

Carers in Mind awarded 2 years funding for Acute Carers Recovery Worker!

Following the full evaluation of the Acute Carers Worker pilot we have now been awarded 2 years grant funding from the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames for a full-time worker to develop the project further. Unfortunately the wonderful Sarah Mullett has now gone on to a new job closer to her home in North London but this legacy is a tribute to all the hard work she put into the project.

We are now starting the recruitment process for a new Carers Recovery Worker who will support carers during an acute crisis and we hope to have someone in post by the end of May. The focus for the next stage of this project will be to look



at how to improve carer inclusion in relapse planning and prevention (when they want to be included!). This will involve working in partnership with SWLStG's Mental Health Trust and local carers.

Sarah also supported the implementation of the Triangle of Care on Lavender Ward. Thank you to the carers who have already been involved in this work. We will be reviewing the progress and setting new actions once the new worker is in post.

The Richmond Carers Recovery Worker pilot was included in a recent Triangle of Care newsletter which highlighted good practice examples from across the country. We are delighted we are able to continue to develop the project and offer such a valuable service.

Welfare Reform Act

The Welfare Reform Act became law in March this year and introduces a new Universal Credit which will replace most existing benefits. The new Universal Credit will also limit the total amount of benefit a household can claim.

It is expected that Universal Credit will start being paid to new claimants from October 2013 – from this date no new claims for Income Support, Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, or Housing Benefit will be accepted. The Government plans to move everyone on the benefits listed above onto the Universal Credit within the next six years with changes being introduced gradually across the country starting with pilot sites in the North of England.

The same Welfare Reform Act will also bring in a new size criteria or 'bedroom tax' in the social rented sector where the household contains working age adults. This reform will cut the amount of Housing Benefit payable to somebody if they are 'under-occupying their home'. Rules will be introduced that set out how much benefit will be lost and in what circumstances. If you or the person you support may be affected:

Richmond AID are holding an information session at Richmond Royal for carers and staff on Friday, 12th April 2-3.30pm

If you would like a copy of the newsletter in large print or you need any help accessing information from the internet - please let Kim or Ruth know.

Farewell!



At Richmond LINK's last public meeting, outgoing Chair Bonnie Green set a number of challenges for the replacement Healthwatch Richmond organisation, Richmond's new Clinical Commissioning Group (RCCG), Richmond Council and the community.

"We all have to ensure that the poor care, the target culture, the absence of transparency, and the ears deaf to the patient voice that was identified in the Francis Report into Mid Staffs does not happen again and particularly for us, does not happen for Richmond people." said Bonnie Green.

Richmond LINK also called on people to be more proactive when they experience or see poor care or practice provided in both health and social care services. *"It's very easy if we are aware of poor care, or indeed good care, to do nothing about it", she said. If it is about healthcare, it is really important to pass on this experience to the hospital concerned or to RCCG through their PALs service, or to the new Healthwatch Richmond. It's only by identifying both good and poor care that can we get the best care for everybody - we shouldn't tolerate second rate care."*

The Mental Health Group has worked extremely hard in Richmond and has achieved very good outcomes which are listed in the LINKs Final Review:

- ★ Commissioners and providers are taking increasing notice of the views that we and users/ carers express, and have produced a framework and action plan for involvement.
- ★ We have also developed close relationships with Richmond commissioners; we sit on the main committee carrying out the reorganisation of community mental health services and were involved in the selection of providers.
- ★ Following our protests, SWLStG's Trust felt it necessary to hold a Serious Incident Enquiry into why and how 2 ward closure had taken place. As a result of that enquiry, there has been a considerable improvement in engagement and consultation. It is now highly unlikely that any closure would take place without engagement unless it was made necessary by a genuine emergency.

- ★ In late 2012, SWLStG's Trust made the decision to redevelop their main site located at Springfield in Tooting. Due to our consistent campaigning which resulted in a consultation exercise, in February 2013 the Trust committed to more investment for services closer to their users and carers in Richmond and away from Tooting. This is an excellent achievement.
- ★ Richmond LINK has made a series of detailed recommendations to the Trust and commissioners, designed to improve the standard of care for service users on Lavender ward and in the community.
- ★ The Trust has issued a formal response that includes several improvements they have made because of our concerns, including staffing increases. A report on our visit to Lavender Ward was published in January 2013 and is available online: www.richmondlink.org.uk
- ★ Richmond LINK wrote to SWLStG's Trust and to key local figures expressing concern and explaining why it was not able to support the Trust's FT application in May 2011. The Trust subsequently undertook a number of changes within its senior management and made written commitments to greater transparency and candour. Importantly, it also committed not to make further closures or transfers of services without public consultation.



From April 1st 2013, Healthwatch will be the new independent consumer champion for both health and social care. The aim of Healthwatch will be to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within their locality. It will perform two roles:

- ★ **Engagement and Influencing:** The Consumer Champion role
- ★ **Information and Advice:** The Signposting role.

Healthwatch will carry forward the functions of the LINK but will have additional functions and powers. It will incorporate the good practice of LINKs, communicating with and listening to patients, carers and the wider community, establishing relationships with local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), patient representative groups, the local voluntary and community sector and service providers to ensure it is inclusive and truly representative of the community it serves. Healthwatch will also have a seat on health and wellbeing boards.



Richmond CCG given green light for commissioning local health services

Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group (Richmond CCG) has been given the green light from the NHS Commissioning Board and is now fully authorised. This confirms that the CCG is fit for purpose and ready to take on the role of commissioning local health services from 1st April 2013.

Richmond CCG brings together 30 GP practices in the borough of Richmond into one commissioning organisation. It will formally take responsibility for commissioning hospital, community and mental health services for local people from April 2013, overseeing a budget of approximately £220 million. It has been operating in shadow form since April 2012.

Chair of the RCCG, Dr Andrew Smith, said: "We want to provide quality, effective and efficient health and social care for our patients by developing a joint commissioning structure through greater integration with our health and social care partners."

What are the priorities for Richmond?

The priorities for Richmond CCG are to deliver quality improvements and to ensure that finite resources are spent most appropriately to make a difference in people's lives. This will include:

- ★ Listening to our patients, carers and the wider community to design and improve care.
- ★ Ensuring that Richmond's Health and Wellbeing strategy, which brings together local leaders from the health and social care system, is central to all planning and delivery. The Strategy is designed to understand the community's needs, agree priorities and encourage commissioners to work in a more joined up way.
- ★ Working with our health and social care partners to align and integrate care pathways to improve both the patient and carer experience of local health and social care and deliver better health outcomes for all.
- ★ Improving options and choice for care to reduce the reliance on inpatient care.
- ★ Developing a collaborative commissioning structure which will improve quality and deliver financial efficiency for Richmond residents.



How is the RCCG planning to use the voice of the user and carer in their decisions - what plans are there to enable the community to get their views across to the RCCG?

We want to be an open and listening organisation that has the needs of local people at the centre of our decision making. To do this we need to embed a culture of patient and public involvement across Richmond CCG and to develop the role of clinicians and member practices in engaging with and empowering patients and carers.

To provide feedback email: richmondinvolve@nhs.net



New research carried out by Time to Change has shown that only one in four people who have experienced a mental health problem have received a get well card during their illness, even though 80% say that a card would be a good way for others to let them know they are thinking of them. Contemporary British artist Stuart Semple and cartoonist Stephen Collins have created exclusive 'get well soon' ecards - send them to a friend you know is going through a mental health problem and let them know you are there for them.

time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

What should I do if I am unhappy about my GP?

Carers have been asking what they can do if they experience poor care from their GP. This has been a particular concern more recently for two reasons. Firstly, there are plans for some people currently treated under specialist mental health teams to transfer to the care of their GP. Secondly, *“If the GPs are now commissioning the health services, who do we turn to if it is our GP we are unhappy with?”*

Carers in Mind has fed back these concerns to local commissioners and there is now clear advice on what you can do if you are unhappy with your GP.

You need to register your concern with the Richmond Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). PALS provides patients, carers and their families with free, confidential advice, information and support.

Your local PALS team can:

- ★ inform you about local NHS services
- ★ listen to your questions and concerns and give you information on the options available
- ★ help sort out problems or concerns that you may have about NHS services
- ★ arrange an interpreter, signer or other support service to be at your appointment with you
- ★ advise you about other organisations and services that could help with your problem or guide you through the NHS complaints process if you want to make a formal complaint.

The PALS team can advise on and listen to any difficulties or concerns you may have about local NHS services, including care provided by GPs, dentists, pharmacies and opticians in the borough of Richmond. They will use your comments and suggestions constructively to make sure we can improve NHS services

Contact your local PALS team:

020 8734 3001 or richmondpals@nhs.uk

Carers in Mind now has a list of GP practices in Richmond that have allocated space in their surgeries for the Richmond Wellbeing Service to run their service from. If you would like more details please contact the carers office.

Local Services Update!

Services for you and the person you support

The Richmond Advocacy Service

has been designed to ensure ease of access for people who need advocacy support and will be delivered in a variety of ways including Professional, Peer, Self and Citizen Advocacy. Richmond Advocacy will work across the Borough from a variety of community and other convenient locations. The service can also meet clients at a location of their choice including their home. If you feel you may benefit from the Advocacy Service and are eligible to participate, please contact us by;

Freephone: 0300 200 0022 9am-5pm Monday to Friday, 9am-7pm Thursday.

Minicom: 0300 456 2364

Text: Text the word 'pohwer' and then your name and number to 81025

Email: richmond@pohwer.net

Skype: pohwer.advocacy

Fax: 0300 456 2365

Post: Richmond Advocacy. PO Box 14043, Birmingham. B6 9BL.

Update on Team Managers

There have been some changes recently in management of the SWLStG's specialist mental health teams. The current managers are listed below should you need to contact them and also for your information.

Locality Manager for all Richmond Teams: Kerry Mowat-Gosnell

Richmond CMHT/Assertive Outreach Team/Recovery Team: Helen Emmett

Twickenham CMHT: Geoff Allan

Early Intervention Service: Joe Cardwell

Personality Disorder Intensive Treatment Team: Andrew Mackinnon

Community Drug and Alcohol: Michelle Chambers

Crisis and Home Treatment Team: Emmanuelle Asu Tako.

SWLStG's is currently in the process of recruiting a new permanent Services Director for Richmond and Kingston. We are pleased to report that a Richmond carer is sitting on the interview panel. Historically the panels have included a service user, but not necessarily a carer, we are delighted that it is now seen to be important for carers to be included. We hope to be updating you in our next newsletter about who the new Service Director is.