



Rethink Carers Lancashire

Newsletter
June 2017

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UPCOMING MEETINGS

East Lancs group: Wednesday July 12, 6 – 8 pm Accrington Our speaker will be Lorraine McDonald-Johnson, recently appointed as lead for all the East Lancs community mental health teams. Lorraine has said she will come to all the meetings of this group – so an excellent opportunity to discuss how our services are doing.

Wednesday August 9, 6 – 8 pm Accrington We'll welcome Andy McGinty from the Lancashire Constabulary. Andy is from the East Lancs Early Action Team and has special expertise in policing and mental health.

Fylde Coast Family Support Group: Tuesday July 11, Tuesday August 8, 7- 9 pm, meets at Grenfell House, 5 Grenfell Avenue, Layton, North Blackpool FY3 7BP

WORRIED ABOUT PAYING FOR YOUR OWN CARE IN LATER LIFE?

Theresa May sent us all into a panic when she proposed using the sale of our houses to fund our own care, and her subsequent U-turn hasn't been much of a consolation! Those of us who've benefited from solicitor Steve Howell's help in setting up discretionary trusts to protect those we leave behind may be surprised to learn that such a trust won't necessarily prevent our inheritance from being taken away to pay for our own social/nursing care. This is a very complex situation, and no one can predict what steps a future government may take to fund these very high costs. However, there are ways at the moment this problem might be addressed. Steve, who we know from experience is very skilled at explaining the laws on complex inheritance matters, has very kindly agreed to give us another talk on this specific issue. Steve will again also offer individual appointments. We'll let you know the date as soon as possible, it's likely to be August, but let us know if you're interested.

Visit to look at the Whittingham Hospital Archives: This will now take place on Monday July 24, from 10.30-12.30 on 24th July at Bow Lane, Preston PR1 2RE. We'll try to find somewhere for lunch afterwards. If you haven't already said you'd like to come, let us know, also whether you'll need directions or a lift.



YOUR CARER ASSESSMENT – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Following some heated discussions about these at our East Lancs group meeting, we wrote to nCompass as well as to the Lancashire County Council Mental Health Lead Charlotte Hammond, and Commissioner for Carer Services Natalie Burfitt. This move was also prompted by experiences of Lancashire Care mental health professionals who had a somewhat rose-coloured view of what the nCompass assessment can do for carers. Those members who had agreed for their names to be passed on should by now have been contacted by nCompass to find out why they had apparently received an incomplete service. We also had a meeting with senior nCompass managers and found out some extremely interesting facts:

- Contrary to what we'd been told, your carer assessment *can* be done by the Care Coordinator and doesn't have to be done by nCompass
- nCompass can offer the nCompass newsletter, plus further opportunities to talk to their staff.
- Their follow-up is limited to one letter giving details of the decision about the personal budget allocation and a summary of the discussion, but without specific references to the Care Act wellbeing domains and outcomes
- nCompass can signpost carers only to services that already exist. However, the fundamental principle of the Care Act is that support offered should be tailored to individual need – people (carers as well as those they care for) should not be restricted to what's already out there. So, for instance, if family therapy would be helpful (see below) nCompass is unable to initiate or arrange this
- nCompass provides general information such as is given to all carers (e.g. benefits claims, the Peace of Mind plan) but does not have any mental health specific resources or information.

We shall be taking this up with the Council as it seems that there is a gap between what nCompass can do for carers and what the Care Act stipulates should be offered to them.

Take the lead Our major conference for anyone with lived or professional experience of mental illness. You should have received the information about this, let us know if not. The conference takes place in Stoke on Trent on September 27. We're hoping to provide subsidised train tickets for group members

A new service;
Could Family
Therapy help
YOU ?

What is Family Therapy? Family and systemic psychotherapy – also known as family therapy – can help those in close relationships to better understand and support each other. It enables family members to express and explore difficult thoughts and emotions safely, understand each other's experiences and views, appreciate each other's needs, build on family strengths, and work together to make useful changes in their relationships and their lives. Every family is a bit like a human body. Sometimes it feels great, and things work well. Sometimes even small things can feel like a huge challenge. When we hurt one part of our body, every part can be affected in some way. But all the parts of the body can work together to help if a bone gets broken, or if there's an infection. So, family therapy helps family members to work together when something is hurting, or just feeling out of sorts. Much more information at <file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/What%20is%20Family%20Therapy%202017%20for%20website.pdf> or we can send you a hard copy

'Family' is used to describe any group of people who care about each other and call themselves a family. As well as parents and children of all ages, this may also involve grandparents, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins, friends, carers, and other professionals. Therapists try to include whoever is important to the family. Family therapists are trained to work with children, young people, adults, carers and other professionals. Their aim is not to take sides, blame or provide simple answers. Instead, they aim to engage family members in sharing understandings of what is going on and exploring ways forward that work for the family. Sometimes the family therapist will work on their own and sometimes together with a colleague. Family therapists often work in pairs or as a team as this has been found to be most useful when working with more than one person. Family therapy could last between 3 months and one year and the number of sessions needed would be discussed at the start of therapy and be reviewed on a regular basis.

Family Therapy is now available across Lancashire Care Trust. If you're caring for someone with a diagnosis of psychosis or bi-polar disorder who is under the Community Mental Health Team, and you think this will help you, please ask us for the complete leaflet and then discuss with the Care Coordinator, who will refer you. (It's hoped this service in the near future will be extended to other situations.) NB – Rethink Carers Lancashire is one of the first groups to learn of this provision, not all Care Coordinators are aware of it yet. The Trust's leads are **Karen Allan, Family and Systemic Psychotherapist** and **Dr Rachel Wade Principal Clinical Psychologist**.



Can you help with a study? Northumbria University is looking for carers, family or friends of someone who has been diagnosed with a severe mental illness to take part in a study which aims to create a model that can be used to develop an online intervention to improve carer wellbeing and quality of life. Those who take part will be asked to complete health questionnaires, before being asked to complete a weekly diary for up to 6 weeks and will then be invited to attend a telephone or Skype interview. Interviews will be about online support and will be organised at a time convenient to the carer. The questionnaires will be sent through the post and the diary is available either online or paper-based.

To take part in this study, you should be a UK adult (aged 18+) carer, family or friend of someone diagnosed with schizophrenia, psychosis, bipolar disorder, personality disorder or severe depression. The research looks at both those who use online support and those who don't. For more information, please contact Amy Johnson at amy.johnson@northumbria.ac.uk or ask us to pass on your contact details to her.



Get a break:

Cortijo Romero, (www.cortijo-romero.co.uk) centre for alternative holidays in Grananda, Spain, is offering discounts for carers (shared room for £170 pp on this year's courses e.g. Roots of happiness/ Life Stories/Free the spirit . In addition, for those most in need, two places available **entirely free**. Ros can really recommend these, and can give more details if anyone is interested. Ask for her number.

And nearer home: Carers Link have further discounts available at both their Haven Holiday Park Carers Caravans in Blackpool & the Lake District on the dates below. These are primarily for carers from East Lancs, but if you live elsewhere you may be able to use the caravans for any unbooked periods. Saving a whopping 70% on normal prices:

Marton Mere, Blackpool 16th - 19th June for £160 / 19th - 23rd June for £195

Lakeland, Grange-over-Sands 16th - 19th June for £160/ 19th - 23rd June for £195 If you are interested or want to inquire about other dates call Carers Link on **01254 387444**. Please note that due to short notice full payment must be made.

On Friday and Saturday July 7/8 there will be two performances each day (6.30 and 8.30) of a play on Stockport train station. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-bMystC6vw> (part of the Manchester Fringe Festival) This is the first collaboration between Rethink and Virgin trains, and all ticket money will go to Rethink. If you'd be interested in going to this, and getting a meal either before or afterwards, let us know which day you'd prefer and we'll see if we can organise tickets and transport.



Want to be a film star for NHS Expo 2017? Let us know if you do.

Health and Care Innovation Expo will be held on 11 and 12 September 2017, in Manchester.

The purpose of Expo is to help leaders in the NHS, local authorities and beyond to work together for whole-system change and improvement. At Expo 2017 the focus will be more sharply than ever on the actions that can be taken to deliver the vision of the NHS Five Year Forward View, across all parts of health and social care services.

NHS England are looking for volunteers who are willing to be part of a film that will be shown during the Expo to share recent experience of:

- 1). Carers whose relative has been in hospital over the weekend
- 2). Individuals with recent experience of their relative being an emergency inpatient at the weekend
- 3) Being discharged as a result of the right services being in place over a weekend

The filming will be a guided informal conversation about your experience of a particular time the person you care for was unwell.

As the film is focusing on seven day services it will be discussing your experiences of NHS services at weekends, whether they were positive or needed improving or whether you couldn't see a difference between weekdays and weekends.

There will also be the opportunity to discuss your general views on what NHS services, particularly in hospitals, should be available at weekends and what benefits you feel there are to patients and their families having access to NHS services seven days a week.

This film will be shown on Tuesday 12th September at NHS expo 2017, and may also be uploaded to the NHS England YouTube account.

The next two pages have more on the Care Act. A lot to take in, and it may not be of interest to everyone, but for some it may be vital information in ensuring good care for their relative.



Care Act 2014

...the most significant piece of legislation since the establishment of the welfare state.

(SCIE)

- Has been the law now for over two years
- Group members who have asked for a Care Act assessment have to be insistent but are finding it helps
- Mental health professionals are now beginning to take it seriously, BUT
- Very many community team staff admit to knowing little about it

On April 25, the Group Coordinator wrote the following to both Lancashire County Council and Lancashire Care NHS Trust: *Our groups are still finding major difficulties in obtaining Care Act assessments (not carer assessments). Some of the teams we contact are more than willing to engage in Care Act assessments, but it is very obvious that the staff have not had appropriate levels of training in how to do these. Last week I attended one meeting where two practitioners from the CMHT showed themselves to be extremely caring and demonstrated a very high level of skill and sensitivity in responding to the family members. However, it was clear that the 'FACE' tool used for the Care Act assessment could have been counter-productive and even damaging. The format is insensitive and inappropriate for someone in the kind of emotional distress likely to be experienced by many of LCFT's patients. It makes it very difficult for good practitioners to do an effective job.*

On April 28, I received the following from Charlotte Hammond, Head of Mental Health Services for the Council: *Thanks very much for your feedback, it is concerning to hear that people are having a difficult experience. I am really pleased to hear that workers were caring and sensitive, that is lovely to hear, it is unfortunate that the computer system may have impacted on the effectiveness of the assessment. There is currently work underway to evaluate the training and application in respect of FACE and the system which hosts the platform - LAS. We have had feedback from a range of practitioners that they are finding it difficult, this is not an issue which is particular to mental health and doesn't necessarily reflect ineffectiveness in respect of the Trust. LCC has a section 75 agreement with LCFT which covers statutory social care duties such as assessments and reviews. Many of the social care staff who are hosted by LCFT in integrated teams are employed by LCC. I hope that is helpful and offers some assurance that we are aware and taking action to improve the use of FACE and LAS.*

On May 30 a reply from Dee Roach, Executive Director of Nursing and Quality, stated:

*LCC acknowledge that work is underway within LCC to evaluate the training and application in respect of the FACE assessment, and the system which hosts this, following feedback from a range of practitioners that they are finding it difficult. It is unfortunate that the computer system may have impacted on the effectiveness of the assessment. We have been working with Merseycare * to support us in progressing the *Triangle of Care Quality Improvement (QI) Programme to begin in June 2017. This will support us in further promoting carers as key partners in care and cover such agendas as consent and confidentiality. The proposal to progress this work was approved at the Promoting Health Preventing Harm meeting in March with the QI Conference to be the formal launch of this initiative. We are working with Lorraine Morris of Ncompass and Lorraine has been delivering and continues to deliver a training programme across teams which encompasses the Care Act and Carers Assessments and this will be strengthened as part of the Triangle of Care work.* We will keep you and the Rethink Group informed about this work and will invite your contribution. We acknowledge that there is work still to be done to ensure that the best experiences are consistently achieved for everyone.*

We recognise the need to further align our processes to the Care Act, and have two key work streams around this currently:

Training: *The community staff across the mental health services are being directed towards the Care Act Practice Development Day training which is a full introduction into the Care Act for the practitioner provided by Lancashire County Council and which both social care staff and trust staff have had access to through the reciprocal training*

arrangements. They have offered additional sessions for May and June, but further funding arrangements for beyond June may need to be established. By mid-June 100 staff will have attended.

Electronic records: To accommodate the work done on the local authority systems (for all three authorities) a modification of the Health and Social Needs (H&SN) assessments has been suggested and agreed to enable completed documents/PDF records can be 'tagged' to the current H&SN on eCR. This came out of a work stream to reduce the need to duplicate work. This will be active end of June. More recently it has been agreed that a further modification be made to the H&SN assessment to make it fully Care Act compliant – this was following the notice that mental health will not be an early area of development on RIO (the replacement to eCR). This will be defined and proposed to the Programme Board in June and scheduled to be available in September.

With further training available and with the means to link LA work and complete compliant assessments on eCR we will soon have the training and the tools to be fully compliant with the Care Act.

(Note from Valerie *Merseycare has apparently just abandoned its implementation of the Triangle of Care !)

***The Triangle of Care Toolkit a Resource for Mental Health Service Providers**

The Triangle of Care was launched in 2010 and was developed by carers who were supporting someone who regularly needed acute inpatient mental health services. It identified six key standards that if in place would mean that the carer would be better involved and supported by mental health services. Since the launch, Carers Trust has led on the programme in England developing the original guide so that it can be implemented across all mental health services including specialist, forensic, children's, older people's and community. In 2013 the Triangle of Care membership scheme was launched to enable mental health providers to receive formal recognition of their commitment to cultural change and carer involvement. Since its launch, 31 NHS trusts have joined the scheme and their experience, knowledge, good practice and pitfalls have been identified to help develop a toolkit for implementation of the Triangle of Care.

The toolkit consists of a series of self-assessment documents by which nursing staff assess themselves. It has no legal status. There have been no national evaluations of how much difference it has made.

Note from Valerie: I have been invited to be a member of the steering group for Lancashire Care Trust's implementation of the Triangle of Care, with the first meeting scheduled for July. The group is very large but consists mainly of LCFT staff and representatives from carer organisations (nCompass, Carers Link, Carers Trust Fylde Coast) who are apparently not themselves carers of someone with a mental health condition. The rationale for this is 'when you are looking after a loved one it is very hard to attend meetings. Therefore, we have learnt that to reach out to the majority of carers it is best to work in partnership with the carers services who have regular pop in and chat sessions, a large carer distribution list and valued relationships with a variety of carers.' This is recognised everywhere as bad practice. Carers should speak for carers, and as far as I know I am the only carer in the steering group.

I shall be asking the following questions:

1. Why has the Trust decided to implement this scheme, what is the evidence base for doing so?
2. How will we know whether the considerable resources devoted to this have been worthwhile? What audit of the current situation has been undertaken?
3. One of the aims is to develop a staff training package. What use will be made of the very considerable and successful staff training packages developed by our groups' carers and why have they now been discontinued?
4. What is the anticipate cost / duration of this initiative and how does it compare with equivalent efforts to comply with the *statutory* Care Act?
5. How are the current training programmes (by nCompass and Lancashire County Council) being evaluated?

All comments/questions welcome. If you're interested in being part of a small working group to address the Care Act issues, please let us know.

(No 'In the news' feature this month, too much in here already!)

