



Rolling out modernisation

County Durham Care and Support Learning Disability Day Services

Learning Disability Day Services has been redesigned to offer high quality person centred care and support for adults with learning disabilities. It serves people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and those requiring health related support.





Background

This initiative was as a Topss England pilot site from 2003-2006. The core elements of this initiative included a management restructure; day service modernisation; a companionship scheme; community project workers and funding for a communications project officer.

County Durham Care and Support currently provides a range of services for people with a learning disability. There are day centres, community facilities and special projects throughout the county and people can access services that suit their needs close to home. The level of support for each person is planned as a result of discussions between them and their care co-ordinator (social worker). Services are only provided once this needs assessment has taken place.

Aims

The key aim of this initiative was to redesign and modernise the Learning Disability Day Services in County Durham to be more flexible and responsive to the needs of individuals.

What was done?

Job roles were redesigned and job descriptions and person specifications were revised. A range of extended skills were identified for participants undertaking these roles. This led to the development of training programmes to improve the knowledge and skills of the workers and enable them to be more effective in the revised roles.

The bespoke range of development opportunities included training in facilitation; equality and diversity and protection of vulnerable adults. Relevant NVQ level 2 and 3 modules were identified for the staff.

To ensure service users, families and stakeholders were kept informed of the changes, the team produced a DVD which explained why the changes were necessary.

“I don’t know what I would do without this [service].” Parent.

Outcomes

Key outcomes include:

- the project has now been integrated into everyday policies and systems
- job descriptions and service specifications are available for use by other services in the region
- and other organisations wishing to redesign services
- new roles have now been rolled out across other geographical areas in the region.



Impact

There have been a number of key impacts from the project:

- **reducing hospital admissions:** supporting individuals and carers helps service users stay in their homes for longer periods of time and reduce or delay admissions into residential or longstay care facilities
- **timely hospital discharge:** service users being discharged from hospital are able to resume their placement within the service once the appropriate assessments have taken place— usually within a day or two discharge
- **more effective transitions:** the transitions team supports young people to move from school to adult services, in a seamless way
- **more effective use of resources:** this service has ensured that the staff working in day care services have the right knowledge, skills and competence to look after people with learning disability across the region.

Learning

Key factors in gaining acceptance of, and implementing, change included:

- social marketing and awareness raising initiatives, eg DVD
- engaging with key stakeholders
- commitment and determination of the individuals leading.

The team manager notes that service users, parents, carers and staff members are often very anxious during periods of change. It is very important to ensure that their concerns are listened to and, wherever possible, acted upon:

“If you are unable to meet any of the requests of stakeholders it is important to explain why you aren’t able to do so. Always be open and honest.” **Team Manager.**

Next steps

A review of learning disability services in the region is currently underway. A service user consultation has recently taken place to consider ways of improving social inclusion, whilst ensuring the dignity and respect afforded to individuals is maintained and enhanced.



Links

County Durham Care and Support, Learning Disability Day Services, Statement of purpose and service user guide <http://content.durham.gov.uk/PDFRepository/LD-Day-Services-Durham-and-Chester-le-Street.pdf>

http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforce_strategy/workforce_innovation_programme/prevention/NToW53.aspx (Includes video)

NToW53 - Range of job descriptions to support the project

NToW53 - Change manager job description

NToW53 - Community coach job description

NToW53 - Community project team manager job description

NToW53 - Community team manager job description

NToW53 - Day services improvement service user coordinator job description

NToW53 - Project manager day service modernisation job description

NToW53 - Senior community coach job description

Contacts

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/Pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=8295>

Further information

For further information about the health and social care integration work between Skills for Health and Skills for Care please contact:

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