

Reviewing Service User Experiences Of Mental Health Services In Swindon

INTRODUCTION:

An independent survey by Service User Network Swindon (SUNS) in June 2014, gave cause for concern about the experience of service users of some mental health services provided by Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP). (See Reference Point 1).

As the provider of secondary mental health inpatient, community and specialist services in Swindon, AWP received a copy of the survey results at the trust board meeting on 25 June 2014. This was presented to them by SUNS with the offer to AWP to feedback on the survey.

Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are focussing on the potential for redesign and improvement of mental health services in Swindon and held a service redesign workshop to inform a mental health strategy to cover the next five years.

Key statistics presented at the mental health service redesign workshop highlighted:

“Mental health affects 1 in 4 of people in a life time. Once diagnosed, the average life expectancy of a patient is twenty years less than the average person.”

“Mental Health services in the UK are one of the services most likely to face significant growth, placing Mental Health high on the agenda.”

July 2014 also saw the council and health service commissioners in Swindon issue an invitation to tender for the provision of reshaped mental health services in the borough.

The specification required bringing together elements of services, previously delivered by a number of organisations, and develop a holistic service that provides integrated support for adults experiencing poor mental health. The new contract will start on 1 January 2015.

This highlights the importance of getting the design of services correct now and therefore it is imperative to build the experience of patients into the process.

It is recognised that AWP acknowledges that services provided by a large trust are best managed at a local level; and that considerable changes in delivery have taken place over the last two years.

However, although the SUNS survey had limited circulation and therefore may not be statistically representative, it highlights some poor experiences and serious concerns. In addition to this Healthwatch Swindon also receives feedback regarding service users' experiences and enquiries around accessing mental health services.

This project proposal is based on gathering views from service users and their carers and families in Swindon. It will also look to involve input from service providers (including staff), mental health support service providers other than AWP and primary care professionals. It is pleasing to note that this project fits into the positive planning that was introduced at the Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group Mental Health Service Redesign in November 2014.



BACKGROUND:

Swindon is a mainly urban medium sized town with an estimated population of 212,000. The overall population of Swindon is forecast to rise to around 250,000 by 2030.

As with any predominantly urban area there are challenges around inequality and disadvantage. Deprivation is lower than average, however about 17.3% (7,200) children live in poverty. Life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average.

Swindon has a diverse and growing population of Black and Minority Ethnic families.

Mental Health and Wellbeing (See Reference Point 2):

Mental health and wellbeing are fundamental to our ability to flourish as individuals and as a community.

Mental wellbeing can be defined as “a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community (World Health Organization (WHO)). Mental illness can be defined as the existence of a clinically recognizable set of symptoms or behaviour associated in most cases with distress and with interference with personal functions (WHO).

Using the National Wellbeing Survey and the Swindon Residents Survey, the Swindon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing 2014 (JSNA) highlighted that:

- mental wellbeing in the national population improved during 2012/13, whereas in Swindon it slightly deteriorated.
- There was no difference in wellbeing between genders but those over 65 years of age had better wellbeing than those aged 16-24 years and those in most deprived parts of Swindon had significantly worse wellbeing scores than those in the least deprived areas.

The JSNA estimated that:

- between 22,600 and 29,000 individuals have a common mental health disorder such as anxiety, depression, phobias, panic and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- the number of people in Swindon with depression is slightly higher than the national and regional average but the numbers with severe and enduring mental health conditions is slightly lower than national and regional averages.
- The number of people with mental health disorders is predicted to rise over the next twenty years due mainly to demographic changes.

The JSNA also sought the views with regards to Swindon mental health services of service users and carers. It concluded that mental health service users and carer thought that:

- changes to the services would reduce capacity and choice.
- services should focus on early intervention rather than leaving problems to get worse before being able to access services.
- there were concerns about re-accessing services in a timely manner when they are required.

It was also noted that Carers thought social isolation was a real concern and that service users would be completely socially excluded without their carers support. Carers also expressed concerns that their voice, as a carer, was not heard particularly within the GP and Social Care environment.



WHO WE ARE:

Healthwatch gives people a powerful voice locally and nationally. At a local level, Healthwatch Swindon works to help local people get the best out of local health and social care services. Whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow. Healthwatch Swindon is about local voices being able to influence the delivery and design of local services. Not just people who use them, but anyone who might need to in future.

Project management will be undertaken by Will Evans, Director of Healthwatch Swindon and Pete Rowe, Manager of Healthwatch Swindon.

PROJECT AIM:

This project proposal is based on service users of adult mental health care who live in the borough of Swindon and who have accessed any mental health services in Swindon in the last 2 years. The primary questions is: are the results and comments of both the independent survey carried out by SUNS and feedback we receive representative of service users and is there a platform for those who support the service user to also voice their comments.

It is hoped that the information generated from this project will:

- go towards influencing and improving the delivery and access of these services within Swindon.
- enhance the quality of the currently commissioned provisions.

TARGET GROUP:

For the purposes of this project, target groups have been divided into 4 key areas:

1. service user, including those that are housebound.
2. family and carers.
3. service providers and mental health support service providers.
4. general practices – their role in early intervention and primary mental health services.

The aim is to gain a representative sample of at least 100 adult service users across age, gender and ethnicity.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY:

- To undertake a review of the independent survey conducted by SUNS and ongoing feedback we received to establish key areas of concern.
- To confirm the work undertaken by Swindon CCG to inform the mental health strategy.
- To review the findings of the CQC inspection of AWP (June 2014) to establish what change or improvements have been required; and what action has been planned or taken by AWP as a result.
- To consider the conclusions and key recommendations of the Swindon JSNA for Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- To obtain the service user, family and carers perspective on the issues and concerns raised, which will result in the collection of data from at least 100 participants. This will include:
 - To undertake 3 focus groups with service users, family and carers.
 - To distribute and receive at least 70 completed questionnaires (Face-to-Face, Online, Service User Touch Points such as LIFT Psychology).
 - To undertake 4 Discovery interviews with service users, family and carers.



- To identify and explore opportunities to work with the support of AWP (including staff), Mental Health Support Services and general practices to engage with their service users to ensure a representative sample.

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS:

There will be two approaches to recruitment:

1. Healthwatch Swindon will invite participation via local service user groups and organisations that provide mental health support services. Service users will see anonymity maintained as potential participants will respond to Healthwatch Swindon.
2. Healthwatch Swindon will invite participation from amongst the 3000 local people registered on its database.
3. Recruitment will be done via community engagement activities as and when an opportunity presents itself.
4. To ensure a wider engagement we will undertake to highlight the project through a press release to local media connections.

A researcher or trained volunteer will be available to answer any questions prior to participation and each participant will be invited to sign a consent form.

WAYS OF PARTICIPATING:

Participants will be invited to select one or more of the following methods of participation: Focus Group, Questionnaire and Discovery Interview.

Focus Group: This approach is useful for establishing consensual views in peer groups about experiences and attitudes (Krueger and Casey, 2009). The focus groups will be a series of ongoing groups to allow service users, family members and carers to influence the questions and highlight the key areas of concerns based on their experiences. This will then allow us to develop a service user-led questionnaire.

Questionnaire: This approach will enable a 'high level' view of the research topic. The questionnaire will be produced and trialled prior to 'going live'. Volunteers will be trained prior to carrying out any face-to-face interviews. Participants will not be required to provide contact details unless they are interested in either exploring their experiences in more detail (focus group or discovery interview) or they would like to receive a copy of the final report/attend a feedback session. Their details will be recorded on a separate form.

Discovery Interview: Traditional 'Tell us about your health needs' questions have proven difficult for people to answer so Discovery interviews were developed as the least intrusive, and most empowering, way of enabling community members to share their experience. Healthwatch Swindon volunteers will conduct these interviews and all participants will receive a letter explaining exactly what is involved and a consent form will be required. Interviews will be recorded using a dictation machine.



FEEDBACK MECHANISM

- The project will be completed and a presentation prepared to present to the Health and Wellbeing Board by June 2015.
- To formally feedback to appropriate service providers, commissioning bodies and scrutiny committees.
- To hold a feedback session for participants.

NEXT STEPS

Healthwatch Swindon to make contact with key organisations to finalise plans.

Contact List 1: To be contacted in December 2014

1. Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust
2. Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group
3. Swindon Mind
4. Great Western Hospital Mental Health Lead
5. GP Mental Health Lead

Contact List 2: To be contacted in January 2015

1. Service User Network Swindon (SUNS)
2. Lift Psychology
3. Community and Voluntary Sector (Voluntary Action Swindon)
4. TWIGS/LEAVES
5. Richmond Fellowship
6. Carers Centre and Young Carers
7. Swindon Advice and Support Centre
8. Day Centres
9. SEQOL

REFERENCES

- (1) Appendix 1: Review of independent survey by SUNS as summarised by Healthwatch Swindon.
- (2) Swindon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing. Available: <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/sc/Health%20Document%20Library/Information%20-%20Adult%20Mental%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf>

Author:

Pete Rowe
Manager
Healthwatch Swindon Manager
01793 497777
pete.rowe@healthwatchswindon.org.uk



PROJECT TIMEPLAN

Week Ending	Dec-14				Jan-15				Feb-15				Mar-15				Apr-15				May-15				Jun-15
	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	
Task																									
SETUP																									Prepare presentation for the Health and Wellbeing Board
Contact made with Group 1 Contacts																									
Brief included in Health and Wellbeing Report																									
Meetings And Feedback From Group 1 Contacts																									
Finalise Project Brief																									
Contact made with Group 2 Contacts																									
Press Release Issued																									
Focus Group 1: Set Objectives																									
DESIGN																									
Focus Group 2: Develop Questionnaire																									
Health Professionals Focus Group: Feedback																									
Review Against Project Brief																									
TEST																									
Focus Group 3: Test Questionnaire																									
Review Against Project Brief																									
IMPLEMENTATION																									
Complete Questionnaires																									
Discovery Interviews																									
ANALYSIS																									
Review Data And Analyse																									
Prepare Report																									