

# Community Development Workers Newsletter

Edition 1 May 2012

## Over the last 12 months...

Community Development Workers (CDW) have been working on numerous projects across Dudley & Walsall. These projects have worked to increase people's knowledge of mental health, and have helped to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Relaxation & Meditation sessions with the Gujarati Community, the Walsall Well-being Project, a visit to the International Slavery Museum, and Mental Health Awareness workshops with the elderly community in Halesowen are just some of the projects that have been carried out by the CDW Team.

The team also held regular drop-in clinics across various community settings, and have worked at increasing mental health awareness with young people. In addition to this the CDWs have worked on a Cultural Awareness Guide and Toolkit,

which will be available across the Trust.

As part of the work done with the communities during Ramadan, CDWs spent time on Radio Ramadan talking about mental health, local workshops and the Foundation Trust campaign.

The team focused a lot of their work in the community but in the future plan to work more within Trust services, to help make services more accessible to black and minority ethnic (BME) groups.

In addition to all this, CDWs have led on the Foundation Trust membership drive. By reaching the wider BME communities, and voluntary sector services, we have secured over 2500 members as part of the Trust's overall membership figure.



## Relaxation and Meditation

A 10 Week Relaxation and Meditation program, looking at stress, relaxation, chakras (energy centre) and mandalas, (art used in healing and therapy) began at the beginning of May.



These sessions are taking place with the Shree Krishna Elderly Day Care Centre, in Dudley.

This project aimed to improve and promote positive mental health within the Gujarati community of Dudley, as well as reducing stigma towards mental health, providing the attendees with practical skills and improving wellbeing.

It is hoped, at the end of the course, participant's self-esteem and confidence will increase, as well as a sense of empowerment.

## Diwali Celebrations

During October 2011, to improve wellbeing and promote greater cultural awareness, the group made Diwali cards.

Feedback from one of sessions showed that those involved felt a lot more positive after the task.





## Halesowen Asian Elderly Association Mental Health Awareness

After successfully applying for some funding through the Small Grants Fund, a six week program was started. These sessions were to promote mental health and breakdown the stigma attached to mental health. A selection of topics were covered over the course, starting with an introduction to mental health, grasping an understanding of mental health was and looking at self-help strategies.

To help breakdown the stigma attached to mental health the group looked at myths, facts and statistics of mentally ill people. At the end of the first session the group were given 'Good to be you' CDs and leaflets in Punjabi, Urdu and English. To break up the sessions, and make them enjoyable, a session around art took place, looking at art as a therapy. Clients created pieces of art around what mental health meant to them and whilst doing this had discussions around these thoughts.

To improve emotional health, the group developed new skills by learning how to grow their own fruit and veg. Not only did they learn that gardening was therapeutic and good for their emotional well-being, it was also a way of keeping fit. Working with the EBEs and the Carers Network, a session around carers rights and entitlements was offered. Many people within the group had been carers without even realising. Carers spoke about their mental health, as well as the person they are caring for. After all the hard work and commitment from the group, everyone went for a meal at The Venue.

The sessions ended with an evaluation, where group members discussed what they had learnt over the weeks. The group are now speak about mental health more and share their experiences. As a result of this project the group's mental health and wellbeing improved, and they now know ways to help themselves.

## Hate Crime Reporting

In March 2012, CDWs worked with the Dudley Community Safety Team and other partners to host a Hate Crime Stakeholder Event. The purpose of this event was to explore issues of disability hate crimes, and the setting up of Third Party Reporting Centres. These reporting centres are already in operation in other parts of the West Midlands, and allow victims of hate crime to speak to professionals, in an environment they find comfortable.

This event was attended by over one hundred delegates, and was the culmination of research carried out earlier in the year in which CDWs acted as 'Mystery Shoppers' at Police Stations in Dudley to see how they dealt with Hate Crime. Police were asked how they would respond to such crimes, and whether they were aware of True Vision (an online reporting website).

## Drop in Sessions

A range of drop in services are provided by the team across Dudley and Walsall. These allow people from the community to come and speak to us in a location near to them. Information, self-help material and support is offered, as well as signposting individuals to services, within the Trust, and externally.

In Dudley, CDWs can be found supporting communities with drop-in Services at the Lye Community Project, and the Halesowen Yemeni Community Association. In Walsall, a regular Drop-in takes place at Palfrey Sure Start, and from May 2012, at Walsall Councils Offices.

Other settings in which the CDW team have held a drop-in include: Public libraries in Halesowen, Dudley, Sedgley, Stourbridge, Brierley Hill, Walsall, Darlaston, Rushall and South Walsall. Through this, people who would not normally access mental health services are able to increase their awareness.

The CDWs try to be as diverse as possible in their approach to drop-ins. With this we have held stalls in supermarkets including Asda and Tesco, and community centres. We have also had stands at Dudley Leisure Centre and Haden Hill Leisure Centre, where we come into contact with over 100 people receiving information on mental health in the 2 days we were there. From the high uptake we plan to do more of these in the future.

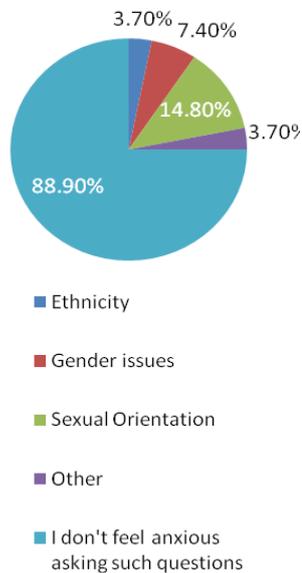
Throughout the year we have also provided mental health stands at Dudley College, Walsall College and Sandwell College.



## Patient Experience

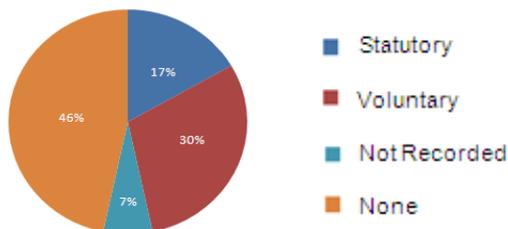
In Autumn 2011, the CDW Team undertook work to gather the views of staff and patients across services in regards to asking questions about

Key findings of this research showed that staff did not feel comfortable asking questions around diversity, specifically on sexual orientation. This report is available in full, from the CDW Team.



## Client Contact

The CDW service is accessed through 3 main routes: statutory services, community organisations and by self-referral. When an individual comes into contact with the team, an internal client contact form is filled in. Analysis of data from Quarter 4, 2011 showed that almost half of the clients seen needed no further assistance or signposting. CDW intervention, such as access to self-help material or simply having someone to talk to, has often been enough to help an individual.



## What are the CDWs planning for the future?

From April to October 2012 CDWs will be working towards new goals, and areas of work will include:

- Criminal Justice system
- Work within schools
- Mental Health workshops
- Cultural Competency training
- Joint working with the police, looking at anti-social behavior and mental health
- Working with asylum seekers to improve access to services
- Promote services responsive to the needs of BME communities
- Art, stigma and mental health workshops
- Re-launching the open space in Bushey Fields and the multi-faith centre in Dorothy Pattison
- Awareness workshops in Bloxwich Hospital

In addition to these areas, CDWs will be working more closely within the Mental Health Services within the Trust. This is to try and help improve access, and promote cultural competency. Each CDW has been allocated a service to work more

## Cultural Competency

A cultural guide has been produced by the team which will be distributed as part of cultural competency training. Research from the Patient Experience Analysis showed that there is a need for this training, especially when looking at the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The guide has a basic outline of each of the faiths and beliefs represented within Dudley & Walsall. This is to help improve services for people of different faiths and cultures. The guide also includes different community organisations, faith centres, surgeries and voluntary sector organisations.



## Translated Information

As part of working with the acute services, the food menus on the wards are now in the process of being translated into different languages so patients can have a choice as to what food they would like when their first language is not English.

## To Get in Touch

Contact details for each CDW, along with their respective service are:

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- Community and Recovery Service (CRS)

**Kuldeep Singh** 07766 368 373

- Transfer and Transition Team (TTT)
- Early Intervention (EI)

**Lorien Hays** 07766 252 782

- Older Adults Service

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- Acute Services

### The Team are based at:

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