

Norwich Mind

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Focus Group

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Date of Focus Group – 20th August 2015

Service / Project Reviews - Carer Support Service

Facilitators – Moira Burton, Sandra Flanagan

Meeting commenced at 1:30pm.

Welcome and ice-breaker – Moira Burton

Introduction - Sandra Flanagan

Objectives - Moira Burton – Overview of current service

Identify areas most valued by Carers

Explore any new ideas that carers have for
the service

Moira outlined the current service, including details of how Carer Support is funded (via the CAP partnership) and the geographical area that has been allocated to NCNM by the CAP contract lead (Crossroads). This was followed by a discussion about what part of the service carers found most useful. This inevitably varied but everyone agreed that support groups were valuable and that the 4 monthly groups should not be reduced in number or held more or less frequently. Carers felt that there should be more activities and said they enjoyed the outings. People were open to the idea of multi group outings but

raised concerns about individuals being able to travel to attend "out of area" event.

There were lots of ideas about improving NCNM Carer Support communication with carers to ensure they are kept well informed and this was seen as an important role for the locality leader. Further details below.

Carers were all aware that the service is much reduced now with only one FTE compared to 5-6 previously but they are happy that the service has continued to provide 1-1 support and monthly groups.

Meeting Closed at 4:30pm and everyone enjoyed a BBQ of burgers, hot dogs with a vegetarian option.

Subject	Suggestions	Outcomes
<p><i>Communications: How best to disseminate information that would be relevant to Carers</i></p>	<p><i>More use of the Mind website: Carers section. Facebook – closed user groups Text Alerts: Most carers have mobile phones Use of volunteers to ensure timely updating across all media formats</i></p>	<p><i>Use of the Carer Support part of the website is a cost effective way of providing information to a wide carer audience. Can be introduced quite quickly. (a small amount of training and an update of user rights to access) Facebook CUG and text alerts would require further investigation and may also incur costs (particularly the text alert option)</i></p>
<p><i>Support Groups: Four monthly groups held around the county. Are these still useful? How can they be improved?</i></p>	<p><i>Nominated individuals at groups to assist with organisation of activities and ensuring others are up to date with information/matters arising at group. Supporting groups to organise their own activities/outings Groups raising funds to support their own activities</i></p>	<p><i>Requires a "volunteer" at each group, and also for other members of the group to agree for their contact details to be made available. The Dereham carer support group has already been successfully mentored to set up an independent group and this entitles them to a small group grant which they use for their own choice of activity</i></p>

<i>Befriending Service</i>	<i>Carers felt that this service could be used more effectively, especially given the reduction in FTE at the Carer Support Service. People who had previously used this service had found it to be valuable</i>	<i>NCNM are currently waiting to employ a volunteer co-ordinator and until this person is in post, the Locality Leader is not in a position to recruit new befrienders (due to constraints of resource and current commitments)</i>
<i>Other ideas that carers would like to receive from Norwich and Central Norfolk Mind Carer Support Service</i>	<i>Awareness workshops Training – discounted if not available FOC</i>	<i>It is hoped that with improved communications (see point 1), carers will be better informed about training and workshops that are already on offer (NSFT/ NRP etc). The main barrier to providing free of charge or discounted training is funding. The carer support service has a very limited budget and covers a very large geographical area.</i>