

## **Service User and Carer Advisory Group : Supporting people who use Services for Mood, Anxiety & Personality Disorders, through collaborative work with Service Managers**

The Service User and Carer Advisory Group is part of the Mood, Anxiety & Personality (MAP) Clinical Academic Group (CAG) - an organisational structure which manages services for mood, anxiety & personality disorder across the South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM). Most advisory Group members have experience of using mental health services or of being a family member/carer of someone who does. Other members include senior managers. We meet every month and our aim is to keep the views of service users at the heart of all service developments and improvements. To make sure that people know what we are discussing in our meetings we have developed this short briefing sheet:

- 1) Six service user/carer consultants were at the February meeting, plus the Clinical Director, and the patient & public involvement leads for the MAP, Psychological Medicine and Psychosis CAGs. Apologies were received from 7 service user/carer consultants and one staff member.
- 2) We will develop a role for service user / carer consultants help community mental health teams to support and encourage service users to give feedback and get involved within their services.
- 3) We met Dr. Hugh Jones – the new clinical director. He described the emerging structure – there will be 4 ‘pathways’ – assessment, personality disorders, recurrent affective disorders and anxiety disorders. Each pathway will have a clinical and operational lead. We will work with these leads to make sure service users and carers are involved in development work. We raised some concerns such as: the delays in developing the personality disorder pathway, the over representation of black men & women in mental health services, how lack of information can sometimes prevent you from making the most of psychological therapies & the need to offer more than medication for bipolar disorder.
- 4) Following our visits to reception areas, some money was made available for improvements. A member of our group is helping to make sure that the money is spent on things that were highlighted. We will continue to work with staff to carry out recommendations. Members of the group will work with the clinical governance officer to plan revisits to reception areas in May. Concern was raised about disability access on some sites. This was also highlighted in visits to services to check on quality.
- 5) A group member fed back that she was pleased that a second service user consultant was now on the bipolar and recurrent depression steering group. Group members continue to get feedback - with a session at Hear Us in Croydon and some targeted work with BME communities.
- 6) Group members and other service user consultants have finished accompanying staff on visits to services to check on quality. A member fed back that the process had been positive and enjoyable and that it was useful for similar services to review each other. Reports will be sent to the services and senior managers will also review them.
- 7) We will review how our meeting works as part of a wider review of service user/carer involvement in the CAG. Currently, the PPI lead is identifying the level of involvement that is happening in services.

***Views and comments from SLaM service users and carers on any of the above issues, as well as feedback on how you would like the ‘Mood, Anxiety & Personality Clinical Academic Group (MAP CAG) Advisory Group’ to develop its strategic work with SLaM, are welcome. Please contact Alice Glover, Patient & Public Involvement Lead on 0203 228 0959 or email [alice.glover@slam.nhs.uk](mailto:alice.glover@slam.nhs.uk)***