

Annual Report 2008/09

Self Help Services originally began with the creation of a small self help group in 1995. Since that time, we have grown considerably such that the charity is now a well respected, third sector provider of primary care mental health services in the Greater Manchester area.

Self Help Services is one of the Big Life Group's charities and gained charitable status in 2006 after formerly being a department under the charity, Big Life Services (now Big Life Centres). We are a user-led mental health charity - that is, we are run by and for, individuals with lived experience of mental ill-health. The ethos of the charity is such that we believe that those who have personal experience of living with a mental health problem, when provided with support and professional training, are best-placed to provide services and support to others.

Over the timeframe 2008-9, Self Help Services grew considerably through securing contracts with Primary Care Trusts on the basis of a number of successful pilot projects in the field of cCBT.

The charity's current expertise lies in the delivery of primary care mental health services and today we specialise in the delivery of low intensity therapeutic 1:1 interventions, user-led self-help groups (drop-in and structured groups) and computerised cognitive behavioural therapy (cCBT) services. This year, the charity was short-listed as a regional finalist in the North West Health Awards in recognition of its Manchester cCBT service.



The Self Help Services' Staff team - April 2008

SELF HELP SERVICES

Charity no: 1122063

Company no: 6036050

Registered Address:

The Kath Locke Centre, 123 Moss Lane West, Moss Side, Manchester M15 5DD

Board Members:

Iphigenia Papoulia

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Adrian Jennings

Mark Fitzgibbons

Angela Young

Tahira Hussain

Staff:

Chief Officer - Nicky Lidbetter

cCBT Manager - Nic Seccombe

Community Services Co-ordinator

- Lucy Rolfe

Stockport cCBT co-ordinator -

Lydia Morris

Salford cCBT co-ordinator - Danny

Hulme

Manchester cCBT co-ordinator -

Jack Merlo

HMP Manchester cCBT co-

ordinator - Miriam Samad

East Manchester cCBT co-

ordinator - Christine Molloy

Funders:

Tudor Trust

Manchester Primary Care Trust

Salford Primary Care Trust

Trafford Primary Care Trust

Stockport Primary Care Trust

Who Uses Our Services?

How many people used our services in 2008/09?

In total, 5,705 individuals accessed our services.

This figure can be broken down as follows:

700 used our cCBT services

462 used our PCMHS service

108 used our structured support groups

4368 used our drop-in self help groups

67 used our acupuncture services

What has Self Help Services achieved in terms of outcomes?

Outcomes are very important for Self Help Services and the charity prides itself on its ability to collect the full IAPT Minimum Data Set (MDS) for its clinical and cCBT services.

Outcomes for the cCBT services this year included:

PHQ-9 (pre-post) 13.3-6.1

GAD-7 (pre-post) 11.5-5.2

CORE10 (pre-post) 17.9-10.3

"This has been very helpful and the staff and volunteers are always very helpful, approachable and understanding" cCBT client

"Excellent and appropriate service, wonderful workers" cCBT client

Outcomes for the PCMHS (Primary Care Mental Health Service) this year included:

PHQ-9 (pre-post) 13.3-7.1

GAD-7 (pre-post) 12.4-6.6

CORE10 (pre-post) 18.7-12.0

"This practitioner was very supportive at a difficult time; it was definitely good to have something regular to attend while I was suffering from depression" Manchester PCMHS client

"This service has given me some realistic, practical tools to help me cope with my anxiety, I'd recommend to anyone" Trafford PCMHS client

For those individuals accessing our structured support groups and complementary therapy service, outcomes are measured using the Measure Yourself Medical Outcome Profile Tool (MYMOP). This allows service users to choose which symptom/problem they would like to monitor whilst accessing our services.

Outcomes for the acupuncture service this year included:

Symptom 1 (pre-post) 5-3

Symptom 2 (pre-post) 4-2

Activity (pre-post) 4.5-2

Wellbeing (pre-post) 5-2.5

"I feel much more positive and refreshed" - Acupuncture client

"It's so nice to take time out and do something to help look after myself; a really relaxing experience"- Acupuncture Client

What do people say about us?

"Your work within the field of mental health is inspirational" - Media Trust

"We all found the information that you provided through your consultancy service very useful. It was presented in a very effective way that allowed open discussion and question. It has enabled us to take our work forward effectively and we are looking forward to doing this with confidence." Mental Health Commissioning, East Lancashire PCT

*"We remain very supportive of the work that you are doing in promoting Beating the Blues as part of the solution to the IAPT agenda and wish you every success in the future".
Nigel Brabbins, CEO Ultrasis UK*

"Self Help Services' work is interesting, innovative and inspirational" - Work Through Partnership, Manchester Business School

"I found your positive and professional approach totally inspirational. Fabulous stuff!" - Chris Shaw, Advocacy in Wirral

What We've Done This Year

2008-9 represented a very busy year for Self Help Services. This year our hard work was recognised at regional level when we were short-listed as a regional finalist in the North West Health Awards. We were also visited by representatives from the North West Commission for Mental Health who commended us for the high quality, accessible and innovative services that we provide.

This year marked the first formal year of funding for our Primary Care Mental Health Service whereby we managed a small team of Low Intensity practitioners for Manchester and Trafford Primary Care Trusts over a period of a year. The practitioners offered brief therapeutic interventions to individuals affected by common mental health difficulties in accordance with the 'low intensity' model proposed by the Department of Health's 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies' initiative - IAPT. The management of such workers is traditionally seen as NHS business and therefore we were very pleased, given our third sector status, to be able to have the opportunity to demonstrate our competence in this area.

Our cCBT services continued to grow this year with long-term contracts secured with both Salford and Stockport PCTs. On the back of our successful Manchester cCBT project, we were offered the opportunity to pilot a small-scale cCBT project at HMP Manchester. This has again been an exciting and welcome opportunity for the charity.

Issues and challenges

This year one of our main challenges concerned the management of self-referrals within our Primary Care Mental Health Service. As this was our first year of accepting such referrals we had a somewhat steep learning curve and subsequently had to implement new policies and procedures around the handling of self-referrals.

Given the extensive expansion that has taken place within Self Help Services over a relatively short timeframe, it proved challenging to run such comprehensive range of services with such a small staff team. As a result it was necessary in the latter part of 2008 to evaluate the organisational structure and subsequent additions to the core staff team have been made. This should alleviate the pressure on the committed core team who along with Self Help Services' dedicated volunteer team, have been responsible in the main for the charity's phenomenal success.

Collecting the IAPT Minimum Data Set has also proved a challenge especially for low intensity practitioners who have a very short, defined timeslot in which to see clients who frequently present with a high level of complexity and need.

Finally, finding a way of successfully evaluating our drop-in groups has also continued to challenge our Community Services Team.

Volunteering opportunities

Volunteers have always been fundamental to the success of Self Help Services and are often referred to as the 'lifeblood' of the charity. This year was no exception in that over 97 individuals volunteered for the charity in range of capacities from cCBT volunteer to self-help group facilitator. Self Help Services very much acts as an informal transitional employment project - facilitating the re-entry into employment for many previously socially excluded individuals.

Plans for 09/10

In 2009/10 Self Help Services aims to consolidate its current service provision whilst expanding its cCBT and primary care mental health services to other parts of Greater Manchester.

We are keen to build on our pilot project that is currently underway at HMP Manchester so that in the future we deliver a range of primary care mental health services at this and other prisons within Greater Manchester. Similarly, we are keen to expand our ever-popular consultancy service so that we can share our successful service delivery model and user-led ethos with others in different parts of the country.

Case Studies

'Christine'

For the last 18 months, Christine has coordinated a computerised cognitive behavioural therapy (cCBT) service in East Manchester for Self Help Services. The CBT program helps anxiety and depression sufferers develop techniques to overcome their difficulties. Christine, as an anxiety sufferer who struggled to find appropriate services, is especially passionate about self help initiatives; she provides a service, whereby in addition to people getting access to the program, they are also provided with support by volunteers. Indeed it was through volunteering that Christine gained the confidence to take on this coordination role. Despite experiencing quite severe anxiety herself, Christine has not missed any of the cCBT clinics, and has been able to provide a lot of people with support in their time of need. Her service is popular and regularly receives positive user feedback. Through this work, Christine has proven that anxiety need not prevent someone from working in a professional capacity and achieving excellent results for the community. Christine feels that her experience of working within Self Help Services has helped her cope with her anxiety. Eventually she hopes to get the confidence to return to full time work.

'Peter'

Peter accessed one of our cCBT services at the beginning of 2009. At the time he was struggling from depression, which he had experienced since his mid teens. He had previously had counselling and taken medication but these treatments had not been fully effective. Owing to depression, he was on the verge of dropping out of university. Through using the cCBT service Peter has learnt how to manage his thoughts and mood more effectively. This has enabled him to finish his studies and he has recently been offered a place on PhD course to study science. Peter's experience shows that living with depression need not prevent someone from undertaking study at a high level.

Comments from users of our self help groups:

"I learn so much from the group; it has showed me that I'm not the only one with these problems. Meeting others who have been through similar things makes such a big difference and makes you feel less isolated"- Harpurhey Depression Group member

"Many thanks for the kind words of support and for setting up the group. It's opened up many opportunities to help me on the road to recovery" - Manchester Social Phobia Group

"The group has enabled me to learn things about myself in a safe, non threatening environment. I am a lot more social and a lot less stressed" - Wythenshawe Anxiety Group member

"I have improved my family relationships and started to change the way I behave. The group has helped me to stay off medication and stay in work"- Self Esteem and Assertiveness Course client

"After the course I ended a relationship that wasn't doing my self esteem any good. I have been in contact with old friends, started looking for work and hope to move into my own place soon" - Self Esteem and Assertiveness Course client

"I am much calmer and I've become more sociable. I've made new friends and my life feels back on track" Anger Management Course client

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