



Manchester LINK

HOMELESSNESS

Staff Training DVD

Why did we look at staff training?

Lydia Hurford-Cato from the Manchester LINK Support Organisation went out and spoke to people at different groups and organisations that work around homelessness. She spoke with workers and service users / clients to find out what they thought about health and social care services in Manchester.

One thing that a lot of people said is that they were not treated with dignity and respect. Once staff in services know that they are homeless, that they are treated as 'second class citizens'.

A group of people from the LINK Steering Group and

different projects working with homelessness came together to form the 'Manchester LINK Homelessness Task Group'.

The group decided what the LINK could do to improve services for the people of Manchester.

They felt that one way to address the issue would be to produce a film. It is hoped that the film will raise people's awareness and understanding of what it is like to be homeless.



What has the LINK been doing about staff training?

The LINK put an advertisement in its monthly newsletter and sent out an email, asking if any community groups or organisations would like to make the film. It asked anyone interested to put forward a proposal with details of their relevant experience, together with a fee to produce it.

The Service User Network (SUN) were successful in their bid to make the film.

As part of the agreement, they held a workshop at the LINK event on 5th October 2009, which was the start of their involvement of service users.

The LINK held an event on 5th October 2009

Notes from the workshop: Service User Network (SUN) to produce DVD to train staff in health and social care services

People that are homeless say that sometimes staff in health and social services do not treat them fairly. This is probably because staff in services do not understand what it is like to be homeless.

It was decided that the LINK would help make services better by funding a group that works with homeless people to make a short film. The film will be used to raise awareness with staff about issues around homelessness.



Introduction:

Following a successful funding bid, the SUN will be working in partnership with Life Matters to involve service users in the design, production, editing and publicising of a DVD aimed at staff who work with the homeless. The DVD aims to tackle issues faced by the homeless, and break down pre-conceptions that act as barriers to service users when they access services.

Feedback from the event:

Three groups were formed at the event, and each given the following questions to address:

1. Target audience: who will the DVD be aimed at?
2. What are the barriers faced by the homeless when trying to access a service?
3. What suggestions do you have, for inclusion within the DVD?

The outcomes can be seen over the next few pages.

Target audience: Who will the training DVD be aimed at?

Whilst the DVD is mainly aimed at health and social care providers, it may also be of interest to the following staff and organisations:

<p>Public sector: Prison release staff Army aftercare teams Council staff Benefit agencies Police Officers and staff GMPTE - Transport services Public facing services Home finder staff Direct Access Centres Benefits - call centre staff Prisons Care managers Post office Support workers Schools Jobcentre Plus</p>	<p>Private sector: Opticians Banks Housing associations Chemists Education providers Interpreters</p> <p>Third/Voluntary/Community sector: Crisis resolution teams Day centres/ drop-ins Hostel staff Citizens advice Bureau</p> <p>Other groups: Family members</p>
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What are the barriers faced by the homeless when trying to access a service?

- The stigma attached to "the homeless"
- Judgemental attitudes - often fuelled by hearsay or one bad experience

- Learning disabled - example given: one service user with Multiple sclerosis often got mistaken for being drunk and denied service
- Jargon used by statutory agencies may make communication difficult
- Dangers of over simplification - can come across as patronising
- People are often judged by their appearance
- Stereotypes of homeless people as having an addiction or being aggressive
- Not knowing what services are available to vulnerable people
- Employment difficulties: no fixed address or identification makes employment difficult
- Transport - clients may be unable to get to appointments
- Hospital discharge - often people will be discharged at night and have no transport home



What suggestions do you have, for inclusion within the DVD?

Staff attitudes:

- Ask, don't make assumptions
- Let people know what you can do
- Listen first then talk
- Speak clearly
- Treat people case by case
- Honesty and empathy
- Body language
- Direct engagement
- Clarity of staff explanation
- Offer help - better to have it offered and it not be accepted,

than not offer it when it was needed

- Don't force your beliefs: Accept people for who they are, meet the needs of the moment

Service user involvement:

- "Fish where the fish are"
- Use service users as volunteers, throughout the planning process
- Peer assessment - when homeless: for supported housing, personal responsibility and accountability

Pre-conceived notions:

- Basic training information should be given around drugs, alcohol, mental illness to inform staff
- Front line information exchange

It was suggested that the DVD would feature several role play based scenarios with different outcomes to enable staff to see how problems can begin etc.

The DVD will finish with suggested ways to cascade ideas that staff have as a result of watching the DVD to other members of staff, and how this could contribute to changing the culture of the organisation in order to make it more user friendly.



The next steps

The SUN would like to invite service users and providers to become involved in the project in the following ways:

- Form part of a task group to direct the project
- Consult with staff who work with vulnerable people to see what information would be appropriate for the DVD
- Consult with service users to see what information they feel should be included on the DVD
- Scripting, acting in, producing and editing the DVD
- Publicise the DVD to relevant organisations

If you want to know more about SUN's involvement with the production of the DVD

Please contact Lorna the Co-ordinator!

sunmanchester@hotmail.co.uk

www.sunmanchester.org.uk

0777 258 2425

What happened next?

SUN set up a 'task group' which met regularly to discuss the content of the film and bring everyone up to date.

Lydia from the LINK attended, along with Lorna from SUN, and Rick from Lifematters. The active service users who were doing the filming and acting were also at the meetings.

Lorna updated the LINK regularly on how the film was progressing.

The film was edited in March and April in preparation for the LINK event on 26th April.

It is to be shown for the first time at the event, in front of professionals from health and social care services.

What happens to the film after the event?

The LINK wants to encourage health and social care professionals to use the film as part of their staff training.

By doing this, they hope that staff will increase their understanding of what it is like to be homeless. And this should lead to homeless people feeling like they are being treated better.

The film is being shown at the LINK event on 26th April, and hopefully the professionals there will tell their colleagues about the film.

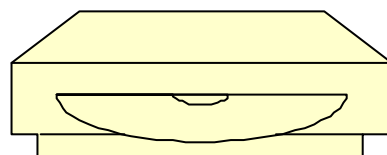
The LINK has arranged for 500 copies of the DVD to be produced. Some of these will be given out at

the event.

Others will be sent to NHS Manchester, the Hospital Trusts and departments within Adult Social Care. The GP surgeries that were visited as part of the Mystery Shopping activity will also receive a DVD.

Any organisation that wishes to have a copy of the DVD can contact the LINK.

If you would like a copy, please get in touch with the LINK, details are given on the back page.



With many thanks also to:



FACE IT

Face It is a theatre and drama based group supported by ECHG and based at Lifematters on Swan Street.

Face It is aimed at adults who have experienced or are experiencing homelessness, mental health issues and substance misuse and uses drama to explore a variety of issues around those experiences.

Regular performance projects take place and the group welcomes new members at any time.

Fridays 1.30 - 4pm.

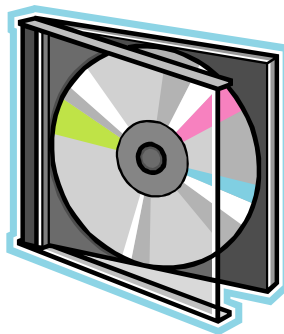
For more details about
The Face It theatre
and drama group
Contact
Rick Jundi
on 0161 835 5921

Would you like a copy of the film?

The LINK would be really pleased if you would like a copy of the film.

Just get in touch with your details.

There may be a small fee payable, which will cover the costs of printing the DVD and postage.



Whether you will be charged a fee or not will depend on whether you are a charity or a statutory organisation, and how many copies you would like.

Would you like to know more?

Would you like to get involved with the LINK?

If you would like to:

- Find out more about any of the pieces of work about homelessness,
- Find out more about what the LINK is or what it is doing,
- Have someone from the LINK visit your group, or
- Get involved with the LINK

Then please contact Lydia on:

☎ 0161 214 3909

✉ Email:

manchesterlink@blackhealthagency.org.uk

✉ Write to: BHA, Gaddum House,
6 Great Jackson Street,
Manchester, M15 4AX