

CENTRAL WEST LONDON SEXUAL HEALTH PROVIDERS FORUM

HIV PROVIDERS SUB GROUP

Minutes of meeting held Tuesday 13 September 2011 Irish Cultural Centre, Blacks Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9DT

PRESENT

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| 1. Allan Anderson | Positively UK |
| 2. Judith Kulabako | Africare |
| 3. Chris Woolls | Cara Trust |
| 4. Phil Storey | Hammersmith & Fulham CAB |
| 5. Steve Symonds | Immigration Law Practitioners Association |
| 6. Sandra Chidavaenzi | Youth Projects International |
| 7. Katie Smith | The Food Chain |
| 8. Mohammed Miah (Minutes) | Kensington & Chelsea Social Council |
| 9. Martha Stafford | Living Well |
| 10. Catherine Stephens | Metrosexual Health |
| 11. Oola Balam | Opportunity For All |
| 12. Kathryn Dombrowicz (Chair) | River House Trust |
| 13. Pippa Brown | Terrence Higgins Trust Refugee Mentoring Project |
| 14. Karen Randall | West London Gay Men's Project |
| 15. Gladys Jusu-Sheriff | WAND UK |

APOLOGIES

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| 1. Cephas Mosinghi | Africare |
| 2. Dennis Reed | Terrence Higgins Trust |

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Kathryn welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited members to introduce themselves and their organisations.

FEEDBACK: JUNE SEXUAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

Kathryn Dombrowicz, The River House Trust

Kathryn gave feedback from the sexual health conference, organised by members of the sexual health forum. She said that overall, the event was a great success and received a lot of good feedback from attendees. The main themes of the event included commissioning, benefits reforms and young people. Attendees were interested in learning more about outreach, peer support, stigma and mental health.

Kathryn announced the mental health training for HIV service providers on 9th November (date to be confirmed) at the London Lighthouse. She said more details will be available on the website shortly and notices will be sent out to members.

Kathryn also announced the establishment of a new sub group which will focus on young people's sexual health. The first meeting will be on 22nd November at the London Lighthouse. She also said that members who wanted to get involved in the planning process could contact Mohammed.

PRESENTATION: THE FOOD CHAIN

Katie Smith, The Food Chain

The Food Chain (TFC) provides nutrition services including home delivered meals, essential groceries and nutrition advice to men, women and children who are chronically sick as a result of HIV related illness. The service was established in Christmas 1988.

TFC uses borrowed kitchens across London to deliver hot and cold meals to its clients. Due to transportation issues and increased traffic on London's roads, it has become difficult to get so many hot meals out to service users, and Food Chain is now considering cold meals as well as hot. If they do reduce the number of cold meals they will consider providing more than one meal as they feel it isn't enough.

The NCVO conducted a research into why people weren't accessing nutritious meals and found that 57% of those people had mobility problems or visual impairment, 30% suffered isolation, 18% were living with depression or anxiety and 6% were in financial difficulties.

Katie explained the organisation has recently undergone major restructuring. There is now a nutritionist to ensure the food is up to a good nutritious standard, and the organisation is determined to counter a potential 'pizza delivery' reputation.

Clients can be referred via charities, dieticians, GPs and social workers. There are four criteria for referrals:

- Have insufficient money to buy the food they need and whose health is at risk,
- Face ill-health that restricts them from shopping, preparing or eating appropriate food,
- Lack the knowledge and practical skills to eat well,
- Need additional motivation to eat well and to improve their quality of life.

The people who use The Food Chain's services are generally expected to be unable to prepare their own meals.

TFC will also be more outcomes based, focussing on personal outcomes of individual service users. While depending on food supplies on a long term basis for many clients is unsustainable, The Food Chain hopes to educate and empower clients to be able to become more self-sufficient.

TFC is piloting a service together with Age UK Camden for communal eating from October 2011 to March 2012, which will address issues of nutrition knowledge and social isolation. Referrals are being accepted from Camden or neighbouring boroughs for men over 55 who are socially isolated and would benefit from the service.

Asked how long clients receive the service, Katie replied length varies depending on the client's situation and services continue as long as they are needed to make a difference.

Chris asked if Katie has information on sources of free food for those with no recourse to funds, adding that he has many clients who fall in this category. Katie said that GIFT provide free food, adding that whilst in the past their services were restricted to the Jewish community, they have now expanded their services to others. Katie was unaware of any mapping exercise for sources of free food, but suggested it could be something the forum looks into. Phil mentioned there is an organisation in Hammersmith & Fulham called Food Bank, but was unaware of its current status. Gladys suggested St. Mary's Madeline church, which helps asylum seekers.

Katie concluded and thanked the forum for giving her the opportunity to speak about The Food Chain.

PRESENTATION: WORKING WITH UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS AND THOSE REFUSED LEAVE TO REMAIN
(Presentation attached)

Steve Symonds, Immigration Law Practitioners Association (ILPA)

Steve introduced himself and gave a brief introduction to ILPA, which is a membership association of immigration advisors. ILPA does not provide legal advice directly to individuals, but rather support advisors who provide front line services. Much of ILPA's work involves campaigning and lobbying.

Steve spoke about barriers in providing free legal advice. In 2004, changes had restricted the time an immigration adviser could spend providing advice and assistance on Legal Aid. Since October 2007, fixed fees have meant that advisers are paid the same fee for all cases (regardless of the complexity of or time spent on each case). There has been no increase in the fees for immigration advice since April 2001, and from October 2011 the fees are to be reduced by 10%. These and other factors have made it increasingly difficult for advisers to continue taking on Legal Aid cases. As a result many have stopped or significantly reduced the proportion of Legal Aid cases they take. It has also forced advisers to cherry pick easier or shorter cases. Steve also mentioned the two largest not-for-profit providers of Legal Aid in immigration have both closed - Refugee and Migrant Justice (formerly the Refugee Legal Centre) closed last summer, and the Immigration Advisory Service closed this summer.

The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill will, if implemented, make this already difficult situation worse. Firstly, it is set to remove Legal Aid for all immigration cases - except for asylum claims and appeals, challenges to immigration detention and some judicial review claims. This means that immigrants in detention will receive Legal Aid to challenge detention, but once out, will again face the difficulties of gaining legal advice or representation.

Steve advised those concerned about the changes to join campaigning and lobbying groups. He said there was no guarantee that anything would change but insisted that making more noise about the issue would increase our chances of getting heard. He also advised forum members to write to Tory and Lib Dem MPs. Steve offered his assistance and support to any organisation that wanted to challenge the changes.

The forum agreed that it should engage in some sort of collective action. Kathryn proposed the forum present a joint response against the Bill. The forum agreed to this. Steve offered his support and said there were other organisations who could potentially work with the forum.

HIV SERVICE MAPPING

Mohammed asked the forum if members were using the HIV service mapping carried out by the forum last year. He also asked the forum how useful they found it and if they had any suggestions on making improvements to it.

A few members said they used it. Chris said he uses the mapping information and also gives a copy to new staff members and volunteers.

Some improvement suggestions were made, which included; keeping information updated using volunteers and to provide local numbers instead of premium numbers where possible to make it more accessible.

ELECTION HIV PROVIDERS SUB GROUP CHAIR

All members participated

Kathryn gave a brief description about the role and duties of the chair and spoke a bit about what the current chairs have been doing.

The election was held and Kathryn was unanimously re-elected as the chair.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 8 FEBRUARY 2011

The minutes of the meeting held 8 February were agreed.

MEMBERS UPDATE

Kathryn invited members to outline new areas of work:

- (a) Cara trust:** Cara's kid's summer programme had come to an end. Some of their activities had to be cancelled due to bad weather and the riots.
- (b) Positively UK:** Positively UK has won a new contract in Brent which will include one on one support and out-reach support at Monk's Park. Positively UK is also organising a conference for HIV patients which will focus on activism.
- (c) Opportunity For All:** Have been successful in their DESTA consortium bid. Project involving work with HIV patients to begin soon.
- (d) Living Well:** The next Positive Self-Management Programme will begin on 4th October and the Life Club in Ealing on 26th October.
- (e) Hammersmith & Fulham CAB:** Phil said the CAB provides financial advice and invited staff and service users to contact either him or Martha if they required financial advice.
- (f) WAND UK:** Has been bringing HIV positive and non HIV women together to help reduce stigma. The BME Women Health Improvement Day will be on 27th September. WAND has also received some funding from Camden and Islington for testing.
- (g) Youth Projects International:** Sandra mentioned Eddie was away on a project in Uganda.
- (h) THT Refugee Mentoring Project:** funding has been secured for another year, and referrals are still being taken.
- (i) Africare:** Will hold a focus group next month with young people with HIV and their parents.
- (j) River House Trust:** RHT started their legal advice clinic five months ago, which is going really well. RHT has been running a number of new workshops. They have also been looking at mental health issues.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting to be confirmed.