



Rethink Carers Lancashire

Newsletter
April 2017

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New venue for our Lancashire-wide meetings –

Brindle Community Hall PR6 8NH

Very easy to find, only a few minutes from where M61 junction 9 meets M65 junction 3, excellent parking. Nearest train station Bamber Bridge.

Let us know if you need directions or a lift.

We can pay travel for anyone coming more than 20 miles

NEXT GROUP MEETING Thursday April 27, 10.30 to 12.30 plus lunch, with a team from the North-West Ambulance Service, including their Mental Health Project Lead and a Community Specialist Paramedic. They'll be bringing their award-winning 'Patient Experience Board Game' which can apparently get quite competitive. **LUNCH** will be as before, hotpot or butter pie as the vegetarian option and pickles, price £4 to be paid on the day (we can help if anyone is having difficulty finding this amount). Please let me know by **MONDAY APRIL 17** (or sooner if possible) whether you will be coming, and **PLEASE** make sure you give me your lunch order at the same time. It takes quite a lot of time to ring round all the people who forget to do this.

A FOLLOW-UP TO OUR VERY POPULAR CONFERENCE JANUARY 2016

On Thursday June 15, we welcome again barrister **DOUG FEERY**, who will be updating us on progress with the implementation of the Care Act, and other significant developments in mental health law. Doug is a specialist in mental health, human rights, and public law; he trains professionals across the country, and particularly here in the North West, and has unequalled insider awareness of what is happening within the services. Doug has kindly offered to give advice privately after the meeting on an individual basis; let us know if you would like this.

The meeting will be from 10.30 to 12.30, followed by a lunch of either pickle with hotpot or butter pie (for vegetarians) price £4 to be paid on the day. This meeting is open to anyone, but as funds are limited we also ask for donations as follows:

Carers living in Lancashire £1

Carers from other areas £3

Paid professionals £5 (we can provide receipts and attendance certificates)

IT IS ESSENTIAL TO BOOK YOUR PLACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, but at the latest by TUESDAY MAY 30. If you would like lunch, please give your choice when booking the meeting.



WHITTINGHAM HOSPITAL –

An important and exciting project – we can all be involved in this

(Image courtesy Geoff Speight)

Whittingham Lives will bring together former staff, patients and community groups to record the legacy of the mental health hospital, exploring how this history can be made relevant to people's lives today!

A new two-year project exploring the history and legacy of Whittingham Hospital, near Preston, once the largest mental health asylum in Europe, has recently launched.

It intends to research the past and use the arts to explore how this history can inform better mental health care for the future. Former staff, patients and visitors are being asked to get in touch with photos and memories of the place while local history fans, arts' groups, mental health charities and other interested parties are being encouraged to volunteer as part of the research team.

Rethink member and part-time project manager Sue Flowers said, 'It's vitally important that we don't just look to the past, but that we use this history to inspire hope and advocate for positive change in service provision for the future'.

Over the next two years there will be a range of events for service users, carers and members of the public.

If you have a story to share or would like to get more involved contact Sue Flowers 07940-775290 or email contact@whittinghamlives.org.uk www.whittinghamlives.org.uk



Personal Independence Payment

Rethink Launched a campaign action last month on PIPs because the Government is ignoring a court decision which would give people with mental health conditions the same financial support as those with physical health conditions. The courts ruled that if people experienced

overwhelming psychological distress when travelling, and were unable to do so without any help, they should have access to a higher rate of PIP. Instead of listening to this ruling, the Government is trying to undermine it by changing the eligibility criteria for PIP.

PIP is massively important to Rethink's beneficiaries as it provides financial support to people who have a long-term illness or disability to receive help with daily activities such as shopping, paying bills or travelling. In our area those on Disability Living Allowance are being 'migrated' to PIP, and we are regularly finding that the mobility part of PIP is being denied for the reasons mentioned above.

IF YOU'RE COMPLETING A PIP APPLICATION, MAKE SURE YOU ASK FOR ALL THE INFORMATION THIS GROUP CAN PROVIDE BEFORE YOU START

Rethink Mental Illness in Partnership with Virgin Trains AND Lloyds Bank!

Launch of an exciting new charity partnership between **Virgin Trains** on the west coast and **Rethink Mental Illness**. The partnership aims to raise awareness of issues relating to mental health and offer support to **Virgin Trains employees and local communities across the UK**.

Virgin Trains colleagues will be raising money throughout the year with a programme of fundraising activities designed to work with local communities in and around its stations – reaching millions of customers across the network. The partnership will see Rethink Mental Illness in England, alongside partner charities Hafal in Wales and Support in Mind Scotland collaborate with Virgin Trains' Community Champions to organise local initiatives and campaigns. Virgin Trains on the west coast will be marking the launch of its new partnership with Rethink Mental Illness on May 4th with a 'May the 4th be with you' Star Wars dress-up fundraising day. The partnership will also have a big focus on the mental wellbeing of Virgin Trains' employees - raising awareness of the importance of good mental health in and outside of the workplace. This will include training opportunities, such as online modules and special events. Virgin Trains has long placed mental health at the centre of its responsible business agenda

Emma Malcolm, Associate Director for Fundraising and Supporter Engagement at Rethink Mental Illness said: "It's great to see Virgin Trains West Coast continuing to put mental health centre stage across the business, and Rethink Mental Illness are really excited to be leading on this new partnership, working with our partner charities, Hafal in Wales and Support in Mind Scotland. Throughout the next year, we are looking forward to developing a range of fundraising activities, alongside new training and support for staff that will continue to raise awareness of mental health problems, and embed understanding, ensuring that everyone has the tools to hand to support their mental wellbeing both at work and in our communities."

We'll soon be looking for volunteers to be involved in this on Preston station. Watch this space!

The two-year partnership with **Lloyds Bank** aims to raise at least £2million each year to help create a pioneering Mental Health and Money Advice Service to support people with both mental health and financial difficulties. Lloyds Banking Group colleagues overwhelmingly (62%) voted to support mental health as the groups new charity for 2017 and 2018. Having the support of such a large banking group will enable Rethink to make a huge difference supporting the millions of people affected by both mental health and financial challenges in the UK. A large number of volunteers offered by Lloyds will be both supported and given work to do. This will involve, amongst other things, connecting with groups and mentoring. Rethink and Lloyds together will work on a 'thought leadership programme' around being a good mental health employer and maintaining good mental and physical health.

We'll soon be looking for volunteers to be involved in meetings with local branches of Lloyds. Watch this space! (Again!)

Most of us haven't been aware of the huge amount of work put in by Rethink's fundraising team to persuade employees of companies such as this to vote for us rather than another charity. The fundraising team is pretty small, but they punch well above their weight.

Don't forget the meetings of the new groups:

East Lancs: meetings to be held May 10, June 14, July 12, August 9. Contact details as on this newsletter

Fylde Family Support group: meetings to be held May 9, 13 June, 11 July, 8 August, 12 September. Contact Stuart and Toni on 07999 332804 or emailfyldefamilysupportgroup@rethink.org

In the news

More than 500 people placed in out-of-area psychiatric beds in December More than 500 people in England were placed in an in-patient psychiatric bed that was outside of their local area in December 2016 – with 23 people having to travel more than 300 kilometres from home to access a bed, official figures have shown. Figures from NHS Digital revealed that there were 528 out-of-area placements at the end of December 2016, of which 96% were due to a lack of availability of a local bed. This is known as an inappropriate placement. The North had the most out-of-area placements (225), followed by the Midlands and East (120) and the South (110). NHS Digital's figures also showed that patients spent 15,118 days out-of-area, with 71 patients spending over a month receiving mental health treatment outside of their local area. In addition, 242 patients had to travel more than 100km to receive treatment. The cost associated with out-of-area placements in December 2016 was more than £6.76 million. The Government has set a target to eliminate inappropriate out-of-area placements in acute adult inpatient mental health services by 2020-21.

Online support service for people with bipolar receives funding boost to cope with

increased demand A 24-hour eCommunity service, which provides online support for people with bipolar to share experiences, express their feelings and seek support, is to expand thanks to a £200,000 grant. This will be used to re-develop the charity's eCommunity service including a new mobile app, additional support resources for young people and to recruit online site moderators and youth officers to provide support. Bipolar UK's moderated eCommunity, which has been running for 15 years, is a forum for people to share experiences, information, and advice as well as interact through a peer support service, which covers a range of topics including medication and self-management. There are 15,100 members in Bipolar UK's eCommunity – 25% of whom are Londoners. The charity has recently seen an unprecedented acceleration in demand for the service and in the past two years it has welcomed more than 7,000 new members to the forum. Bipolar UK says demand from children and young people affected by bipolar has also increased dramatically. The forum's online registration details offer crucial contact information, should someone indicate that they are at risk of suicide and in need of crisis intervention. As bipolar increases the risk of suicide by up to 20 times the charity says it's vital to be able to respond immediately to any concerns. Last year, 35 people from the eCommunity were referred to crisis support services having been identified as at risk of suicide. Research by Bipolar UK shows that 72% of eCommunity users say that the service helps them feel less alone

Online psychiatric assessments could help the young access help sooner Computer psychiatric interviews of young people had a diagnostic success rate of 80-90%, according to a University of Aberdeen trial. The tests were used to diagnose and create a psychiatric history in order that clinicians could then more quickly choose the right service for children in need. Psychiatric conditions were divided into: Anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, phobias / Attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder /Autism, asperger's syndrome / Oppositional and conduct disorders. Professor Philip Wilson, head of the University of Aberdeen's Centre for Rural Health said: "This is an important trial to test a new service which could ultimately lead to a slicker, more thorough and effective system for psychiatric referral for children and young people." "The current system is inefficient at best and often results in families being sent from pillar to post due to inaccurate or non-comprehensive diagnosis.

Study launched to understand why autistic people may be more at risk of mental ill health

A nationwide online study has been launched that aims to understand why autistic people may be more at risk of depression and suicide than the general population. The team from Mental Health Autism, a research group based in Coventry University's Centre for Research in Psychology, Behaviour and Achievement, hopes the results will enable them to create the first assessment tools for health organisations, service providers and clinicians to quickly assess if an autistic patient is at risk of suicide and to enable them to receive the correct support and treatment. Recent research from the team revealed that up to 66% of adults newly diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome consider suicide at some point in their lives, compared to 17% of the general population. Another large study revealed that autistic people are much more at risk of dying by suicide than those without the condition. However, there is little research to understand why this is and how it can be addressed.

JOIN RETHINK MENTAL ILLNESS Membership of our local Lancashire group is free, but we'd like everyone to join the national organisation, as this gives Rethink more weight for its campaigning as well as access to your opinions and knowledge. In return you get the quarterly information-packed magazine, access to a special bit of the website, and free conferences (including in November our National Members Day which this year WAs in Birmingham). Look at the website or phone 0121 522 7007

There is now a cheaper membership for people who can do everything online – fewer perks but the same information. If you're already a member, you'll be informed about the alternative at renewal time.

ONE COMMENT WE HEAR FREQUENTLY NOW IS THAT RETHINK IS THE BEST SOURCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS INFORMATION AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO CARERS IN LANCASHIRE. One way to show your appreciation of this is to join the national organisation.

Date for your diary

Wednesday September 27, 2017

Another important regional conference, Stoke on Trent (half an hour by train from Manchester)

"Take the lead – equipping people to be leaders in their own care"

Look out for more details soon

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