

IMHCN NEWS

THE NEWS FROM PLYMOUTH

Whole Life Whole System Mental Health Strategy

Over the past 6 years Plymouth Mind has lead on developing and establishing a mental health network that has become to be recognised by commissioners and the local mental health community as the forum for consultation, information exchange, stakeholder networking and promoting best practice. The network started as a small group of like minded people and has now grown into a fully fledged network of over 100 members. This membership includes service users, carers, NGOs, statutory provision and remains open to anyone interested in mental health.

The network has been actively working with the IMHCN since 2010 to develop a Whole Life Whole Systems Mental Health Strategy which was finally launched by the Leader of Plymouth City Council in 2013. It was important to the network that this strategy was for the people of Plymouth, by the people of Plymouth and not from a top down organisational approach. Ensuring an inclusive approach took time but we were determined to get it right.

Significant to the development of the strategy was the use of the key 8 life domains which are:

Art, Culture and Spirituality

Education

Occupation and employment

Friends and families

Housing and accommodation

Social Networks

Sport and Leisure

Treatment and Therapies

From these areas we identified 15 key recommendations and an implementation group has been set up to take these forward. We are initially working on developing

Learning Sets to ensure that the principles of recovery are embedded in practice and using Carer User Expectations of Services to gain knowledge from those with direct or indirect experience tell us what would aid their recovery and keep them well.

It is the intention of the Network to change the thinking, change the practice and change the system by implementing this whole life whole system approach and thus improve the experience of the end user be that someone with lived experience, carers or people working in the system.

Developments at Mind

Over the last year Mind has worked hard to develop its Recovery College. It aims to support people to deal with their experience of mental health challenges in a positive way. A wide range of recovery focused educational courses and resources enables individuals to recognise their hopes, talents and attributes and to move forward to achieving the things they want in life.

All courses are designed to contribute to well being and recovery. They offer opportunities to gain understanding of mental health challenges, the journey of recovery and the hope that taking control and self management can bring.

The College is available to everyone whether you have lived experience, or are a friend, family, loved one or colleague of someone with such experience.

The courses run across 4 areas and vary in content, length and learning:

- ≡ Understanding mental health issues, treatment and options
- ≡ Rebuilding your life and developing positive lifestyles and choices
- ≡ Developing skills and opportunities to increase your leisure opportunities
- ≡ Getting involved in your community through education, volunteering and employment

The courses are co-produced and co-delivered wherever possible by people with lived experience of mental health challenges and people with experience through training.

In our first year we had 391 students and 35% have achieved their goals and moved on to more community based activities including education, training and work.

In the coming year we are concentrating on looking at the gap in provision for young people aged 16-25 who are experiencing emotional issues with an aim of building resilience and supporting them through an important period of transition. Our first step is to start the **YoungPeople@Parkside** pilot youth centre initiative, working towards early intervention and prevention of mental health problems in young people, with the following aims:

1. to develop and strengthen young peoples' resilience to cope with stresses and adversities when they arise
2. to promote positive mental health in a holistic way

3. to signpost young people to youth counselling and/or mental health services when needed

Conference

This year saw Plymouth's 6th annual mental health conference organised through Mind by the Network which has become a key event in the mental health calendar in Plymouth. These have on occasions involved valuable input from colleagues in the IMHCN. This year's theme was "Let's talk about self harm and suicide" and aimed to break down some of the taboos and mis-information around these areas which people often find difficult to deal with. See attached report. We are just starting to organise the 2015 conference with a probable theme of young peoples' mental health and wellbeing. Any thoughts or contributions will be gratefully received.