Response to NHS Chief Executive’s Open Call for Evidence and Ideas

Respondent ID: 24

Organisation name: Emotional First Aid

Type of response: Document and email correspondence
Emotional First Aid: Innovation.

Background
Ensuring that every child gets the best start in life is one of the goals of Solent NHS Trust, working with partners to achieve the aims set out in national documents. Every Child Matters sets out the vision that agencies, services and professionals should actively work together to ensure that all children and young people have the best opportunities to grow and develop. The emotional health and psychological well-being of young people are essential ingredients for the achievement of the five outcomes set out in Every Child Matters. The National Service Framework for Children, Young People, and Maternity Services also recognises the importance of psychological wellbeing for healthy social, emotional, physical, cognitive and educational development. Standard Nine of the NSF calls for all staff working directly with children to have sufficient knowledge, training and support to promote the psychological well-being of children, young people and their families and to identify early indicators of difficulty.

A young person may not have a mental health problem to be experiencing emotional distress. For a young person emotional distress can be heightened as they have less experience of understanding their feelings, and situations are new. It is at this initial stage that support and a listening ear can be most beneficial. Nationally it is estimated that about one in four young people will have a mental health, emotional or behavioural problem sometime in their life. Ten per cent of five to fifteen year olds have a diagnosable mental health disorder, with around 1.1 million children and young people under eighteen who would benefit from specialist CAMHS services.

CAMHS Tier 1 training at a regional level is generally delivered to increase the skills and confidence of frontline workers; to promote positive mental health and to work more effectively with children and young people who may experience mental health problems.

Emotional First Aid (EFA™)
*Emotional First Aid™ is the initial response given to a young person experiencing emotional distress before specific professional help is sought and obtained.*

Solent NHS Trust Provider Services aims to be an innovative organisation, which has encouraged the CAMHS Team (Senior CAMHS workers Stuart Gemmell, Jacquie Kelly and Dave Smith, managed by Barbara Inkson) to devise the Emotional First Aid (EFA™) training course. Launched on 1st July 2008, EFA is complementary to existing CAMHS Tier 1 training. EFA training differs from the general CAMHS Tier 1 training as it is built on adolescent’s expressing their experiences and what helped towards addressing their needs. Based on early intervention, the course’s focus is on adolescents who are perhaps experiencing some form of mental health issues but are continuing to function with daily life, it is not a clinical intervention.
EFA training is directed at practitioners who come into contact with young people regularly, for example, teachers, youth workers, project co-ordinators, to aid in the detection of signs of ‘emotional stuckness’, thereby reducing the risk of the development of more severe disorders, significantly increasing mental health awareness and the potential for early identification and intervention and therefore better long term outcomes.

The course has been informed by the booklet ‘Me & U – a real insight into the emotional experience of a young person today’ and an accompanying DVD. The project was undertaken by Solent Youth Action working with young people who have experienced mental health illnesses and made positive steps towards a recovery. The EFA utilizes these resources to teach those who work with young people to recognise the signs of mental illness and to help them learn how to provide support, and encourage the person to seek help. Working in this way increases capacity, confidence and competence in the Tier 1 workforce therefore reducing access to both Tier 2 community and Tier 3 specialist CAMH services.

Training Delivery
The EFA course is delivered over 6 half day sessions (3.5 hours per session) delivered over 6 weeks. This delivery style is crucial to the course as it aims to encourage reflective practice and personal development amongst trainees. The skills adults learn gives them confidence to become advocates for young people and to try and help them resolve their issues. An important element to the EFA course is the support network that cohorts are encouraged to form. After their courses each cohort meets quarterly to review skills in practice, and is encouraged to utilise the support network created.

The EFA course was delivered to 4 pilot cohorts in 2008 with 38 professionals from health, education, social care, voluntary sector attending since the launch. Several examples of initial feedback indicate the enthusiasm with which the EFA course has been received:

“You really need this course but you won’t realise how much you needed it until you have done it”.

“The rest of my team need to come on the course – it needs to be rolled out over the city/country so that we are all thinking in the same way and aren’t blind to people’s emotional stuckness”.

“That young people may present with one problem but may be hiding another”.

“I have taken more time to look beyond the behaviours and the outward signs of emotion ‘aggression, etc’ to try and see if there is an underlying issue”.

The first “Train the Trainers” course was delivered on 27th & 28th April with 22 participants. The training delivery and outcomes will be independently evaluated by Southampton Solent University. A website has been set up.
(www.emotionalfirstaid.co.uk) to promote the training and will soon provide a forum for Emotional First Aiders and Trainers. The EFA Team has won an “Innovator of the Quarter Award” from NHS Innovations South East, in recognition of the innovative approach adopted.

**EFA Training Activity 2009-2010**

£26,000 was secured by Barbara Inkson from CSIP, which allowed the team to employ a band five trainer for delivery of the EFA courses over the financial year 2009-10. The EFA team was able to increase training delivery and train 142 staff from the wider Children & Young People’s workforce in Southampton.

![Sector Breakdown: April 2009 - March 2010](image)

In response to demand for the EFA material to be recontextualised for the Primary Years setting (Staff working with Children age 5-11), Stuart Gemmell & Dave Smith created Primary EFA and two pilot cohorts in Gosport and Southampton.

- **Having attended many courses, I have been blown away by both the content and the presentation of this course. It has been a fantastic experience, that has made me more confident in my work place. Thank you.**

- **Thank you one of the best courses been on. Confidence in myself that can do job, right to feel emotions and how important the child chooses you. Group support excellent and invaluable.**

- **This has been the most valuable course I have been on. It has transformed my way of working with Children and I am already seeing positive results. Dave & Stuart’s delivery has been supportive and engaging. An extremely valuable course!!!**
EFA Training Activity 2010-2011

The financial year 2010-2011 has seen EFA move from a local initiative towards gaining a national identity. The solid reputation of Emotional First Aid that we have sought to build upon since its inception in 2008 was picked up on by many Regional TaMHS (Targeted Mental Health in School) Commissioners across the country.

By the end of March 2011 we had successfully delivered Emotional First Aid for Young People, Primary Emotional First Aid and Train the Trainers courses in: Lambeth; Thurrock; Southend; Sittingbourne; Medway; Wokingham; Slough; Bracknell Forest; Portsmouth and Rochdale, with a further courses being delivered by EFA trained staff from last years courses delivered in Fareham & Gosport and Windsor.

It is the hope of both EFA and the Regional TaMHS Coordinators that EFA will continue to be rolled out in the development sites and add to the positive feedback and momentum we have created.

In the past financial year we have also been grateful to take on two groups of IPL (Inter Professional Learning) Students from Southampton University, who carried out audits on our Customer Experience including efficacy of our marketing materials and website, and the second group auditing the experience of being an EFA Trainer. This has given us some vital information which we hope can improve our training and brand identity. The audit reports produced by the IPL students are available to view on the EFA website.

There have been a large number of delegates on EFA courses from Education, mainly due to the nature of the TaMHS project. A number of comments received from these courses were from teaching staff who believed that EFA should become part of teacher training, and we are proud to acknowledge that we have delivered a trial cohort of EFA to a group of PGCE (Post Graduate Certification of Education) Students from Southampton University who will become Newly Qualified Teachers starting their careers in September 2011, and an article about their experience of the course will be uploaded onto our website shortly. A further cohort of Primary EFA will be delivered at the University in February 2012.
EFA Training Activity 2011-2012

In March 2011, EFA were commissioned to write a Parents version with thanks to a grant from Sue Boniface, Parenting Commissioner. Rather than create a new Parenting Programme, Stuart Gemmell & Dave Smith, together with a group of Parents, Parent Support Officers and Advisors, using the EFA ethos as a backdrop created a six week programme focussing on recognising Parents own Emotional Stuckness and developing Self Esteem. We aim to have Parents’ EFA launched as a new product in September 2011, and will offer this out to current trainers to deliver in their localities.

As we write this report, we can also announce that EFA for staff working with people with Learning Disabilities is in development. EFA has been commissioned to carry out this conversion course with thanks to Portsmouth TaMHS Commissioner Anne Hutchings and Portsmouth CAMHS Manager Anne Flemming. A group of specialist staff will be developing the material together with Stuart Gemmell and Paul Jetten, which we hope will be ready to roll out towards the end of the second quarter of the financial year 2011-2012.

The EFA Team are also looking at creating a new courses targeted at staff working with young offenders; Carers; and Peer Mentors.

It is widely acknowledged that training from CAMHS is often seen as reactionary, but we know from studies in physical health that early intervention can have a positive impact on reducing the severity of symptoms. Currently Mental Health Services do not respond in this way. The emphasis is on treating Mental Illness. Emotional First Aid seeks to increase confidence, capability and capacity in the universal services and encourage workers to engage with Children and Young People experiencing emotional distress before more severe mental health problems take hold. The impact of this training we hope will reduce the cost of higher tiered mental health services and create a more robust well-being orientated approach to staff working in universal services, promoting that mental health is everyone’s business.

There is a longitudinal study being undertaken by Solent University on the effect on staff confidence levels from having attended the emotional first aid training. There is a further study being completed by Southampton University who are looking at creating a Wellbeing tool to measure the efficacy of having EFA trained staff on the Children & Young People.
Dear Graham,

Firstly many thanks for getting back to me.
In answer to your question about spreading Emotional First Aid (EFA) across the NHS, I wondered if we could set out a number of objectives with the assistance of yourself and your team.

The first part would be to establish a strategic forum in government to pull together Health, Education, Social Care and the Voluntary Sector to explain the purpose and delivery of EFA. We do have some information on the importance of training and early intervention in the Universal Services, which does highlight a need for EFA across a range of sectors. I know that some of these documents may be out of date with the change of government, but so far there have been a number of white papers and initiatives that EFA does tie in well with such as:

Every Child matters - Change for Children No Health Without Mental Health National service framework for children, young people and maternity services.
The common assessment framework
The common core of skills knowledge for the children's work force (Common Core) National occupational standards in Children's care, learning and development National healthy Schools programme Extended services (may go to) in and around schools SEAL (social emotional aspects of learning) Children's Act 2004 CWDC standards for Foster carers/common induction standard: No5 and No 6 + common core of skills and knowledge No 2 and No 3.

This strategic forum would be well placed to act as strategic partners which would be able to disseminate information back into each region of the UK.

Secondly, if we were able to create a national database for those in local health and education authorities that are responsible for wellbeing and the promotion of mental health (perhaps those who head up what used to be the TaMHS (Targeted Mental Health in Schools) initiative. This would allow us to develop a targeted marketing strategy to promote EFA and the importance of early intervention in the universal services. If we could maintain the momentum that we created in EFA last year, the longitudinal study being carried out on the efficacy of EFA on the confidence, capability and therefore capacity of staff who have completed the training should demonstrate that staff in the universal services feel more well equipped to make interventions and work alongside children and young people showing signs of emotional distress and reduce the likelihood of them developing more severe long-term mental health problems. This in turn we would hope, would lead to a reduction in the amount of unnecessary referrals into CAMHS services, therefore reducing the cost on the NHS of these higher tiered mental health services.

The third phase of objectives to continue to roll out and develop EFA may be to look into moving it into a Social Enterprise or Community Interest Company, which would allow us to access further funding. An example of how effective the social enterprise model is that of Mental Health First Aid, who although are not competition to EFA, as their training deals more with working with Mental Illness, they have a much larger infrastructure and marketing network that EFA is able to produce at present. (Currently EFA is a team of three staff, of whom only myself is full-time. My manager, Stuart Gemmell, is split between EFA Manager and Strategic Lead for Primary Mental Health in Southampton, and our Administrator is only 30 hours per week).
We would also hope to promote EFA on at any Exhibitions or Road shows relating to innovations in health and wellbeing. So far despite generating £349,000 worth of business last year, we are still struggling to market EFA effectively and a great deal of our business has been the solid reputation of EFA & Solent NHS Trust, and word of mouth.

If you would like myself and my manager Stuart Gemmell, to come up to London to give you more information on the work we have done, we would be more than happy to. There are a number of new products that we currently have in development, which we feel could further promote EFA training and NHS Innovation to other sectors.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks

Paul Jetten