**Student Mental Health Forum: Managing Risk Across Services Group Discussion**

**Friday 29th April 2016, 12:00pm – 2.00pm**

**The University of Manchester (UoM), Counselling Service**

**Represented:**

UoM Counselling Service; The Docs Surgery; The Bodey Medical Centre; LGBT Foundation; The Proud Trust; University of Salford Counselling Service; Manchester Student Homes; UoM The Atrium; UoM Security; MHSC; MMHSC Trust; Moodswings

**Minutes**

1. **Welcome from the Chair.**

Sarah Littlejohn, Head of Counselling Service, University of Manchester welcomed the attendees to the meeting. It was commented that it was great to start the meetings again as it has worked well in the past and helped to identify issues that can be resolved from our open discussion and through our varied membership.

The group in turn introduced themselves, their role and organisation.

**ACTION** – to confirm the topic of the next meeting at the end of this one.

Sarah introduced Diana Ong to present an overview of the work of the LGBT Foundation in Manchester.

1. **LGBT Foundation – presentation (see slides)**

**2.1 Overview**

Diana Ong began by introducing herself and role as a therapist at the LGBT Foundation based on Richmond Street in central Manchester. Diana gave a power point presentation providing an overview of the LGBT Foundation services.

One particular challenge highlighted was about there being LGBT clients whose gender is not immediate.

After a question the meeting was reminded that the LGBT Foundation was based on Richmond Street which runs parallel to Canal Street.

It was asked how long it took to be seen from initial triage and for volunteer counselling it is around 3 months and for CBT fairly quickly.

The meeting acknowledged how useful they found the presentation and were pleased to be aware of the services on offer at the LGBT Foundation.

It was asked how the LGBT Foundation communicates with other services e.g. GPs. It was explained that an initial letter would be sent to the client’s GP and then a further letter upon discharge from the service. In IAPT it there is a requirement but some clients stipulated that their GP not be notified.

The question was also asked as to how the Foundation links up with the Student Union, there is no link currently but it could be developed in the future.

**3** **Proud Trust –** a brief overview about the trust was given by Matty Donaldson.

Proud Trust was formerly LGBT Youth Northwest and supports young LGBT people in the UK. It was reported that LGBT students are more likely to experience problems and don’t often feel like services on offer would help them. It was revealed that only 20% of trans students felt safe with 1 in 5 LGBT students having experienced bullying or harassment.

The Proud Trust run a variety of weekly youth work sessions for young people up to the age of 25. In addition they offer a wide range of LGBT awareness training for professionals which includes training on how to make services more inclusive for trans people. The trust also manages the LGBT Centre based in Sidney Street, Manchester.

The trust is involved in a new project involving LGBT students in partnership with University of Manchester Students Union. The project is a Peer Support Programme that will be launching in September 2016. It’s aim is to train LGBT students to provide support and advocacy work for other LGBT students. The trust is training students over the summer and they can get credit for their work.

If the pilot scheme at UoM is successful then there is potential for it to be rolled out further next year to other universities.

Flyers will be distributed in due course with regards to advertising the service and informing students how to access it. Matty will meet all those making a request for the service with regards to suitability.

The age range of the people the trust see are from 13 years to 25 years old, however, some people may go up to adult services at 20-21 years of age.

The trust has a lot of crossover with 42nd Street and they are currently working on an LGBT project with them at present.

The meeting was then informed of current services within 42nd Street. They offer a Therapeutic Programme that has been running for 12 months and the programme has just been extended to run a further 12 months. It is for anyone who comes under the 42nd Street catchment area of Manchester, Trafford, Salford, Tameside & Glossop. The programme runs groups of up to 10 people for anyone with a diagnosis of EUPD (Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder) eligible referrals to 42nd Street. Currently two places available.

A further service for referral of personality disorder is Project 15 run at Gaskell House. The project is for adults with a history of emotional problems and usage of psychiatric and associated services. People are seen relatively quickly with no waiting list at present.

It was commented on that a number of services are under threat e.g. psycho sexual services, peri-natal mental health care are being decommissioned and the community alcohol team is changing. Other core services will be absorbed by the rest.

It was also commented on that many referrals don’t sit comfortably between primary and secondary care. There is a long waiting list for psychological therapy in the NHS. In addition, students moving house during their studies can close down a referral and there may be multiple agencies involved.

It was asked what the University of Manchester Counselling Service offers. It is an open access self-referral service dealing with a wide range of difficulties from mild anxiety and depression through to severe and complex difficulties. At the lower end the service offers workshops, online resources and self-help information. At the upper end there are assessments and referrals. The service has a consultant psychiatrist in attendance 1 day per week for referrals and a Mental Health Practitioner for 3 days a week.

It was agreed that emotionally unstable personality presentations are difficult to place in the correct service however there is a close relationship with the crisis team. Also the service is co-working a student pathway with the Eating Disorder Service. It was asked if people can be referred in to our Eating Disorder Service and if they are students of the university they can be referred in. For E/D groups run at Gaskell please email Sarah for details.

The Atrium representatives stated that it was a struggle with those who present unwell but who are not unwell enough for immediate services.

It was agreed that students are a vulnerable group because of their age and developmental stage. They can find it difficult to access mental health provision via NHS services. On the other hand they have relatively good support services within the University.

Students can also be eligible for support at DASS (Disability Advice Support Service).

How do we wish to take things forward with the meetings?

It was agreed that case studies are very helpful along with presentations. It is good to have the meetings and learn about new services. It was suggested that it would be good to hear more about Self Help Services, Crisis Team, Change Grow Live, Sanctuary, Moodswings.

**ACTION -** Sarah to invite a speaker to the next forum.

Training came up as a grey area for those dealing with someone who is initially in crisis and this can be difficult for security who are often first responders within the university.

**ACTION** – Sarah to think about possibility of specific training.

There was a suggestion of an Australian franchise that provides Mental Health First Aid but this was viewed as formulaic

Risk and mental health training is provided a number of times each term by the Counselling Service . there are also plans to develop on-line training to complement this.

The LGBT Foundation offer some training in Sexual Identity and Monitoring.

Further ideas for consideration were:

* A presentation on emotionally unstable presentations as it is a complex group to work with.
* Developing further NHS links
* Inviting NHS commissioners to future meetings given a lot of things are in flux at present and it would be a way of exchanging information.
* Linking in with research studies e.g. as UoM currently do with the PRODIGY study. Possibly invite them to a future meeting.

It was proposed that the next meeting would be scheduled and a date confirmed shortly. It would take place here at UoM. It was suggested that the meeting could be hosted offsite at another members’ service in future e.g. it has previously been hosted at the Bodey Medical Practice.

The participants were thanked for their attendance and the meeting concluded.