Mental Health Befriending Scheme

Approved scheme to be run by Winchester Area Community Action (WACA)

Stuart Banks

WACA

Winchester Town Forum

23rd March 2010

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

Important note

- This presentation is aimed at people who may not have an understanding of Longer-Term Mental Health Issues.

Meeting 23rd March 2010

- **Agenda**

- Background
- Current Services
- Proposed Scheme
- Status
- Future actions
- Discussion

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

- ***Background***

- 1 in 4 people suffer some kind of mental health problem in their lifetime.

- Depression and Anxiety very common today.

- Medical treatment often restricted to a course of anti-depressants…..***But***

- The condition often persists and relapse occurs

- So what is there for people with these longer-term problems?

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

- Under GP but basically discharged into the outside world – **ready or not!!!!**

  What happens?

- "Sometimes slow (or no) progress in taking steps to rejoin community life."

- Relapse common

- Re-admitted into NHS Care, further stretching resources

- There is a NEED for a specific service?

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

- **What is the NEED?**

- Personal support and help with understanding individual issues.
- Getting people back into community life
- Personal support and guidance
- An agreed approach
- No time constraints/pressure
- Opportunity to meet with others
- Chances to gradually move forwards as recovery progresses

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

What are the typical mental health services available?

- Several Services exist e.g.

  County Mental Health Team

  Solent Mind Priory Gardens

  Andover Mind etc.

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

What are the main issues with the current services?

- All are geared towards a finite period of time that a patient is allowed

- They are all geared towards achieving agreed objectives by a deadline date

- After this time no further treatment can be given – due to budget allocation rules – and the patient is often discharged….

- Group work tends to dominate

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

Issues created

- Time pressure can contribute towards relapse
- Failure to achieve in the given time is likely to set the patient back, somewhat
- Patients need differing approaches and time plans, therefore, a flexible approach is necessary
- Many patients may need a lot of personal support
- Some patients are not suited to group work

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

- ## Proposed Scheme Objectives

- Create a service designed to counter insularity and help people back into the community.

- Ensure no time pressure

- This is a more socially/personally based form of help – not medical – and is time hungry.

- Provide a personal "Befriender." to devote the time necessary to help achieve recovery

- Avoid relapse at all costs

How will we do it?

- Create a Befriender Scheme where former service users are trained as Befrienders.

  Knowledgeable, credible, understand issues

- Provide 1 to 1 support and guidance

  Allow necessary time and individual approach

- Rebuild self-esteem and confidence

  Enable reintroduction to local community life

Status of Scheme

- Completed user survey and feasibility study

- Formed small Service User Group

- Formed Steering Committee

- Applied for funding to HHC Adult Services, SEIF and BIG.

- Funding agreed by BIG and HCC…..yet to hear from SEIF.

Supporting Evidence of Need for the Service

- Mark Oaten, MP has provided an independent reference in support of the scheme

- He confirmed that he regularly sees the need for this service through his surgeries

- He has written a supporting letter to BIG to emphasise the need for the service in the Winchester District

- He is a Board Member of "Mental Health Matters" and has asked to be kept informed of our progress

What do we need

- Support for both User Group and Steering Committee – more members.

- A Project Worker to manage the scheme – will be advertised.

- Volunteers interested in helping.

- Former Service Users to train as Befrienders.

Mental Health Befriending Scheme

Details of structure

- 3 year project
- Funding need approximately £100k-over 3 years
- Target is to help 195 people over the 3 years
- Scheme to be run day to day by Project Worker – reporting to Steering Committee
- Monthly review meetings
- Service User Group to help develop Service and provide a feed of potential Befrienders

Can You Help in any way?