



Mental Health, Day Services and Community Participation

“Mental ill health does contribute to social exclusion because it affects your confidence to participate in the life of your community.”

Who is this for?

People affected by mental health problems, all those providing services for people affected by mental health problems, including primary care and voluntary sector staff, and people who commission or work in day services, volunteer bureaux and agencies, sports and leisure facilities.



Key facts

- In discussions with the Social Exclusion Unit, people with mental health problems highlighted the important role of day services but often said that they should have a greater focus on providing access to mainstream services in the community rather than being 'building based'.
- In 2002-03, health and social care spent £140 million on day and employment services for adults with severe mental health problems in England, but the money is not always invested in the types of services that best promote social inclusion.
- Direct payments allow people to purchase their own care, based on an agreed needs-led assessment. However, take-up by people with mental health problems has been low.
- Nine out of ten people with mental health problems engaged in volunteering said it gave them a sense of purpose and achievement, and more than eight out of ten said it had a positive effect on their mental health. Arts, leisure and sports activities can also have a positive impact on mental health.

Promoting social inclusion

ACCESSING THE WIDER COMMUNITY, MAINSTREAM PROJECT, IMAGINE, LIVERPOOL

Imagine is a voluntary sector organisation that runs the Mainstream project. Mainstream supports people with mental health problems to access wider opportunities rather than just mental health services. Each staff member ("bridge builder") is responsible for making links with a particular sector and supporting clients in these areas. Sectors include education and training; employment; visual and performing arts; sports and leisure; volunteering; and faith, spirituality and cultural communities. Clients define their own support needs and aspirations, and the client and bridge builder identify possible opportunities to meet these in mainstream settings. Bridge builders offer dedicated, tailored support to clients as they develop the confidence to use mainstream services and further develop social networks.

Contact: imagine@mentalhealth.org.uk, 0151 709 2366 - www.imaginementalhealth.org.uk

What can commissioners and providers of day services do?

Ensuring services are outward focused and inclusive

- Take a general approach to the planning of services that focuses on social inclusion and employment outcomes.
- Develop strong links and referral arrangements with community services and local partners.
- Recognise people's diverse needs around ethnicity, gender and culture, and reflect this in provision, perhaps by commissioning specialist support from local voluntary and community groups.
- Promote opportunities for the wider community to access day service facilities, eg use facilities for evening courses or concerts.
- Assign project workers to accompany people to mainstream community services if needed (see the previous case study).

Ensuring people have access to the opportunities they value

- Involve people with mental health problems in the design and delivery of services, including people who do not currently use day services. For example, feedback could be sought as part of the Care Programme Approach (CPA) process.
- Ask individuals what they wish to do with their time – people often identify activities or participation in the community, rather than in a day centre.
- Encourage people with mental health problems to run activities.
- Develop a newsletter or intranet to keep people informed of any changes to services where services do not operate from a fixed base/building.
- Introduce flexible opening hours to enable people in employment, or who have other commitments during the day, to access services.

Linking to other services and support

- Recognise that day services can help address other support needs that people accessing these services may have, such as housing need/homelessness or substance misuse problems, by putting them in contact with the relevant services.
- Support people to access and use direct payments.

What can mainstream services, such as supported employment, arts and leisure providers, do?

- Offer taster courses, or go into day services to talk to people who could potentially use your service to discuss their needs and aspirations.
- Ensure that discounts on services are available to people with mental health problems as well as to those with physical impairments.
- Promote opportunities for people with mental health problems to participate alongside people from across the community rather than offering segregated provision.

What can day services and mainstream service providers do together?

- Provide training for staff in mainstream services, with the help of people with mental health problems and day services staff, on the needs of people with mental health problems.
- Ensure that there are clear opportunities for progression from day services to mainstream services offering a variety of opportunities.
- Involve people with mental health problems in the monitoring of services, including the setting of indicators, with feedback to service commissioners.
- Develop links with the local area, for example by holding joint meetings with local tenants' associations or other local groups.

Further information

Direct payments¹ – most people who use mental health services have the legal right to choose to receive a direct payment to meet their assessed social care needs. This offers greater control and flexibility for the individual about how their needs can best be met. People can have as much support as they need to manage a direct payment, including planning to allow for fluctuating conditions and crises. Direct payments can be particularly helpful for people from ethnic minority backgrounds as they allow culturally sensitive support to be purchased.

Although direct payments were originally introduced for disabled adults, access to direct payments has been extended more recently to other groups, including carers (Health and Social Care Act 2001, and Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000).

Direct payment schemes are managed by each local authority, and most have an independent support service. For further information if you are having difficulty accessing direct payments contact Robin Murray Neill, on 01206 287 588.

Arts/Exercise on Prescription – a number of areas run ‘arts on prescription’ or ‘exercise on prescription’ projects, where GPs can refer people to local arts organisations, leisure centres or gyms. Evaluation has found that such schemes can have a positive effect on mental health. See **Health and Social Care** fact sheet for more details.

THE SOCIAL EXCLUSION UNIT REPORT ACTION POINTS

- Transform day services into community resources that promote social inclusion through improved access to mainstream opportunities.
- The Department of Health (DH) will work through the National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) to ensure that day services for people with severe mental health problems develop to provide for supported employment, occupation and mainstream social contact beyond the mental health system. This should include:
 - access to supported employment opportunities where appropriate;
 - person-centred provision that caters appropriately for the needs of all individuals, including those with the most severe mental health problems;
 - developing strong links and referral arrangements with community services and local partners;
 - providing befriending, advocacy or support to enable people to access local services, (including childcare services);
 - involving people with mental health problems in service design and operation; and
 - a focus on social inclusion and employment outcomes. (NIMHE guidance for commissioners to be developed by the end of 2004.)
- Progress in service redesign will be monitored through the annual review of mental health services (the ‘Autumn Assessment’) by Local Implementation Teams.

- NIMHE will work with the voluntary sector to disseminate a guide to action on direct payments for commissioners, managers, practitioners and people with mental health problems. This will include highlighting the potential for direct payments to help meet the needs of ethnic minorities and carers. (NIMHE to disseminate by the end of 2004.)
- The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) will identify and disseminate good practice examples. (SCIE by the end of 2005.)
- DH will review the direct payment exclusion criteria in relation to people detained under mental health legislation on leave of absence from hospital. (DH by the end of 2005.)
- Models to enable adults with mental health problems to participate in volunteering are being developed through Capital Volunteering, a partnership project in London led by Community Service Volunteers and NIMHE. (Community Service Volunteers/NIMHE from 2004.)
- The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in partnership with DH will give priority to undertaking research to establish the health benefits and social outcomes of participation in arts projects and the characteristics of effective local projects. (DCMS/DH to report by the end of 2006.)

Funding

Many day services receive their core funding from health and social care services. Other funding is also available (often to promote specific activities or to meet the needs of particular groups), but this can vary between different areas. Day service commissioners and providers could contact organisations such as their local Jobcentre Plus, further education college or local leisure services to discuss whether they could jointly fund and support projects.

The Government Funding website (www.governmentfunding.org.uk) provides information on grants that are available to voluntary and community groups from the Home Office, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), DH and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

The Grantfinder service (www.grantfinder.co.uk) is the most wide-ranging source in the UK of accurate and comprehensive information on the full range of UK and EU financial support provision, including grants, subsidies, loans, venture funding and other incentives, that are available to all types of organisations. While there is a cost to purchase this service, Grantfinder tends to be available in the majority of local areas, either through local authorities and/or local Councils for Voluntary Services (CVSs). Contact your local authority or Local Strategic Partnership for further information.

References

- 1 Direct payments provided by health and social care services need to be distinguished from the scheme by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to pay benefits and pensions directly into people's bank accounts, which is also known as 'direct payments'.

www.socialexclusion.gov.uk

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