

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD: 19 NOVEMBER 2015

REPORT OF HEALTHWATCH LEICESTERSHIRE

SWANSWELL INSIGHT REPORT
ROAD TO RECOVERY

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to presenting the findings of an exercise to collect evidence and insight relating to substance misuse services by listening to service users and staff so that Healthwatch Leicestershire (HWL) could:
 - Establish a deeper understanding of service users' experiences;
 - Understand what changes service users would make to improve their experiences with Swanswell;
 - Gather the staff perspective on improvements.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The report insights will feed into the Public Health Substance Misuse Review/ Procurement process of Leicestershire County Council.
3. The report will also be distributed or presented to:
 - Swanswell;
 - The sub-regional Substance Misuse Clinical Forum for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, hosted by Leicestershire County Council.
 - West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group and East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group
 - Better Care Together Programme Board

Background

4. HWL has pledged to gather the views of health and social care service users across Leicestershire. From May to June 2015 it collaborated with Swanswell, a national alcohol and drug charity that delivers services locally, to listen to both staff and services users to understand better their experiences of working within and accessing substance misuse services.
5. The local Swanswell service in Leicestershire and Rutland started on 1 July 2011 and now operates out of two offices based in Coalville and Loughborough, as well as from district based hubs across the two counties. The service works in GP surgeries providing shared care. Swanswell supports approximately 1500 service users each year in Leicestershire and Rutland and accepts referrals from a variety of sources but mainly from either GP's or self-referrals.

6. Swanswell is committed to continuous improvement of its organisation and welcomed the opportunity to work with HWL.

Staff and service user Involvement

7. The project involved various components to gather staff views and service user experiences:

- Group discussions took place with four existing service user peer mentor groups in Coalville, Oadby and Wigston and Hinckley, allowing open conversation and a chance to share experiences.
- A Recovery survey was completed with new and existing service users through drop-in sessions, reception waiting areas and outreach locations.
- Staff were offered an opportunity to provide comment on what changes if any, they would make to the service, that would allow them to provide better care to service users.

Emerging themes from service users

8. Coordination of services

Services users spoke of a lack of a joined-up approach and co-ordination of care between different services or professionals. Links between GPs, hospitals and Swanswell regarding their care could be improved. Service users wanted professionals to treat them holistically, taking the whole person into account, dealing with their mental, social and physical illnesses.

9. Peer groups

Support groups at Swanswell worked very well according to service users. We were told that a recovery plan that supports the user to think about the wider objectives of their recovery and lifestyle would be beneficial.

10. Aftercare

Aftercare could be put in place for those users who had left the service or were deemed to no longer need the service. They could receive a follow up appointment or conversation after a particular period of time.

11. Access

Greater flexibility for service users around access to services at various locations outside of the City, involving joined up service provision across Leicester and Leicestershire.

Service users felt attending more than one meeting per week would provide additional opportunities for support and aid recovery.

Emerging themes from staff

12. Manageable caseloads

Staff said that more manageable caseloads would in turn help to provide a healthier working environment, increase support and allow more dedicated time for clients.

13. **Streamlined processes**

Reviewing and streamlining processes to avoid duplication of paperwork between various personnel would help to reduce administration and save time.

14. **Ways of working**

Staff would welcome more time to discuss how to work smarter, review the practicalities of current working patterns, and geographical locations of staff across Leicestershire.

Recommendations to Partners

15. Based on its findings, HWL offers the following recommendations to providers and commissioners of services:

Leicestershire County Council

16. To use the findings of the report to help inform future procurement and commissioning of substance misuse services.

17. Substance misuse should be understood as a period of illness affecting the body and mind, developed as part of a public health campaign which may help to reduce the stigma service users feel and experience.

Swanswell and Leicestershire County Council

18. To use the findings of the report as a springboard to further understand what is of most benefit to service users.

Swanswell

19. Implementation of a recovery plan that sets out the service user journey with their progress and next steps, reflecting an understanding of the different individual needs. This would include their aims, how they will be supported to achieve the plan and would provide a continued journey through the system.
20. A patient's aftercare plan should be recognised as an important step in maintaining the will to stop substance misuse for service users. It would also be useful to have a follow-up conversation built into the service, to allow contact to be made with the ex-service user at the three to six months' stage to assess whether additional support is needed. This would be beneficial especially for those with no support system at home.
21. Review the provision of peer support groups/ meetings to either continue to develop these or create new activities that further benefit the recovery of service users.

Clinical Commissioning Groups and Better Care Together partners

22. A system that flags to a GP when a substance misuse service user has not collected their repeat prescription could be explored (and consider any patient consent issues), as not taking medication could be detrimental to recovery.
23. Greater links and understanding between hospitals and substance misuse services to better support the user should be adopted. These links would be beneficial to all parties and be a step forward in terms of risk management. To set out and implement a clear pathway of communication between emergency services when a patient is

identified or admitted for a drug or alcohol issue, as working with Swanswell would be both beneficial and expedient.

Recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board

24. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to support the recommendations and urge partners to consider any actions for improvement of the service and system as a whole.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

25. None.

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Relevant Impact Assessments

Equality and Human Rights Implications

1. Healthwatch Leicestershire is aware that the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) applies to all functions of public authorities that are listed in Schedule 19 Equality Act 2010. Schedule 19 list does not include Healthwatch England or Local Healthwatch organisations, however as bodies carrying out a public function using public funding Healthwatch Leicestershire is subject to the PSED general duty.
2. Healthwatch Leicestershire is committed to reducing the inequalities of health and social care outcomes experienced in some communities. Healthwatch Leicestershire believes also that health and social care should be based on a human rights platform. It will utilise the Equality Act 2010 when carrying out its work and in influencing change in service commissioning and delivery.

Partnership Working and associated issues

3. Healthwatch Leicestershire would like to thank Swanswell for allowing access to both staff and service users.