

INVOLVED

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICE USER AND CARER NEWS IN WANDSWORTH

ISSUE 3 SUMMER 2009

This is the third edition

This is the third edition of a newsletter about service user and carer involvement with Adult Social Services in Wandsworth.

Adult Social Services works with older people, people with physical disabilities, sensory impairment, learning disabilities, and mental health needs, and the carers who support them.

Involved will:

- Let service users and carers know how to get involved and what involvement has achieved.
- Give staff information about service user and carer involvement.
- Provide organisations and groups in Wandsworth opportunities to share information about service user and carer involvement.

Announcing the brand new Service User and Carer Engagement Strategy

The Council is launching its brand new User and Carer Engagement Strategy in order to give service users and carers in the borough an even greater voice to influence things that affect them!

The Council already has a strong track record in engaging with service users and carers in the decisions that affect their lives, but it is taking a fresh look at how it engages with people and how it should adapt to the changing world of social care over the next three years.

Central to this strategy is the setting up of two new groups – one of service users, one of carers – to ensure a stronger voice with Adult Social Services. Both groups will bring together people across the care groups. If you are interested in finding out more about these two new groups, contact Jim (see details at end of article).

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INVOLVED would like to hear from any organisation or group which is developing user or carer involvement.

INVOLVED would like to hear from **service users and carers** who want to get involved.

If you want to put something in the next issue of **INVOLVED** or want to talk with someone about user or carer involvement in Wandsworth:



email: feedbackssdcc@wandsworth.gov.uk



leave a message on: (020) 8871 6241



fax: (020) 8871 6724

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At the moment, the groups are being seen as having two main purposes: a representative voice speaking up for service users and carers, and also shaping what Adult Social Service does and how it does it.

In the true spirit of the Strategy's aims, service users have been heavily involved in shaping the Council's new Service User and Carer Engagement Strategy. The Council's Adult Social Services team held 5 discussion group events around the borough with service users and carers during April 2009 to get their input and advice into what the Strategy should aim to achieve. The Wandsworth LINK also ran a further 2 meetings. Feedback to proposals has been really positive and people gave some great ideas for how involvement and engagement could be improved. Responses have been

taken on board and really helped to finalise the Strategy, which was approved by the Council in early July.

Dawn Warwick, Director of Wandsworth Adult Social Services says *"Users and carers must be central to the process of transformation in social care. We have valued and will continue to value the important contribution that they make and this key strategy shapes how we will move user and carer involvement and engagement forward together"*.

To find out more about the Wandsworth Service User and Carer Engagement Strategy and the 2 new reference groups, contact Jim Cowan on (020) 8871 8190 or email jcowan@wandsworth.gov.uk. A dedicated Council website page is being developed.

Shaping Our Lives – Relationship Matters

During the Autumn of 2008, Shaping Our Lives supported five service user and/or disabled people's organisations to hold networking events in their own regions. During these events, the importance of networking for service users and their organisations was brought up again and again. *"It is essential to have a unified voice that comes from service user meetings through*

user-led organisations that can feed into the system", participants said. It is through networking that long-term users of health and social care services can share experiences and consolidate a service user identity. This form of empowerment allows service users to move forward together to influence change and promote good relations among and between groups.

Shaping Our Lives National User Network is an independent user-controlled organisation, think tank and network. The organisation's vision is of a society where people have choice and control over the way they live and the support services they use.

The summary and full report of the networking events can be downloaded from the Shaping our Lives website www.shapingourlives.org.uk.

Caring about Carers' Involvement

Carers have been involved in a huge array of recent significant developments within the Council, from strategically shaping the future of support for carers, to developing more user friendly information, to delivering training to staff on carers' assessments.

Carers have been helping develop the new Wandsworth Strategy for Carers and Young Carers, which takes its strapline, "Looking after someone and having your own life" directly from what carers said was important to them. The strategy is a five year plan. It will ensure that the Council and its partners make significant improvements to support unpaid carers looking after vulnerable Wandsworth residents. Carers' voices can be clearly heard throughout this document, and carers will be involved in steering priorities and making sure the Strategy's targets are met.

Carers have also been a central part of Wandsworth's mission to improve how carers' assessments are experienced in the borough. They developed a new leaflet for carers, which aims to demystify carers' assessments, explaining what they are, who can access them and how to prepare for them. They also became champions of a DVD called "Listening to Carers" which shows the experiences of carers across the country. They have arranged other carers to have access to the DVD as they thought it could make others feel less isolated and more aware of the opportunities for support.



Recently, carers have been involved in delivering training to 'professionals' like social workers and care coordinators to carry out good carers' assessments, by emphasising the importance of listening, communicating and understanding the experiences and challenges that carers face. Following the training, one 'carer trainer' said *"I feel like it really made a difference... it helped the social workers see where I was coming from... and it helped me understand where they were coming from too... we need more of the same"*.

What is a Carer?

A carer is a person who provides unpaid help or support to someone who could not manage without their help due to frailty, illness, disability, mental health condition, or substance misuse. If you are a resident of Wandsworth and a carer, you can get involved by contacting Jim Cowan on (020) 8871 8190 or Daniel Blagdon at the Wandsworth Carers' Centre on (020) 8877 1200.

How do I get a carer's assessment?

You are entitled to a carer's assessment if you are 16 or over, look after someone who is 18 or over and provide, or intend to provide "regular and substantial" care. To understand more, arrange a carer's assessment or get a copy of the new leaflet or "Listening to Carers" DVD, please contact the Access Team on 020 8871 7707; Minicom 020 8871 8485; email accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk; or text CARE and your message to 07797 805456.

Bigger and Better Community Partners

Wandsworth Community Partners is expanding to represent all people with disabilities.

Community Partners will soon also include people with learning disabilities and those with mental health needs. It already involves older people, people with physical disabilities and carers.

Community Partner involvement is continuing to be central to shaping the Council's work in Adult Social Services. A 4th Community Partners training course is planned for September 2009, bringing together a new group of service users. This training course is being planned in partnership with Wandsworth Care Alliance (WCA). It will help the Council in developing a system, known as "evidencing outcomes", for collecting personal outcome statements that show what impact services have had for the people who use them. Participants will gain increased knowledge and understanding, will become more assertive, and gain support from other service users.

What are Community Partners?

Community Partners are volunteers who are trained to become engaged with the Adult Social Services Department on specific work programmes. This can include for example, taking part in interview panels; selecting new service providers; or reviewing the way we work.

What will people coming on the training do?

- Work with us to run a number of small projects which get outcome statements from different groups of service users
- Be involved in training staff to get outcome statements from service users and learn from them
- Help us to do this for all our services

Work with us to help us to use outcome statements as part of our work. If you are interested in this training course for service users and would like to talk to someone about it, please ring Susan at Wandsworth Care Alliance (020) 8682 7263 or Jim at Adult Social Services (020) 8871 8190.

Self-Directed Support in Action!

The T family in Tooting was one of the first families to participate in Wandsworth's pilot for using Personal Budgets (PB) to direct their own support. Mrs T, the mother of two sons with learning difficulties aged 20 and 22, was a little unsure about the additional responsibilities of managing money and what would happen when things went wrong, but encouraged by a helpful social worker, and reassurance from the Council that she could call if there were problems, the family were up for the challenge!

And what difference has self-directed support made to the family's life? Using self-directed support has meant that they can find their own agency staff – two or three people that they like.

So what does the future hold? One of the boys wants to do a music therapy course or maybe get involved in the Baked Beans theatre that puts plays on. The other is a keen cricket fan and hopes to get membership for him and for a support worker at Lords next year. In the meantime the family are planning a winter holiday, which the boys' budgets help to fund.

Now embarking on the second year of using self-directed support, the family reckons "Self directed support is a learning process. The first year was getting the hang of it. But we're expecting to see real changes next year".

LINK into local Decision-Making

Become a member of the Wandsworth LINK and have direct input into making local health and social care services better! The Wandsworth Local Involvement Network (called LINK for short) is a membership organisation, open to Wandsworth residents and organisations based in the borough. The LINK enables people to talk directly to the NHS and the Council about what they want, get their questions answered about current issues, and have their say in decisions about local health and social care services.

LINKs are a Government initiative with statutory powers to work directly with the NHS and Local Authority on behalf of the local community to improve services. LINKs listen to local people about their needs and their experiences of services and give them the chance to suggest ideas for improvements. Last year, the Council commissioned Wandsworth

You can become a member of the LINK. It is up to you how and when you get involved and it does not have to take up a lot of your time. You can just comment on issues when contacted or you can get more involved by helping to raise awareness of an issue or by helping to find solutions.

Care Alliance (WCA) to be the "LINK host" organisation to help the Wandsworth LINK undertake all of its work. Today, Wandsworth LINK has almost 300 members, an Executive Committee of 12 volunteers elected by its members, a website and a newsletter.

Stephanie Dearden, service user and member of the Wandsworth LINK's Communication and Participation subgroup, says.

"I'm really excited to be part of this new organisation, especially because it is service user led! This will mean it's more productive and has better chances of getting more quality involvement from people in the community who are interested in making health and social care better. I encourage anyone interested to join and am really excited about what the future will bring."



How do I join the LINK?

To find out more about the LINK and how you can join, visit www.wandsworthlink.org, call (020) 8682 7263 or email enquiries@wandsworthlink.org.uk.

Changing the way we work by Putting People First

The Council is changing the way it works with people who come to us for support, and we want service users to be involved in helping us take this change forward.

The Government published a document called 'Putting People First' in 2007, which is a shared vision for the transformation of adult social care that will engage with service users and carers to transform people's experience of local support and services. This will mean individuals will have much greater choice, control and power over the support services they receive.

Through Transforming Social Care we will change the way we work with people who come to the Council's Adult Social Services department for advice and support. We have already established a Programme Board to take this work forward, which has representation from service users

(through the Wandsworth LINK), the Council, statutory agencies and health organisations.

We will be looking to increase involvement through 6 work streams as the programme develops, as well as having regular updates and news items published in Brightside so that everyone in the borough can be aware of what's happening and what is planned.



For more information about Transformation, contact the Programme Manager Vincent Kelly on (020) 8871 7020, email vkelly@wandsworth.gov.uk, or keep an eye on our website www.wandsworth.gov.uk.

A stronger voice for people with learning disabilities

The Learning Disabilities Service User Board which has representation on the Wandsworth Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (including co-chairs) is raising its voice in a more systematic way, which will make it even stronger.

People with learning disabilities and their carers are a key part of the Wandsworth Learning Disabilities Partnership Board – a multi-agency group of service users, carers, and statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations who work together to make things better for people with learning disabilities in Wandsworth.

This year the Service User Board, which supports people with learning disabilities to speak up and have a collective voice, is continuing to develop its

constitution and is working towards holding elections. Each Board member will focus on their chosen area of interest, such as housing or transport and feed their expert experience into the Partnership Board.

We have also been working with Daniel Blagdon at the Wandsworth Carers Centre to ensure Partnership Board membership includes carers who represent a range of caring situations. We are working to establish a network of carers of people with learning disabilities who will inform the Partnership Board's work through these representatives.

More information about these developments will appear soon on the website for people with learning disabilities in Wandsworth: www.mylifemyworld.info

Community Partners put START under the Microscope

Community Partners are playing a vital role in evaluating the Council's START service. This means helping to find out what impact the service is having by talking to people who have recently used it to see what they thought of it.



Community Partners met with Council staff in mid June 2009 to help design a feedback form which all people who have received the START service will have the opportunity to fill in from September 2009. They will ask them what they thought of the service, and will offer the opportunity to talk to a Community Partner about the service on the phone or in discussion groups. Carers will also have the opportunity to evaluate the service.

START is a short-term personalised and focussed home-based care and rehabilitative support service for people who need help with personal care and domestic routines. It will also assess people's longer term needs for homecare, if ongoing support to remain living in their own home is needed. START helps people regain skills and to feel confident about managing day to day activities independently.

Mrs Smith, who recently used the START service, said "Because of the help the START service gave me when I first came out of hospital after my fall, I can now move around at home without any help again, make a meal or hot drink, and shower myself, which makes me feel much more confident about being in my own home".

START began as a pilot back in 2006 and, because it has been so successful in helping people, became a mainstream service from September last year. Overall, because of START, there has been a 20% reduction in the number of care hours that people need, which means people are living more independent lives.



How do I get START?

START is one of the options available to people who have had a community care assessment which looks at your needs and decides whether you are eligible for help. To ask for a community care assessment, please contact the Adult Social Services Access Team on (020) 8871 7707, email accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk or text CARE and your message to 07797 805456. If you are currently in hospital, ask the ward sister to contact the hospital social work office to request an assessment.

Service Users to have an even bigger involvement in Supporting People

Not only will service users once again have a large involvement in reviewing how the Council's Supporting People team funded services are run, but they will soon also play a vital role in making decisions around re-tendering all Supporting People services over the next 2 years.

The Supporting People programme in Wandsworth has always put the views and needs of service users at the forefront of how it reviews the service and has expanded this to all aspects of how the programme is run. Service User Evaluators will once again help the Council review how the Supported People funded services are run come September 2009.

In addition, service users will now have an even bigger role to play. All Supporting People services will be re-tendered over the next 2 years and the Council has recruited service users to be fully involved as (paid) tender panel members during that process. Last year, 2 day training for service users to become panel members took place, which gave attendees a grounding in the ways in which services are

What is Supporting People?

Supporting People funds supported housing, which provides for vulnerable people needing both housing and support. These include hostels, sheltered housing, group homes and support to people in their own homes.

tendered and practical training to prepare them for this piece of work.

In addition, service users are now members of the Council's two Supporting People Governing Boards, the Core Strategy Group and the Commissioning Body where the major decisions for Supporting People are taken.

Peter Khwaja, Manager of Supporting People services says *"Service users have a huge impact on the way that we work and have developed the Supporting People programme. They are involved at all levels and are so important to our approach in all significant areas."*



Service users at the end of a two day training course

Rights, Voices, Choices – More people to benefit from Advocacy Services

Advocacy Partners have been working in Wandsworth for the last two years, providing independent professional advocacy and supporting self advocacy groups for people with Learning Disabilities to ensure their rights and choices are respected and their voices are heard. Advocacy Partners provide a professional, focussed issue based service, supporting people to make decisions around many issues, prioritising access to support and good healthcare, safeguarding issues and making complaints.

This service has now grown, with the appointment of two new professional advocates and now provides advocacy to adults with disabilities and to older people to improve their choice and control over their lives - including learning disabilities, physical disabilities, older people and those with sensory impairments - so that more people can now tap into this flourishing and helpful support.

"My advocate helps me make sure I understand things. I feel better about talking for myself in meetings. I think people listen to me now about what I want and I'm not so worried about saying the things I don't like." Service user

Advocacy Partners operate an open referral policy so that anyone can make a referral with the consent of the individual, or in their best interest, where this is not possible.



Paul



Keesha



Marcia

If you wish to make a referral for yourself or someone you know, please contact Advocacy Partners at:

SHARE Community, 64 Altenburg Gardens, SW11 1JL
Phone: (020) 7924 7772 and speak to Paul, Keesha or Marcia.
Email: info@advocacypartners.org (please mark FAO Wandsworth)
Fax: (020) 7924 7772

Day Services fit for the 21st Century

Day services for older people living in Wandsworth are being reviewed by Adult Social Services. The Council funds a wide range of services and the people who use these services are being asked to say how they would like to see services change and develop in the future. Service user representatives from each of the Council's funded services as well as family and carer representatives are being invited to join a panel to describe a Wandsworth vision for the 21st Century.

For more information, speak to your day service manager or contact Wendy Moreton, Policy and Performance Manager on (020) 8871 6271.

Mental Health Service Users are Voicing Views

The Voicing Views project has been incredibly busy in recent months making a real difference to how mental health service users and carers can influence how mental health services are developed and delivered.

Among other things, Voicing Views ran a series of training courses for service users and carers during February and March 2009. These were broadly based on increasing confidence in day to day life and also to give people the skills to attend management meetings with the Council, NHS Wandsworth and the Mental Health Trust, all of whom the project works with on important matters relating to mental health services. These courses were so popular and effective in giving people the confidence to have a real say in management meetings that a further series of training courses is being planned for the Autumn 2009.

What is 'Voicing Views'?

Voicing Views is the service user project in Wandsworth which works with NHS Wandsworth, the Mental Health Trust and the Council's Adult Social Services Department on matters relating to mental health service delivery and development in the borough. It runs two service user groups, one in Balham and one in Roehampton, as well as a Mental Health Interest Group attended by staff, service users and carers.

For more information about Voicing Views, please contact the Project Manager, John Morrill on (020) 8696 1709 or email voicingviews@wandcareall.org.uk.

Shaping the Future of Work and Well-being

On 13 July 2009 the Adult Social Services department held a Work and Well-being Day, during which we talked to people with disabilities about what help they need to get or keep a job. It also gave an opportunity for providers of employment, education and training services to tell us about their experiences of providing support.

Throughout the day, we heard about what kind of support people need to get or keep a job, as well as what works and doesn't work. The event really helped us think about existing employment support services in the borough, and potential gaps in current service provision. Separate consultation to hear the views of carers and employers is also taking place.

We are combining what we learned on the day with what we already know works through good practice. This is directly feeding into the work we are doing around helping people with disabilities and carers into employment, including decisions around what type of employment-related services we want to commission in the future.



Participants working hard during the group activities

For more information, contact Sarah Rushton on (020) 8871 7209, email srushton@wandsworth.gov.uk

COMING EVENTS

Wandsworth Carers and Young Carers Conference: looking after someone and having your own life

Tuesday 6th October 2009

Civic Suite, Wandsworth High Street, London, SW18 2PU

There are over 19,200 unpaid carers in the borough of Wandsworth who are the 'hidden heroes' of our community. The Wandsworth Carers and Young Carers Conference will celebrate the work that they do and launch Wandsworth's Multi-agency Strategy for Carers and Young Carers. The Strategy sets out the priorities for Wandsworth Council, NHS Wandsworth, South West London Mental Health Trust and Wandsworth's voluntary and community sector over the next five years.

The event is open to all unpaid carers in the borough who register to attend. A carer is an adult who provides help and support to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour, who could not manage without their help due to frailty, illness, disability, mental health condition or substance misuse.

This event is a thank you to Carers for their valued contribution to Wandsworth. It is free to attend and a hot lunch will be provided.

More details will be available soon. To register your place now, please contact the Wandsworth Carers Centre on (020) 8877 1200.

Independence and well-being in later life

Wednesday 21st October.

Civic Suite, Wandsworth High St London, SW18 2PU

Enjoy a great day out and be better informed about what's available in Wandsworth for you as you grow older. There will be a lively programme of activities to join in with throughout the day and a wide range of information stands.

More details will be available soon on the CareLine website: www.careline.org.uk. For more information, please phone (020) 8871 6278 or email acisse@wandsworth.gov.uk.

Learning Disabilities Open Day in February 2010

Keep an eye on the Council's website www.wandsworth.gov.uk for more details closer to the time.

Get Involved...

If you want to put something in the next issue of **INVOLVED** or want to ask someone about user or carer involvement in Wandsworth, please contact us by email, phone or fax.

You can register your interest in **Community Partners** by ringing Wandsworth Care Alliance (020) 8696 1709.

If you need to talk with someone about **Adult Social Services** please ring the Access Service on (020) 8871 7707, fax (020) 8871 6949, minicom (020) 8871 8485, text 'care' and your message to 07797 805456 or email accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk.

If you need information on health or care services please ring **CareLine** on (020) 8875 0500, visit their website at www.careline.org.uk, fax (020) 8643 8531, minicom (020) 8643 8985 or email careline@clara.net



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