

Newsletter Sept 2004

Viewpoint

Working for better mental health in Hertfordshire.

The Hertfordshire Mind Network established *ViewPoint* in November 2000 to enable people who use mental health services to get involved in the planning and delivery of these services.



CHARITY STATUS OBTAINED



Viewpoint is delighted to announce that as from the 10th August 2004, we are now an independent charity *reg no: 1105423*

We would like to thank all of the service users and professionals who have made a lot of effort to attend Steering Group meetings. You have used your knowledge and expertise not only to gain charity status for the project; but to help shape the focus and vision of Viewpoint's journey. **Thank you all very much - it could not have been done without you!** We need your support now to establish an Executive Committee!

KALEDIOSCOPE FESTIVAL

A multicultural festival was organized by the Welwyn/Hatfield Ethnic Minority Group and Music Box and was a great day out. It featured stalls, bands, dance, food, music, fashion and arts and crafts, and was held at Stanborough lakes in Welwyn Garden City in July. Viewpoint participated by having a stand, which gave information about the project and raised awareness of mental wellbeing issues affecting people's lives.



Dennis and Jacqui inviting people to take aim at the difficulties facing mental health service users including stress, benefits trap, stigma, isolation and side effects of medications.

Well being at work for council employees

Viewpoint has received an invite to have a stand at the Welwyn/Hatfield council employee exhibition at the Campus West. The exhibition is to promote wellbeing in the workplace.

It is hoped that 800 employees will attend over three days in September and so will be an ideal opportunity for Viewpoint to inform council employees of the Project's activities. Viewpoint will also be promoting World Mental Health Day by giving out information on the theme for this year, please see below.

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY SUNDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2004

The Relationship between Physical and Mental Health: Co-occurring Disorders

“Seventeenth-century philosopher Rene Descartes conceptualized the distinction between the mind and the body. He viewed the "mind" as completely separable from the "body" And for almost two centuries, mental health advocates have been trying to put them back together This separation between so-called "mental" and "physical" health has no real relevance to the scientific understanding of health in the 21st century; yet the myths and misinformation persist. Mental health advocates all over the world have, in almost apologetic posturing, said that this false premise should no longer exist and yet these voices continue to go unheard. The time has come to reinforce what we stand for-mind and body are inseparable: health is a complete state of well-being - and there is no health without mental health.”

(World Federation for Mental Health)

More information regarding events across Hertfordshire on World Mental Health Day will be available from Viewpoint in the next few weeks. Primary Care Trusts and Community Support teams are also involved and may be able to give information on any forthcoming events.

New Bishops Stortford Forum

Weds 1st Sept, 1pm - 3pm - starting with a buffet lunch

Come along to the forum to have your say about mental health services in the Bishops Stortford area. The purpose of the forum is to talk about mental health services. Your opinions can be passed on to people who plan, deliver and monitor services. This is a genuine opportunity to influence changes to services for the future.

This is the first forum in the area and we plan to hold them every six weeks. The meetings are to be held at the Library, The Causeway, Bishops Stortford and are open to people who use services in and around Bishops Stortford.

If you would like to attend the forum, we would be delighted to see you. For more information or to

register your interest, please call Amy on 01707 328014.



VIEWPOINT WEBSITE: TRAINING AVAILABLE

Please could anyone interested in editing and updating the forthcoming Viewpoint website register your interest with us. There will be a half-day training session provided by the website designers, Round Your Way, as soon as the website is completed.

There is also opportunities for free training on marketing your website run by Business Link.

For those people who have not used the internet - but would like to learn the basic skills of using search engines, there is also free training offered by Business Support Services which Viewpoint will organise.

Please contact us by filling out the separate form with this newsletter. Freepost envelope provided.

TRAINING FOR TRAINERS

Viewpoint is currently organizing the training course for those who have expressed an interest in training professionals. The course will commence later in the year and we apologise for the delay and thank you for your patience.

INVESTING IN YOUR MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATIONS

& HERTS PARTNERSHIP TRUST FEEDBACK ON THE COMMISSION FOR HEALTH IMPROVEMENT (CHI) ACTION PLAN

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) has committed to holding public consultations on the provision of mental health services across both counties.

It is holding 4 stakeholder days across Herts and Beds in Sept/Oct followed by consultations with mental health service users in all of the Primary Care Trust areas.

Viewpoint, the Herts Partnership Trust and its Public and Patient forum are in discussion about facilitating these consultations.

We will be sending out flyers to you informing you of your local consultation/workshop venue, as soon as we secure definite dates (hopefully late Oct).

The consultation days will consist of feedback on changes made (due to consultations held with service users) to the Herts Partnership Trust action plan in response to the CHI report, plus general discussions on Investing in Your Mental Health and smaller discussion groups.

Those who are interested will receive a consultation pack, which will include questions that the Investing in your Mental Health Team need answers to.

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