

MENTAL HEALTH CARER REPRESENTATIVES FORUM.

Draft NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON

Tuesday 23rd January, 2018

At Oxlease House, Travellers Lane, Hatfield

Present:

Carers: AR, AMS, BL, BF, BB, CH, GT, NY, RL, RC, RT, SK, SW, SL, SA, TG, VW

Volunteer: PM

Apologies: LB, K & KT,

Chair: Rod Cottrell, (carer)

Staff: Sarah Williams, Rosemary Willis, Charlotte Janes, Deryn Sparrow (notes)

Guest Speaker: Gareth Williams, Benefits Advisor (Mental Health) from the Money Advice Unit, Hertfordshire County Council

Item	
1	<p>Welcome: Rod welcomed all to the forum and introductions were made</p> <p>Apologies: as above</p> <p>Sarah: thanked all for their kind messages</p> <p>Rosemary: encouraged carers to complete the State of Caring in Hertfordshire Survey 2018, hard copies available today and it would be sent on line tomorrow.</p> <p>Deryn: following November Forum, carers agreed they didn't understand the statement issued by HPFT about the future of support for Carers, we requested a simpler explanation. Some hard copies were available and Deryn read the statement about Reviewing and improving support for carers in HPFT. The forum found this easier to understand and felt it was an honest explanation of the situation.</p>
2	<p>Guest Speaker: As Gareth arrived early it was agreed he would speak first.</p> <p>Gareth introduced himself and spoke a little about his role, his power point presentation is detailed and informative please refer to this as notes of the meeting.</p>

Points that were discussed:-

Disability benefits:- the three main benefits are Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Attendance Allowance (AA)

- a) PIP was introduced in 2013 and will eventually replace DLA; the outcome is likely to mean that approximately 25% of people will be better off, 25% will stay the same and 50% will receive less or nothing.
- b) People living in supported and who are receiving Housing benefit **(or help with housing costs via universal credit)** are entitled to receive PIP. **If in a care home and not self-funding then the daily living/care component can't be paid, only the mobility. Though you can ask for it to be paid on days you're not in the care home (eg. on holiday, staying with relatives).**
- c) It is not possible to change DLA, if there is a change of circumstance the benefit will change to PIP - **apart from children who stay on DLA until they are asked to claim PIP when they turn 16, & older claimants born on or before 8th April 1948 who will stay on DLA and are unaffected by PIP.**
- d) When applying for PIP, variable conditions can be tricky; PIP looks at the condition being most of the time, over **50% of days over the course of a year. If you are affected for part of a day then that day should count as one of your 50%. Eg. someone who can't get up and dressed in the morning but can in the afternoon as medication takes effect should score because there's a period of the day where they can't perform the activity and would reasonably need or be expected to be able to do so.**
- e) It sometimes helps to ask for a copy of the assessment report. You can ask for the assessment to be recorded, the possibility of all future assessments being recorded is being considered.
- f) Changes of circumstances can affect benefits, i.e. Hospital Stays

Carers Allowance

- g) Carers allowance can sometimes affect other benefits, it is important to check this. Ask The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to do a benefits check.
- j) If a Service User's disability payment is stopped (i.e. for hospital admission) Carers allowance also stops. **It's important to keep DWP updated with hospital admissions as they are a common cause of overpayments. Also worth bearing in mind that the day you go into hospital and the day you come out don't count as days in hospital. You have to both wake up and go to bed there. Hospital admissions separated by less than 28 days are added together for PIP/DLA/AA, so if someone's has multiple shorter admissions close together they could find themselves over the limit.**

Universal Credit:-

The following benefits will be abolished and replaced by UC:

- i. income support
- ii. income-based jobseeker's allowance
- iii. income-related employment & support allowance
- iv. housing benefit
- v. child tax credit and working tax credit

	<p>k) Concerns were raised about service users being able to manage their money when paid monthly and are responsible for paying their own rent/bills etc. answer: - you can ask for alternative payment arrangements when someone struggles with managing finances, it is best if this is backed up with medical evidence and this should be done a.s.a.p., ideally when making the claim.</p> <p>l) It can help if a mental health professional is at the assessment but this is not always possible.</p> <p>m) If you have to claim Universal credit you still need to claim Council Tax Benefit with your local council. Note: Housing benefit and council tax benefit were done on the same application previously, now need to claim council tax benefit from local council to avoid missing out and getting into arrears.</p> <p>Carers, who are resident in Hertfordshire can self-refer to the Money advice unit</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Telephone: 01438 843456 Email: mauadmin@herfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>HPFT staff refer Service Users to this services</p> <p>Rod thanked Gareth for his informative and helpful presentation</p>
3	Notes of last meeting - agreed
4	<p>Feedback of latest news and developments from Carer Representatives and Carer Involvement Workers, identifying any issues to raise at the next round of commissioning/ working group meetings.</p> <p>NY – Healthwatch – Mental Health Service Watch Group are no longer meeting and not getting updates. However still receiving information about the Learning Disabilities Service Watch group which still appears to be running. Action:- Deryn to contact Tom Barrasso from Health Watch for an update. It was agreed to invite him to speak at a future forum about Health watch Services.</p> <p>AMS- Carers Assessments – carers assessments are sometimes linked to receiving funding (formally known as Carer Grant, now a personal budget(PD)), carer understands this is linked to a points system and would like to know how this works. Action: - Deryn to make enquiries and feedback.</p> <p>Sue Mott – Carer Support, Sport England told us about a pilot project in Kent that are offering short carer breaks, giving them the opportunity to experience the joy of walking. These will shortly be rolled out in Hertfordshire, details to follow. More information about the Kent project and Sues contact details:- https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-features/news/2017/october/17/breath-of-fresh-air-for-carers/</p> <p>GT – HPFT Art Project – a Collection of art, all produced by Service Users and Carers will be exhibited at The New Maynard Art Gallery 2nd March until 14th April. More information can be found about this project on HPFT website</p>

	<p>http://www.hpft.nhs.uk/get-involved/art-project/</p> <p>Sarah – Primary Care Mental Health Service - Pilot HPFT are undertaking three pilot sites in Stevenage, Hertford and Watford to explore the impact of bringing Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) resource into primary care. Carers in Hertfordshire have been asked by the Integrated Health & Care Commissioning Team to gather information from carers as to whether they would attend the primary care mental health service with the person they care for. Sarah asked for a show of hands for those who would, most carers in room raised their hands.</p> <p>Will be Working on 2 projects over next few months:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective communication – improving how we communicate with the people we care for 2. Making involvement more effective – we need to encourage more carers to come forward. How can we engage with carers earlier in their journeys? <p>If anyone is interested in working with Sarah on either of these projects please let her know.</p> <p>Deryn- HPFT SPA stakeholder group – Plan to hold a workshop towards the end of February around the Mental Health Helpline – what is helpful and what could be improved. Anyone interested in this please let Deryn know. Petition about increased charges around social care – encouraged members to sign this petition, 1000 signatures needed if it is to be discussed at February full council meeting.</p>
5	<p>Questions agreed to put to the speaker of the next forum to enable them to deliver information required by carers more effectively?</p> <p>Dr Haninder Magon to speak about her role as a psychiatrist on Aston Ward, and her expectations of carers and how they should be involved.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the role of a psychiatrist on an inpatient ward? 2. How do you work with carers and/or their families? 3. HPFT have signed up to the Triangle of Care but carers often feel it doesn't work in practice, in what ways do you follow this? 4. Carers are concerned about the consistency of psychiatrists, how do the wards and community services communicate to ensure continuity. 5. Do psychiatrists eat with the patients?
6	<p>Suggested future forum topics agreed previously, Sarah and Deryn researching possible speakers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revisit accommodation - ask for speaker from charity Shelter and/or Housing Department together with someone from Accommodation commissioning team.

	<p>2. Planning for the future – Rethink Mental Health are researching this, would like to hear from them.</p> <p>3. Suicide Prevention – How to recognise the signs. Forum felt it would be helpful to have a brief presentation, it is sometimes difficult to attend the HPFT Spot the signs all day courses.</p> <p>4. New Leaf college – How this works and information about the courses provided</p> <p>Agreed today and to be added - Healthwatch – see section 4 NY</p>
7	<p>Any other business</p> <p>RL – Health and Safety – lots of talk around health and safety around the Service User and Staff but nothing for carers. In process of producing a leaflet about this and would value the opportunity to have the opportunity to share ideas at our next forum. It was agreed to allow 15minutes during March forum.</p>
8	<p>Future Forums - 2018 forum list</p> <p>Next Forum - Tuesday 13th March, 2018 12.30pm Lunch, Forum start 1pm</p>