

THE CAMDEN BUGLE

FAILING HEALTH

The NHS was the creation of a Labour Government in 1948. It was part of the package of welfare reforms that would provide for people from 'cradle to grave'.

What has gone wrong? The current government has poured money into the NHS and the result is that hospital beds are being closed and doctors and nurses are being sacked and an NHS dentist will soon be impossible to find.

Costly management systems have been introduced and inelegant forms of public involvement have been developed. None of these appears to have had the desired effect.

On the medical model, a doctor would not keep prescribing a treatment which had no effect on the disease. The Government, however, seems to take the view that you keep on with the same treatment even if it is shown not to work.

NO MORE BILL

After eight years the Government has finally admitted defeat with its much criticised Mental Health Bill and abandoned it.

This may not be the good news that it sounds since there are proposals to bring in the most controversial aspects of the proposals in the Bill – compulsory, supervised treatment in the community (CTO) – as amendments to the 1983 Mental Health Act. The real difficulty here is that amendments to Acts seldom receive the same rigorous scrutiny as new bills do and there is the possibility of introducing the most significant reforms almost by ‘the back door’.

Losing the Bill also means that some of the good features such as the availability of advocacy and the need to justify all detentions are also lost. However, the primary lesson is that enough opposition will defeat bad proposals. In the case of the Mental Health Bill the opposition came from all sides from psychiatrists and other mental health professionals, from lawyers and from service users and together they managed to defeat it.

THE JAMESTOWN BATTLE GOES ON

Service users at New Directions Camden’s Jamestown Centre in Adelaide Road valued that service very highly and they were outraged when their centre was threatened with closure under Camden’s Best Value Review of Mental Health Day Services.

They were not going to lose the Day Centre and community that they valued so highly without a fight. This was a battle that they mounted in the High Court through a Judicial Review process and it has caused a Judge to tell Camden Council to think again or to risk the expense of a court case.

The case continues.....

CMHC NEWS

THANKS

CMHC would like to thank the St Andrew Holborn Trust for agreeing to support the CMHC/CBUG Co-ordinator Post with donations of £ 1 500 per year for three years. This Trust has supported our work on a number of occasions and we are extremely grateful for this further indication of the value they put upon what CMHC does..

The Jill Franklin Trust is local to CMHC and has once again made a generous donation of £500 toward our general costs. This is the fourth occasion on which this Trust has supported our work and we are grateful to them for the confidence that they show in us.

WELCOME

Rather belatedly, CMHC would like to welcome Temmy Fasegah to his new role as Mental Health Commissioner at Camden Adult Social Care and PCT. CMHC looks forward to working with Temmy in the coming months to further develop user participation within the mental health and social care areas.

FAREWELL

CMHC is extremely sorry to lose its CMHC/CBUG Co-ordinator, Katrina Anderson. Unfortunately Katrina was with us for only a short period and she has left us to continue her role in social work as the Manager of an Assertive Outreach Team.

The loss of Katrina at a time when the organisation is going through a period of change is a real problem, but CMHC is confident that it will get through the current difficulties and emerge with a new Co-ordinator some time in the early Summer.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW AT CMHC?

The Adjourned Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, 28th February at Tottenham Mews Resource Centre had to be abandoned because there were not the necessary 10 Members present to make up a quorum. That meeting was therefore adjourned for seven days until Tuesday, 7th March, at Hampstead Town Hall when only 11 Members turned up and it was agreed that the meeting should be adjourned for a further twenty-eight days until Tuesday, 4th April,

for the organisation to take stock and present some proposals for moving forward in this situation where no-one seems to want to take on the role of Trustee whilst those who have been doing the job for some time want to move on.

The Adjourned AGM will be held from 12.30 pm at Hampstead Town Hall on Tuesday, 4th April. If there is no clear solution this time then it may be necessary to hold a Special General Meeting of CMHC to ask the Members what they would like the organisation to do or whether it is needed at all now.

This meeting is very important and CMHC hopes that as many members as possible will attend and give us their views about the future of this user-owned organisation. It needs to be remembered that this is an organisation which employs one member of staff and has a vacancy for another and the future for the staff needs to be clear.

The organisation is well funded and has produced some very useful work in the area of user engagement. It now needs to move on to address the new and developing challenges.

NORTH & SOUTH CAMDEN USER FORUMS

For some time the monthly Forums which CMHC runs in the North and South of the Borough have not been attracting the numbers that we like to see to justify their existence. There have been lots of reasons given for this – wrong time, wrong place using a hospital setting, not interesting enough, tired format. Last year in South Camden a new model was used where the Forum travelled around the mental-health venues and gave people the opportunity to raise the issues that were significant and local to them. This met with some success and at the beginning of this year we attempted to widen that remit by holding the meetings in community venues. The first one of these was remarkably unsuccessful – no-one came!

The North Camden User Forum has been around longer and has always had a better attendance than its sister group in the South. However, since the opening of The Grove Centre and its move there, fewer people have come and they have expressed concern about the restrictions which this new venue has created.

The future of both Forums is open for debate at present.

NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Aidan Moloney is the Co-ordinator of Camden & Islington Providers' Forum (CIPF). We include regular monthly contributions from Aidan telling people what is happening in the voluntary sector. Aidan can be contacted by post at Camden & Islington Providers' Forum, St. James's House, 15 – 20 Bruges Place, Baynes Street, London, NW1 0TF; by 'phone on 020 7428 5999, and by e-mail at cipf.office@virgin.net

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Camden, which comes into effect in April constitutes an agreement with central government about some of the key outcomes the Council and its partners, including the voluntary sector, will work together to deliver over the three years 2006-2009. The principles behind the LAA are sound in that it provides all partners in the Borough with an opportunity to work together using Government funding streams more flexibly to meet local priorities. This, we hope, will allow open negotiation with all sectors represented to decide on how this money should be spent.

The LAA will have important implications for the voluntary and community sector locally. A total of around eighteen million pounds will be allocated over the next two years coming from a number of funding streams. The money will be allocated through commissioning panels comprising Children & Young People, Healthier Communities, Older People, Safer Communities, Stronger Communities, and Economic Development.

Concern has been raised concerning the accessibility of the commissioning process to small community groups. A suggestion put forward to tackle this difficulty might be for smaller organizations to form a consortium with other similar groups or with larger voluntary or community groups. As an existing large forum, this is an area that CIPF will look at closely and I will be happy to discuss working with others interested in accessing future funding opportunities through the LAA. CIPF is set to influence this agenda through its involvement on the Community Empowerment Network and through this will work towards having an elected representative on the Local Strategic partnership, which oversees the LAA.

After eight years, and much opposition, it seems that ministers will concede they cannot get the Mental Health Bill through Parliament, and so will try to amend existing laws. However, Mind still has concerns about what might replace the Bill, specifically relating to proposals on how long people with

personality disorders could be detained without appeal. The Draft Mental Health Bill had proposed allowing people to be held for 28 days before facing a tribunal. The government is now considering plans for up to 42 days' detention for some mentally ill patients without referral to a tribunal. If this is the case, the debate around the difficulties of predicting risk and potential violation of people's human rights will continue.

Finally, the second round of funding for Capital Volunteering was officially launched on 24th February. Funded by The Treasury and operating in 11 London Boroughs, Capital Volunteering aims to reduce isolation and increase volunteering opportunities for people with severe/enduring mental health problems, thereby increasing their confidence, skills, social networks and employability. Camden Capital Volunteering is operating a small grants programme where grants of between £2,000 and £20,000 (paid over either one or two years) can be awarded. Camden Capital Volunteering has an overall target that 80% of the beneficiaries of the funding will be on standard or enhanced CPA (Care Programme Approach) or equivalent.

Further details on Camden's Capital Volunteering fund can be obtained from Chris Freed on 07736 814199 or 020 7833 0000 ext. 34. Email: chris.freed@capitalvolunteering.org.uk.

CARE TRUST BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Camden & Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust will take place from 5.00 pm on Thursday, 27th April in The Conference Centre at St Pancras Hospital. These regular meetings are held in public although the public has no right to speak at them. Notified questions to the Board will be taken on the night. The Patient & Public Involvement Forum has two observers at Board Meetings who have the right to speak. It is through them and the elected Council Non-Executive Directors on the Board that ordinary members of the public may raise issues of concern

Papers for the meeting are available from the Board Secretary, Kate Wilkins on 020 7445 8427 or by e-mail. kate.wilkins@candi.nhs.uk Notified questions should reach Kate by 5.00 pm on Tuesday, 25th April.

The Board meetings of other Trusts – The Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, The Tavistock & Portman NHS Trust are open to the public in the same manner.

Care Trust News

Robert Jones, the Social Care & Inclusion Development Manager, provides a review of the month's events within Camden & Islington Mental Health & Social Care Trust. Robert can be contacted at Care Trust Headquarters, 2nd floor, East Wing, St Pancras Hospital, London NW1 0PE, by telephone on 020 7445 8554 or by e-mail robert.jones@candi.nhs.uk

Help the Care Trust improve mental health services

Help the Care Trust to improve mental health services by completing and posting back the 2006 patient survey. If you have received a questionnaire through the post asking you about your experience of mental health services, the Care Trust would like to encourage you to complete it and send back by the 7th April. Your views really do make a difference. Last year the survey showed that services were improving, but not enough people were given information about medication, their rights, alternative treatment or information about groups in the community. As a consequence the Care Trust has been working with service users to produce an information pack that is being distributed to all wards. The more people who can let the Care Trust know their views by filling in this patient survey the better, so don't forget to post it. This year the Care Trust will be working with service user groups (CBUG & IBUG) to provide support for those who receive the questionnaire and who may need some help in completing it and sending it back.

Isledon Road Resource Centre

Isledon Road Resource Centre has just published the results of a survey into their employment and education programmes. 150 people have been on the programmes over the last two years, 67 of them took part in the survey. Over 70% of those surveyed expressed a high level of satisfaction with both programmes believing that they have gained in confidence, skills abilities and social skills, as well as seeing improvements in their general and mental health. It is clear that both the education and employment programmes are a highly valued and are a much needed resource. The Care Trust hopes that the project will be able to obtain the funding needed to continue its work. For details of the survey contact Robert Jones on 020-7445-8554 or you can contact Isledon Road directly on 020-7700-7458.

Mental Health Improvement Programme (MHIP)

The mental health improvement programme is being piloted nationally across the NHS as part of the modernisation process. It was established by the Care Trust in September 2005 and will be reviewing the Care Trust services, practices and resources over the next 18 months. The Care Trust like other NHS Trusts is facing serious financial pressures and the project will aim to make substantial savings by reviewing the way in which the Care Trust works. The programme will ensure that we are operating in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible to enable us to continue to provide quality services and make lasting improvements that we can be proud of. The programme will be looking at ways to improve in-patient services in addition to smaller 'good housekeeping' projects such as installing shared printers instead of printers linked to individual computers, this will bring financial savings while taking account of environmental considerations. Within the Care Trust we know that most staff and service users know ways in which things can be done better and more efficiently and for this reason the programme will be open and transparent, involve as many people as possible and regular updates will be given. If you want further information or want to be involved then please contact Lynda McDonald the MHIP project manager on 020-7530-5347

The Consultative Forum

The Consultative Forum meets every other month and provides a space of service users to gather and put forward their comments. There is usually a Director in attendance; so service users can question them on areas of concern directly. This is an open meeting and all service users in the Camden and Islington areas are welcome. The next meeting is on the 31st March and we are hoping to have a party on the 26th May 2006. The Consultative Forum will be held in the Huntley Centre at St Pancras Hospital.

The Implementation Group

This group meets monthly and looks at areas of policy, practice and development in the Care Trust. One of the main aims of the group is to ensure that the service user involvement strategy is working. At present the Implementation group is trying to recruit new members. If anyone is interested in these groups or would like information on the committees that are available please contact the Service User Involvement Co-ordinator on 0207-530-3340. We look forward to hearing from you.

Psychiatry and the Internet

CMHC Member, Thomas Kabir, writes about how the internet can help people with mental-health problems to know, understand and deal with their problems and cope with some of the ways in which professionals try to exclude people by the use of their own secret language.

‘Information is power’ so the saying goes. And so it is. There are many excellent sources of information about mental health topics available in the libraries within Camden and Islington and on the web. Almost all of the websites and books mentioned below are those that doctors use for their work. And it’s not all gobbledegook. Much of the material is surprisingly readable. So read what the doctors read. Read it and find that you can understand much of it. The internet is far more useful now than it was.

Psychiatry and Diagnosis

Every ‘official’ diagnosis that a psychiatrist will hand out will ultimately come from the DSM manual produced by the American Psychiatric Association. So to find out what a diagnosis actually means just look it up in this book. The Oxford Handbook of Psychiatry* is a great ‘mini bible’ of psychiatry and is packed with useful stuff (a guide to weight gain with psychiatric medication, mental health law, interviewing psychiatric patients, etc). Most newly qualified doctors use these handbooks.

Medication and Side Effects

Every medicine that is available for prescription in the UK is listed together with its cost, side effects, etc in the pharmacist’s bible, the BNF (the British National Formulary). The BNF is available online at www.BNF.org. The chances are that every time you ask your GP or the pharmacist in Boots about the side effects of a medicine they will delve for a copy of the BNF (but some of them are crafty and have an electronic copy stored on a computer). And if you’re tired about the side effects of a medication then report it to the body that licensed it for use in the first place by filling out a ‘yellow card’ at www.yellowcard.gov.uk. There are also the slightly more readable leaflets about individual medications that are produced by the United Kingdom Psychiatric Pharmacy Group (UKPPG, www.ukppg.org.uk). These leaflets can be downloaded from www.nmhct.nhs.uk/Pharmacy/drug_idx.htm.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Consortium is a voluntary organisation, which operates in the London Borough of Camden.

It is run by its members who are users, former users and survivors of mental health services in Camden, its purpose is to enhance the quality of life of its members by promoting social contact and support, enabling them to take control of their own lives.

We promote equal opportunities and positively value individual differences and choice.

We combat negative prejudice and stereotypes of users of mental health services.

We seek to influence professionals and public opinion, to challenge poor practice, and to improve the quality and variety of mental health and related services.


To achieve our goals we work with other voluntary bodies, statutory agencies and individual allies.

Hampstead Town Hall
213 Haverstock Hill
London NW3 4QP

Tel: 020 7419 4196 Fax: 020 7419 4197

email: administrator@cmhc.org.uk website: www.cmhc.org.uk

Events & Diary

DATE/TIME	VENUE	EVENT
FRIDAY 31 MARCH 1.00 – 4.00pm	Groves Lounge, South Wing St. Pancras Hospital 4 St. Pancras Way LONDON NW1	Camden and Islington  Mental Health and Social Care Trust USER CONSULATIVE FORUM
TUESDAY 04 APRIL 12.30 – 2.00pm	CMHC Hampstead Town Hall 213 Haverstock Hill LONDON NW3	CMHC ADJOURNED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY 04 APRIL 5.00 – 6.30pm	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">CANCELLED</div> The Royal Free Hospital Pond Street, NW3	CMHC NORTH CAMDEN USER FORUM
TUESDAY 25 APRIL	TIME & VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED	CMHC SOUTH CAMDEN USER FORUM