

FEEDBACK

December 2007

Issue 1

*The new two-monthly newsletter written and edited by **Carer and Service User members** of the Lancashire Mental Health and Social Care Partnership Board.*

Welcome to our newsletter!

This first edition tells you a little bit about who we are and what we hope to achieve, along with information on current volunteer vacancies

The Lancashire Mental Health and Social Care Partnership Board

is made up of representation of Local Authorities, NHS Trusts and Service Users and Carers, and was established in 2005 to lead and support a programme of change within Mental Health Services across Lancashire, its work is supported by the Lancashire Partnership Team.

Brian Service User Representative - Central Lancashire

My own mental health problems began in 1975 with stress and anxiety leading to depression, only correctly diagnosed in 1994. Having worked in engineering until the age of 46, I had to take retirement due to mental health problems. At the age of 48, I took up a directorship of a live music company and now help to run a music organisation, but dedicate my life to working voluntarily in the mental health field, linking to a wide range of organisations including the Partnership Board. Having experienced "ingrained stigma" from mental health care professionals, the support of my family has been very important to me. My interests include boxing, learning about mental health and I am currently writing my autobiography.

Martin Service User Representative - Fylde Coast

My interest in mental health services began in 1993. I was recovering from another bout of clinical depression/anxiety and was encouraged to join a user group (professionally led) by my CPN. About a year later I joined a CPN supported self-help group which quickly evolved into a user-led group (SASH). This was a major jump for me! Since then I have been a member, and the Chair, of the independent Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Mental Health Forum, representing service users at the Local Implementation Team (LIT), the Fylde Coast Service User/Carer Network, Lancashire Care Trust User Forum, Community Health Council and other groups and committees. What has been the biggest change over the years? Staff are more aware of people's needs and difficulties. More recently an increase in services for those with mild to moderate problems (short and long term) and better focussed services for those who are more poorly.

Rod Service User Representative - North Lancashire

My "illness" first struck me in the Autumn of 1990 when I was initially diagnosed with depression (and only later with Bi-polar illness). Subsequently it has had a considerable detrimental effect upon my public and professional life, eventually forcing me to take early retirement in 2006. On the whole I have been fortunate to receive positive medical care and attention, though at times I have felt isolated and bewildered and know only too well the stigma that mental health difficulties can bring. All this has not been helped by a number of regular re-occurrences of my illness. I am pleased to be able to serve on the Lancashire Mental Health and Social Care Partnership Board and see it as a way of being of use to others similarly afflicted.

Sandra Service User Representative - East Lancashire

It is a privilege to be selected as the East Lancashire Service User Representative of the Lancashire Mental Health and Social Care Partnership Board. As a service user for over 40 years with chronic illness, it is a responsibility and a role which I take very seriously and am happy to fulfill. My contribution to the Board will be positive and progressive with constructive criticism of every issue I believe is of concern to all service users.

In spite of illness I have worked in industry and managed my own business for over 16 years. Unfortunately I am unable to work at the present time except for the voluntary work I am now involved with.

If you have had an experience which you would like to comment on related to being a service user, I would be happy to discuss this with you in confidence.

The Lancashire Mental Health and Social Care Partnership Board - Made up of representation from Local Authorities, NHS Trusts, Service Users and Carers



Blackpool Council
BUILDING A BETTER COMMUNITY FOR ALL



Phil Service User Representative - Fylde Coast (from Feb 2008)

I have a long history of using mental health services and have been the recipient of both in-patient and community care. I have first hand experience of medication issues, psychological and psychotherapeutic interventions, ECT and social models of rehabilitation. I hold a degree in Psychology with Health Studies and a Masters degree in Psychology, which gives me valuable knowledge of the academic and professional side of mental health. I was also appointed to establish and develop the Mental Health Advocacy Project for Wyre and Fylde, leaving post when I became ill a couple of years ago. More recently I have supported the development of a training package for Older People's Mental Health Advocacy (non-instructed) for Age Concern Blackpool working in partnership with N-Compass.

Marjorie Carer Representative - Central Lancashire

From September 2007 I became the Carer Representative for Central Lancashire. I care for my eighty two year old husband and my grand daughter. Since leaving school I have been in caring occupations and roles; as a nursery nurse, general nurse, bringing up the family, caring for my father with dementia, teaching for 24 years and working as a Regional Official for a teachers' union. I was involved in voluntary work for Ormskirk CAB until its closure, and since retiring I have become a volunteer Advocate mainly based in the Scarisbrick Centre at Ormskirk Hospital. I regularly meet with service users and carers as well as liaising with charitable organisations, statutory bodies, social workers and mental health teams. In order to properly represent other carers in the area, I have started to attend the forum of the West Lancashire Princess Royal Trust for Carers so that I may become more fully aware of the needs of other local carers and service users.

B.M.E. VOLUNTEER VACANCY

**for a CARER or SERVICE USER from the
B.M.E. community living in Lancashire
(Black, Minority or Ethnic groups)**

**Are you interested in helping to improve
mental health services in Lancashire?**

We would like to hear from you!

**You will receive a payment for each meeting you attend
and be reimbursed for all reasonable travel expenses.**

**For more information or to receive an application pack please
contact the Partnership Team, as below.**

**VOLUNTEER CARERS
REQUIRED**

**Would you like to join the Partnership
Board as a Carer member?**

**We currently have 2 volunteer
vacancies for CARERS**

living in the

Fylde Coast and North Lancashire areas

(including Lancaster and Morecambe)

**Would you like to use your skills, knowledge
and experience to help influence the way
services are run and to improve standards?**

We would like to hear from you!

**You will receive a payment for each meeting
you attend and be reimbursed for all
reasonable travel expenses.**

**For more information or to receive an application pack
please contact the Partnership Team as below.**

Valerie Carer Representative - East Lancashire

I am a carer for a close family member suffering from schizophrenia, finally diagnosed in 1997. Since then, caring responsibilities permitting, I have been involved, both locally and nationally, in consultation, research, teaching and campaigning, particularly with Rethink, as a NW Committee and Board of Trustees member. For four years I co-ordinated a large support group and am a trained and experienced mental health advocate for carers and service users. My principal motivation is the urgent need for a change of culture within the workforce with regard to carers, for full recognition of their role and acceptance as key members of care teams. I am keen to see proper involvement in consultation for those who are most severely ill and therefore seldom represented, as well as better services, underpinned with vastly increased resources, across the whole range of mental illness, and much greater public understanding of mental illness, particularly in the early stages. I believe strongly that peer support and group initiatives can bring about change, so will be more than happy for people in East Lancashire to contact me about mental health issues to be raised at Board level.

For further information and/or to register your details to be kept informed of our current work, please contact

The Lancashire Partnership Team, Suite 217-218 Bizspace, Turner Road, Nelson BB9 7DR - Tel:01282 607047
Fax: 01282 607051 Email: lancashirementalhealth@eastlancspct.nhs.uk Website: www.lancashirementalhealth.org.uk

your details will be held in the strictest confidence