

# Further information

Further information, including the full guidance for commissioners, can be viewed and/or downloaded from [www.socialinclusion.org.uk](http://www.socialinclusion.org.uk) or telephone 020 7307 2448.

A number of case studies of day services, which have been through changes, are also available in the good practice section of this website.

Local information regarding who to contact to get involved:

This booklet was produced in consultation with people with experience of mental health issues.

With thanks to the people using mental health day services who shared their experiences of changes in those services and of using the modernised services, from which the quotes in this booklet are taken.

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## How will my newly redesigned day service help me?

A booklet for people using mental health day services

*“I feel more confident and it's easier to get on with people in the wider community”*



**This booklet is designed for people who are using mental health day services which are facing or going through a review or changes to how they run. It contains information about the type of changes currently taking place in many, but not all, mental health day services and what they are aiming to achieve.**

The look of the new day services will vary depending on how things have been done before in your local area and what is needed. No two services will work in quite the same way.

## What's happening to my day service and why?

Mental health day services have been an important and valued part of support for people living in the community for many years. They can provide somewhere to go, someone to see and something to do, as well as support with a range of mental health related and practical issues.

However, there are things that many day services have historically not offered people, and many people who

do not feel the services are relevant to them. In recognition of this, in 2006, the Department of Health published some guidance for the people responsible for funding mental health day services (the commissioners) about what those services should look like and how they should run to help people live their lives. As a result, all around the country day services are being reviewed and changes being made to how they run.

These changes could include:

- Supporting people to be more involved in society and linked in to the wider community.
- Making the service more appealing to a wider cross section of the community (young people, women and people from black and minority ethnic groups in particular tend to access these services less).
- Giving people with mental health problems more opportunities to run their own day services.
- Providing more individual support to help people achieve their own goals and get what they want out of life.
- Offering people the chance to learn new skills and learn how to manage their mental health better.

**Changes to mental health day services usually start with a review which looks at what is being provided at the moment. This should include gathering the views of people using services, such as through a questionnaire or by talking to them and recording what is said.**

## What changes can I expect?



*“Having more things in my life has given me the reason to be more independent”*

If the review finds that day services do need to change to better meet the needs of people who might use them, and meet the expectations of government, a process of change or restructuring will begin. This might involve:

- The organisation who runs the service making changes which have been agreed with the commissioners.
- The service being ‘put out to tender’ so that other organisations can bid to take over running it in a different way.
- The service being closed and the money used to fund a different type of day service.

**There is no one 'new look' for mental health day services, but there are some common themes and features which often form part of what people can expect from modernised services. These can include:**

**Individual support** Receiving support on a one to one basis to help individuals identify what they want to do and to achieve it.

**Links into the community** Support to become more engaged in mainstream activities and organisations in the wider community. This is sometimes called 'Community Bridge Building' support and is usually on an individual basis but may involve group activities too.

## How can this 'new service' help me?

**Self help skills** Support which helps people to become better able to manage their own mental health problems, for example through courses on Managing Anxiety or Hearing Voices support groups.

**Services run by people who use them** Including both services and organisations which are entirely

user-run and user-run sessions within existing organisations.

**Inviting people in** Other organisations and the general public making use of buildings which were previously used only for the delivery of mental health services.

**Somewhere to feel safe** 'Safe spaces', where people feel accepted, comfortable and able to access mutual support.

**Developing skills** Covering both skills for independent living and skills which enable people to move on with their lives by increasing their ability to take up other opportunities like going to college or getting a job.

Whilst a single day service may not include all of these elements, they are some of the main things people can expect of a modernised mental health day service.



*"The regular planning and discussion really helped me focus where I want to be"*

## Are the rumours true?

**Proposed changes to mental health day services can lead to myths and rumours about what this (modernisation) process is about and what it will mean.**

**It's all about saving money**

It is relatively unusual for changes in day services to lead to a reduction in the amount of money being put in, although this can be the case. Usually the money is still there, but will be spent in a different way.

**It's about trying to force people into work**

Part of changing day services may be to make them better at supporting people towards getting a job or to provide more in the way of support to develop skills for employment. However

the focus should be on providing opportunities and responding to what people want, not forcing people to work.

**There'll be nowhere for us to go**

The changes to day services may mean reducing the amount of hours that 'drop-in' sessions are available or reducing the number of building bases for mental health day services. However, there is an acknowledgement that providing places where people feel safe to go is an important part of what day services do, and this is likely to form a part of the redesigned service. The service is also likely to help people to go to other places in the local community that they are interested in.

**Social inclusion isn't for people who are really ill**

Some people may feel further away from being included in wider society than others, and may need more support to get to the point of taking part in activities that happen in the community, but social inclusion is for everyone.

**Everything's going to be different**

Again, this is unlikely to be the case. Commissioners and organisations will be keen to keep the things that are working well in day services at the moment. Even if there is to be a new organisation running the service, they usually keep the existing staff.

People who use mental health day services may want to get involved in reviewing existing services and planning new ones. There are a number of ways in which you could do this:

## How can I get involved?

### Responding to a consultation

There should be a consultation with people using the service about the proposed changes. Responses to these often do have a real impact on how the changes happen and what they look like.



*"I've tried practising some of the skills I learnt on the course... thinking about situations and how you could change them helps"*

### Making suggestions

If you have ideas about what it is really important mental health day services provide, put them forward to whoever is leading the review or restructuring process or talk to an advocate or service user representative and ask them to pass on your suggestions.

### Being a representative

Day services modernisation working groups should include representatives from people who use the service.

This role might include collecting the views of other people, helping to write proposals or sitting on the panel which decides who will provide the new service. You may need training or support to carry out some of these roles and this should be provided.

Who to contact about being involved will depend on who is leading the change process. It may be the organisation who runs the service at the moment or commissioners from the Local Authority or Primary Care Trust. The staff at the day service or a Service User Involvement Worker should be able to tell you who to contact or there may be information for your area on the back of this booklet.

### Commissioners

These are the people who fund organisations to provide services. For mental health day services they are usually from the Local Authority (Council) and/or the Primary Care Trust (PCT).

### Day Services

These can include things like day centres, day hospitals and drop-in's. This booklet also refers to services that support people, individually and in groups, to develop their skills, manage their mental health, support each other and become more involved in their local community. They may be available during the day or in the evenings and may run from Centres or be community based.

### Providers

These are the organisations which run the services and employ the staff who work there. Day Services may be run by mental health trusts or social services directly, but quite often they are run by voluntary organisations like Mind and Rethink although they are paid for (commissioned) by the Council or PCT.

### User-Run services

These are services delivered by service users (sometimes referred to as user-delivered services). This is not the same as user-led services. User-led services are those in which service users make decisions about what should be provided and how, but the service may actually be provided by non-users.

## Some definitions

### Modernisation

This is a process of changing services to better meet the needs of a wider range of people, taking into account the context in which those services are running.