

The National Day Services Modernisation Network

Ben Taylor

The National Day Services Modernisation Network was launched in January 2009 and is a collaboration between the Inclusion Institute (taking on the role previously held by the National Social Inclusion Programme), Mind, Rethink and Richmond Fellowship. The Network came about in recognition that many of those involved in modernising mental health day services were struggling with the same issues, often in isolation, and that there was a need for a forum to discuss and develop approaches to these issues.

Key words: National Day Services Modernisation Network; Commissioning; Service users; Mental health

The National Day Services Modernisation Network exists to provide support and resources to those involved in modernising mental health day services in order to increase the effectiveness of the modernisation process and the resulting services. It does this through:

- the discussion of common issues and challenges in relation to day services modernisation, and ways of addressing these
- the sharing of good practice in day services modernisation and the delivery of modernised day services
- the discussion and dissemination of resources that may assist with modernisation or service delivery
- connecting people who can mutually support and learn from each other.

Inaugural meeting

The first Network meeting considered where day services modernisation is at now and where it is going. Those attending reported that the current situation facing day services varies significantly from area to area. In some localities, modernisation

is being led by commissioners, in others providers, and there are varying approaches to delivering modernised services.

Modernisation was being undertaken in all of the areas represented at the Network. Approximately one-third of areas had seen day services tendered, one-third were expecting them to be tendered soon, and one-third were not imminently expecting a tender process. Where day services were not being tendered, many had seen the introduction of new service specifications for existing providers.

Current issues

Some of the key current issues identified by Network members at the inaugural meeting were as follows.

- **Commissioning and tendering.** There are significant variations across the country in how commissioners are interpreting the Department of Health Commissioning Guidance and making decisions about whether day services need to be tendered. It was felt to be important that commissioners and providers work together on modernisation, and for commissioners and local implementation teams (LITs) to take a lead

role. The benefits of having project managers to lead a modernisation process and business consultants to provide advice and support to potential tendering organisations were identified. Concerns were expressed that tendering processes can exclude some day services (particularly those run by local authorities and NHS trusts), meaning that the process is not sufficiently comprehensive, and about the struggle in some areas between commissioners and foundation trusts as to who sets the agenda for service development and delivery.

- **Staffing.** The challenge of overcoming staff resistance and creating staff ownership of the modernisation process is a big issue. This can also impact on how service users feel about changes being made.
- **Buildings.** Having no buildings for day services may lead to some people being marginalised.
- **User-run services.** Developing user-run services is of key importance and may involve people who use services taking on volunteer and staff roles. While volunteering has a role in day services, it is important that volunteers are properly supported, are enabled to progress to paid roles and are not used as a way of delivering services cheaply.
- **Diverse funding.** It is important that day services do not rely solely on statutory mental health funding. Becoming involved in partnerships and networks with a range of mainstream and community organisations can provide routes to alternative sources of funding, as can the development of social enterprises.
- **TUPE.** Taking on staff transferred under TUPE regulations can present a number of issues and difficulties, particularly when they are coming from local authorities.
- **Older people.** There is inconsistency across the county regarding whether day services provide a service for people aged over 65 or not.
- **Cost of social inclusion.** There can be significant costs faced by individuals accessing community resources, and these can present real barriers for people on low incomes. Direct payments and individual budgets may go some way to addressing this issue.

Supporting service users through the modernisation process

The other major topic discussed during the inaugural meeting of the Network was how best to support service users through the process of changing day services. Some key issues and useful approaches suggested were as follows.

- **Involvement.** There needs to be a real commitment to creating a shared understanding between commissioners, providers and service users. Making the development process a shared

journey is important. It is also important to get day services staff and community mental health team care co-ordinators on board.

- **Consultation.** A range of approaches to consultation is ideal, and this should include targeting seldom-heard groups. Strategies could include:
 - being open and honest, including giving clarity about what the drivers are, what is up for debate and what isn't
 - using service user consultants and researchers use creative approaches – for example audio and visual means of consulting and presenting findings
 - have a phone line people can call to respond to consultations.
- **Advocacy support.** This should be made available to ensure that concerns and issues are communicated and responded to appropriately.
- **Identifying 'champions'.** Working with service users who are prepared to act as 'champions' for the modernised service.
- **Taking time.** It is important to take time going through a process of radical change. Rushing it is more likely to lead to mistakes and less likely to get people on board.
- **Listening to service users.** It is important to ask them what they want out of *life*, rather than out of a *service*. Structure a service response to the individual based on those needs. Find out what it is about the existing service that people value and explore how those needs can continue to be met.
- **Share control.** Give service users control by facilitating the setting up of user-run groups and encouraging self-determination and initiative.



Doing things better

The inaugural meeting also looked at how things could have been done better to help support service users through the process.

- **Peer learning** between providers should be encouraged.
- **Personalisation** – be clear what the impact of the development of direct payments and individual budgets will be.
- **Encourage innovation** from providers.
- **Redundancies** – these can be inevitable and appropriate, but can be a very painful process and it is important how this is managed.
- **Get a range of views** – don't just listen to the loudest voices.
- **Don't patronise** – nobody likes to be told what is good for them.
- **Resource involvement properly** – to effectively consult with and involve a range of people needs adequate resourcing.
- **Support 'champions'** – the role of the service user 'champion' (or even just being involved in the modernisation process) can be a very difficult one leading to negative reactions from peers. People may, therefore, need support and training.

- **Help people visualise** how the restructured service will work for them.

Future plans

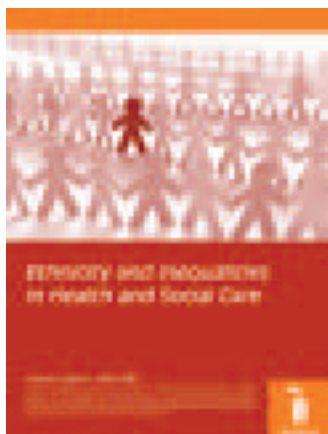
The May meeting of the Network looked at 'day services and personalisation' issues, and helped to develop some valuable learning and ways forward for providers who are seeking to prepare their day services for personalisation.

Future Network meeting dates, venues and topics have been set until February next year and are as follows:

- 13 August 2009 in Bristol – 'User-run day services'
- 12 November 2009 in London – 'Changing roles of staff'
- 10 February 2010 in Manchester – 'Day services and partnership working'.

For more information about the Network, which is open to managers and senior managers involved in modernising day services, or a copy of the minutes from the May meeting, please contact nick.bowles@richmondfellowship.org.uk.

Ethnicity and Inequalities in Health and Social Care



Online access now authenticated by IP address, Athens and Shibboleth

Ethnicity and Inequalities in Health and Social Care promotes race equality in health and social care. It is a vital source of information with its themes clearly located in practice and includes coverage of:

- identifying and preventing inequalities
- access to services
- support, care and quality of service provision and outcomes.

Published quarterly and supported by the Race Equality Foundation, this peer-reviewed Journal explores what is currently known about racism, discrimination and disadvantage and considers interventions that will overcome barriers and promote equality.

ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS INCLUDE FREE ONLINE ACCESS TO ALL ISSUES OF THE JOURNAL

SAVE 20% ON TWO-YEAR SUBSCRIPTIONS

	1 year	2 years
■ INSTITUTIONAL LARGE – print and online (500+ online users)	£719	£1,150
■ INSTITUTIONAL MEDIUM – print and online (50 to 499 online users)	£569	£910
■ INSTITUTIONAL SMALL – print and online (2 to 49 online users)	£369	£590
■ INSTITUTIONAL – print and online (1 online user)	£219	£350
■ INDIVIDUAL – print and online*	£59	£95

* Individual subscriptions must be paid from a personal account and sent to a home address.

ISSN: 1745-9265



Subscribe online at www.pavilionjournals.com
or call Pavilion Journals on +44(0)1273 783720