes. Aim of the service is to engage with service users in exploring appropriate form of care in less institutionalised settings within the community.

The well-being clinic at St Ann's Hospital provides a range of support services to service users that continue to need medication to manage their long term mental illness, but no longer need the ongoing support of a care coordinator.



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The local authority also leads in the operation of two day centres; Clarendon Centre in Wood Green and 684 Centre in North Tottenham. The Alexander Road Crisis Unit provides an alternative to psychiatric inpatient care and the provision of respite care to people experiencing mental health issues.

A Psychological Therapies Service based at St Ann's Hospital provides a range of psychological therapies including a specialist personality disorder service.

The Mental Health Care of Older People's Service is also based at St Ann's Hospital and provides a range of services for people over 65 years of age and for people who have the early onset of conditions such as dementia.

How carers are signposted to services?

A central role of the care coordinator within mental health services is to work with the entire social network including carer(s). Carers are signposted to services through the completion of carer's assessments and through a range of other means such as:

- Direct support to carers from care coordinators
- Direct information in the form of leaflets
- Linkage to services such as Mental Health Carers Support Group
- Direct engagement with the full-time mental health Carer's Assessment Officer

What is done to identify carers?

Carers are identified in a range of ways that include:

At the point of referral to services information regarding carers/family members is requested through the completion of a referral form and in the manner in which an initial assessment of need is required to engage with the views and opinions of carers.

In meetings with service users, care coordinators are expected to engage with the broader social network surrounding the service user. For example the model of 'home treatment' is to arrange a 'social systems' meeting with the service user and their carer/family/friends to explore together the origins of the mental health crisis, to ensure the 'triggers' to the crisis are understood and can be avoided in the future.

A recent initiative has required all care coordinators within the community teams to audit their case load and identify the carer(s) for each service user, and provide a date for the completion of the carer's assessment or when it is scheduled to take place. The audit is being supervised by the team managers.

The mental health Carers Assessment Officer is a full-time post based in one of the community teams and this officer regularly attends all the team meetings to provide up to date information on carer's initiatives, and provide advice about accessing carer's services.

Within the acute care service carers are actively identified and invited to an inpatient carer's group that operates on a weekly basis facilitated by a senior Mental Health Trust director and clinical psychologist.



Carers who have loved ones involved with the Home Treatment teams have also been specifically contacted and asked to provide feedback on the home treatment team service via a feedback questionnaire.

Processes in place in an emergency – e.g. the carer of a person with mental illness falling ill

The Care Programme Approach (CPA) provides a statutory framework outlining the structure of care and support for service users and carers within mental health services.

It is also recognised that provision of information to carers in case of an emergency is essential, as it is carers that often have the most contact and knowledge of the cared for individual.

Within Care Programme Approach meetings (CPA) a crisis and contingency plan is expected to be completed by the care team in partnership with the service user and carer.

If an emergency arises within normal working hours it is generally appropriate to make contact with the service user's care coordinator who will be able to coordinate an appropriate response to the emergency. Outside of normal working hours the emergency reception centre at St Ann's is available 24 hours 7 days a week.

For service users who have previously worked with the Home Treatment Team it is possible to contact them directly for support and advice regarding the nature of the emergency and how to manage it. The outcome of this may be an assessment by the Home Treatment Team depending on the situation and nature of the emergency.

Information regarding Community Teams

As noted in the initial overview there are community teams based at Canning Crescent and Tynemouth Road and a Community Rehabilitation Team based at St Ann's Hospital.

In addition the Short Term Assessment and Recovery Team (known as 'START') is based at St Ann's and is the single point of entry for all mental health referrals for adults of working age. Mental Health Services for Older People have a separate referral pathway, also based at St Ann's Hospital. The START team can be accessed via telephone, fax or via a walk-in to the emergency reception centre that is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

In order to improve the accessibility of services for carers in the community a carer's lunch was recently arranged at Tynemouth Road, and this followed an earlier carer's lunch that took place at Canning Crescent. Both lunches provided an opportunity for carers to meet with a range of staff and identify their wish to have a carer's assessment.

Information regarding Home Treatment Teams

As noted in the initial overview there are two home treatment services that have been operating in Haringey since 2004. The teams operate 24 hours a day 7 days a week and work with a range of service users who are experiencing some form of mental health crisis.

Earlier in 2009 both teams were expanded and are able to provide intensive support such as home visits 2 or 3 times a day. Service users generally remain with the home treatment teams for approximately 6 weeks on average before being linked to other services to continue support following the crisis subsiding.



Future service provision

Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust will be re-structuring its internal senior management structures in January 2010 and this will not impact on the services provided to carers or service users.

In time the movement to a 'service line' form of internal management will provide opportunities to ensure the Trust is more focused on the pathway of the service user and their carer.

The move to service lines is also an indication of the preparedness of the Trust for the national introduction of payment by results that is due to be introduced.

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