

# Bradford District Care Patient and Public Involvement in Health Forum



## Annual Health Check Statement 2006/2007

### CONTEXT

The Patients Forum notes the rapid turn around in the strategic direction of BDCT since the arrival of a new leadership and restructured management team. BDCT now demonstrates a clear sense of direction, purpose and channelling of organisational resources in targeted approaches to service delivery despite the mismatch between commissioning and patient led needs.

However, from the Learning Disability service user and carer experience it is early days as yet to see any significant positive impact upon service delivery.

BDCT needs to develop new funding streams in order to fill the divide between the statutory sector and the market for mental health and Learning Disability care.

Following the 2005/6 Health Check, the Patients Forum produced an internal report, which while demonstrating the shortcomings within BDCT, set out a road map for the Trust to follow during 2006/7.

This suggestion did not become acceptable to BDCT until August 2006 with the arrival of a new leadership and bringing a fresh sense of focus to the management of BDCT's core business.

Some of the difficulties experienced by the Trust are common to other Trusts e.g. Financial deficits, levels of funding nationally for social care services and heavy demands put upon Trusts by central government, not least the need to be seen as successful.

Some of the difficulties seem to be the result of the Trust not acknowledging soon enough the growing credibility gap between the Vision when the Trust was set up in 2003 and the realities by 2005/2006. This created much stress for staff and frustration for service users and carers.

There have been significant changes among senior managers. There is a new Chief Executive, a new Chairman of the Board and a new Director of Service Delivery across Mental Health and Learning Disability. There is no longer a Director of Learning Disability but the post of Deputy Director of Learning Disability remains. It is early days to assess the impact of these changes.

The Forum has noted evidence recently of a change in culture at the most senior level in Care Trust management toward development of a more rounded psycho-social care approach in some practical decision making, as well as in theory. One of several examples is the decision to enhance quality of care and patient safety at the new unit at Airedale General Hospital through stronger promotion of a healthy therapeutic community, rather than building a fence, which would, of course, have been detrimental to quality, including safety. This is the kind of change in culture and practice that the Forum has been seeking for some time. We therefore welcome it whole-heartedly.

Much work has been focussed on clarifying Commissioners relationships with the Trust and in particular the sec 31 agreement with Bradford Metropolitan District Council. Social care resources and Fair Access to Services has been a dominant feature this year.

The Forum does not have sufficient resources to comment knowledgeably on all the core standards. No comment on any particular core standard means we do not have valid evidence as to compliance or non-compliance. Those we do comment on reflect comments made directly to us by service users, carers and 'workers' or issues raised at meetings of other organisations e.g. The Partnership Board.

The Trust both provides and commissions health and social care services. It is often not clear to service users, carers and Forum members what constitutes a 'health' service and what a 'care' service.

The nature of the Forum's reporting on the annual health check generally highlights where minimum standards appear not to be met. Unfortunately general comments will often mask good practice on the part of individuals or sections of the organisation.

## **ISSUES**

### **General issues**

#### **C8 b.**

- We recognise that significant cultural change can involve a long and sometimes arduous journey in personal development for many staff, managers and clinicians and that there may be some influential pockets of resistance. We hope that what has now been set in motion will prove its value to patients and the community and we shall offer all possible support to the Care Trust as it continues to move in this direction.

#### **C14a**

- Complaints procedures have been an issue between the Trust and the Forum for a long time. The Trust maintains it does meet the standard. The Forum and Advocacy organisations think it does not. There is a PALS service that seems to work very well. The Trust has provided the Forum with extensive documentation. This comprises some leaflets that are OK as far as they go. The rest of the documentation was written some time ago and was aimed primarily at staff. It is a very wordy and complicated document making it difficult to identify a fair and proper process. Accessible it is not. The Forum recommends strongly that the Healthcare Commission take the matter up with the Trust direct.

## C16

- Staff readily respond to individual service users and carers in relation to information and advice. There is a PALS leaflet and assessment documentation has been put into accessible format. Beyond that the Trust has been criticised by service users and carers for the general lack of written information/explanation/communication. This has led to misinformation and distrust of the Trust in the past.
- There appear to be no accessible service user/carer guides to Trust services. This has been raised with the Trust many times over a long period. Service users and carers need to know how to access services; what their rights are, and what a service will provide and what it won't etc. It is difficult to judge the quality of a service without this basic information.

## C17

- Various mechanisms have been established to support this standard. The Forum, however, is not sure how inclusive or effective they are.
- Service user and carer guides to Patient and Public Involvement would be helpful to promote greater participation.

## C18

- The Trust is currently involved in introducing Fair Access to Care Services. Again there is no accessible written service user/carer guide. Lack of written information has created unnecessary anxiety for service users and carers.

**The following points refer to Learning Disabilities issues.**

## C6

- Much has been done by the Primary Care Trust(s), Bradford Metropolitan District Council and the Bradford District Care Trust this year to clarify their respective roles in relation to services to people with a learning disability. The relationship between the Local Authority (section 31 arrangements) and Bradford District Care Trust is better understood by the Trust, the Forum and hopefully more service users and carers.
- For much of this year individual service users and carers have had anxiety about their continuing eligibility for services and 'holes' have appeared in services for some people where the Trust has tried to use what resources it has to best overall effect.

## C7 b&d

- It is impossible for the Forum, service users or carers to have an objective view as to whether the Trust meets these standards and how the Bradford District Care Trust compares to other similar Trusts, however we ask that our comment is noted. We believe that Carers in particular are concerned to see best value for money and ask what proportion of staffing costs are spent on front-line staff.

- The Trust has an annual budget of over £100 million with a staff/patient ratio in crude terms of the order of 1:1. Perhaps more accessible public information could put minds at rest.

**The following section refers to Mental Health issues.**

The Forum recognises that much work needs to be done to bring the commissioning process to a level of fitness for purpose to enable a modern mental health service to deliver recovery outcomes rather than mere treatment of symptoms and diagnoses.

The Forum is not optimistic that commissioners are either enthusiastic or capable to sustain the modern philosophy of recovery, which is the hallmark of BDCT. The forum will work with partners to influence the commissioning philosophy.

Fourth Domain: Patient Focus

A number of concerns remain to be addressed from the Forums 2005/6 working document, (a copy of which was passed to BDCT in May 2006, working document referred to in the introduction previously.)

These issues will be referred to in the Forum's 2006/7 annual report.



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Bradford District Care Patient and Public Involvement in Health Forum