

## How do mental health workers make decisions about risk? An invitation to service users and to carers

Mental health workers make judgements every day about risk. But even though all clinicians have been trained in risk assessment, we know surprisingly little about how they make these judgements in practice, how these might vary between individuals and teams and, most importantly, how they determine the clinical decisions they go on to make (for example, about admission to hospital). If we can improve our understanding about how clinicians make these complex judgements, I believe we will be in a better position to improve clinical practice, safety and outcomes for users of mental health services.

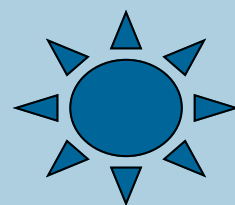
My name is Martin Stefan. I have been a Consultant Psychiatrist in Cambridge for the last 12 years, working on Friends ward in Fulbourn Hospital, and more recently full time with the Crisis Team in Cambridge and South Cambs. I am putting together a project about the assessment of suicide risk, to try and better understand the factors that influence the judgements and decisions we make as mental health workers, with the goal (of course) of improving them.

I am certain that the involvement of people who have experience of mental health services, either as carers or as service users, will help make this a better project. Therefore, in the first instance, I will be organising an open meeting to outline my ideas in a little more detail and to seek some initial advice. Following on from this, I would like to put together a small panel, perhaps of two or three individuals, to take things forward. Naturally, if you become involved you will be paid for your contribution, and expenses will be reimbursed.

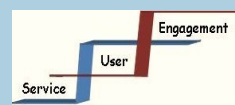
The first meeting is provisionally arranged for 2pm on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November at Douglas House in Cambridge:

CLAHRC Office  
Douglas House  
18 Trumpington Road  
Cambridge  
CB2 8AH

If you feel this project may be of interest, please leave a message for me with Melanie de Smith at CLAHRC on 01223 746007 or [melanie.desmith@cpft.nhs.uk](mailto:melanie.desmith@cpft.nhs.uk) and I will get back to you with further details.



S.U.N.  
Cambridgeshire



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## The Service User Network

The Service User Network is now up and running and saw the first meeting held on October 6th at Huntingdon Library. Representatives attended from Positive Paths (Fenland Service User Forum), People of Potential (Huntingdon User Forum) and Granta Tenancy Involvement Group (Cambridge). In the first meeting, the Terms of Reference for the group were discussed and agreed. We also looked at local and national service user consultation opportunities which the representatives have agreed to take back to their groups so that people can be consulted about service changes. Everyone agreed that it was a positive start and the next meeting date has been arranged for Monday 29th November 2010, 1pm-3.30pm at Huntingdon Library.

The network is open to all mental health service user groups/forums. If your group/forum wants to become involved, you need to send a minimum of one, maximum of two representatives to the meeting. The representatives must agree to be representing the views of your group (not individual issues) and be willing to share the information discussed in the meeting with your group. If your group would like to become members of the Service User Network then please contact Adele McCormack on 07827 971708 or by email on [adele.mccormack@huntsmind.org.uk](mailto:adele.mccormack@huntsmind.org.uk)

The network exists to create a framework where service users can be consulted and raise county-wide issues about the planning, design and evaluation of mental health services in Cambridgeshire (excluding Peterborough). It will generate a working relationship between service users and mental health commissioners with the aim of ensuring that mental health services are right for the people who receive them. This can only effectively happen if people participate so if you want to know what is happening regarding mental health services in the county, this is the best place to be.

## Service User Engagement Worker—Adele McCormack



Here is a rather hideous picture of me, which I thought might be helpful in you knowing who I am. I am Adele and have been the one who has written the past few newsletters and have helped set up the Service User Network. I may have met some of you when doing consultations about mental health services and I am sure I will meet many more of you in the future. If you see me about and want to know more about service user engagement please come and have a chat. I look forward to meeting you all.

# The Mental Health Commissioners



**Melanie Brooks**  
Cambridgeshire  
County Council

Hello. I am Melanie Brooks and I am in the Interim Head of Commissioning for Mental Health at the County Council. My job is to make sure that people with mental health needs get good social care services. The aim is to make sure that we work with a wide range of people to offer support and advice at an early stage, as well as working with those who experience longer-term difficulties. This involves working with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust, a number of voluntary sector and housing providers to deliver good services. Central to this is listening to people to hear about what they think and their experiences of services.

Hi, my name is John Ellis and I am Head of Mental Health, Learning Disabilities, Substance Misuse and Prisons for NHS Cambridgeshire. What I do is understand the need of the public, National Guidance and clinical evidence for mental health services and design and implement services to meet the need, as best we can within the resources that we have available. I then ensure that these services are delivering what they should. Feedback from service users is a very important part of this. These services are provided by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, Cambridgeshire Community Services and many Local Voluntary Organisations.



**John Ellis**  
NHS  
Cambridgeshire



**Claire Warner**  
NHS  
Cambridgeshire

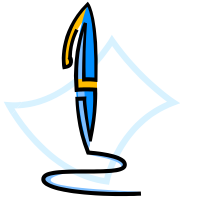
Hi, my name is Claire Warner and I am Commissioning Service Improvement Manager for Mental Health, Learning Disability, Substance Misuse and Prisons. I support John in developing and implementing mental health services for the public of Cambridgeshire. Projects that I have been responsible for have included; the new alcohol service, primary care services and the implementation of the National Dementia Strategy. I have also been responsible for commissioning and monitoring the work carried out by our service user engagement worker.



# Articles Needed!!!

The next edition of this newsletter is due for release January 2011. We need articles from people sharing their stories of service user engagement. So if you or your forum or any group are planning to run a campaign or are running consultations and service reviews then we want to know your story. The deadline for article submissions for the next newsletter will be 31st December 2010. We would also like to hear of any successful campaigns ran in the past. This newsletter is aimed at promoting service user engagement. We need to learn from each other. If you want to submit an article you can do this by

**Email:** [adele.mccormack@huntsmind.org.uk](mailto:adele.mccormack@huntsmind.org.uk),  
**Post:** Adele McCormack  
The Limes,  
24 New Street,  
St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 1AJ



# Consultation Opportunities

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough   
NHS Foundation Trust  
*Understanding mental health, understanding people*

## Online services User engagement discussion

Tuesday 2 November 2010  
[One-and-a-half hour discussion sessions](#)  
Morning and afternoon sessions available  
Computer Lab, Cambridge CB3 0FD

Internet use is now widespread both at home or on the go. This brings with it exciting and creative options for accessing mental health services and information. If you are:

- a service user,
- carer or
- from a voluntary organisation

we want to involve you from the outset in shaping our vision to meet YOUR needs. If you are a user of services travel expenses will be paid.

If you would like to be part of this discussion group, then please e-mail the following information to [katrina.saunders@cpft.nhs.uk](mailto:katrina.saunders@cpft.nhs.uk) or call Katrina on 01223 726767

Name .....

Email Address .....

Organisation (if any) .....

Phone no (and when best to contact) .....

Would you need transport ..... Yes / No .....

I confirm that I am a service user, carer or representative of a voluntary organisation with an interest in mental

