

Engagement with specific third sector organisations: The Connection at St Martins, Passage Day Centre, West London Day Centre, London City Mission and Manna Centre:

All the external organisations listed in Appendix 2 of the engagement report, have been contacted and sent information packs including: a flyer for the open day, information on how to give feedback via the SLaM website or by post. In addition, the manager of the Central Place of Safety (CPoS) team offered to attend any relevant meetings that the organisation felt it was appropriate for SLAM staff to attend, to engage with those attending the centres.

A number of the homeless organisations did not hold any formal service user-led meetings or business meetings and therefore, staff were encouraged to share the information with those in attendance at the centre on the day and given an offer of SLAM staff coming to meet with their staff. This offer was not taken up by most of the organisations.

One homeless organisation was visited and a discussion was held with an experienced member of staff who had lived experience of mental health problems and the manager, on the challenges of getting direct feedback on such a specific issue as a place of safety and being detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act. It was agreed that the link between homelessness and mental health was a sensitive one and it was important not to make assumptions about people attending the centre and inadvertently stigmatise them in relation to this engagement. Staff respected the privacy and dignity of those attending the centre and their right not to disclose any personal or medical history, as the focus of the centre was to offer a space, food, advice and access to washing facilities.

There was an open discussion about what was felt to be the most important outcome for a person who was homeless who comes into contact with statutory services and this focussed a lot on equal access to health care, follow up, advice, on-going support and an acknowledgement of the increased risks to physical and mental wellbeing in the homeless population.

The King's Health Partners Pathway homeless team which is a small, three year funded team which works with SLAM in-patients and the homeless outreach team, 'START' (which works with long-term rough sleepers in the community in Southwark and Lambeth) were contacted and they agreed to ensure that those people receiving a service from the teams were offered the opportunity to attend the central place of safety open day and/or give feedback.

The KHP homeless team has formally agreed to extend their remit to provide a service to the CPoS and are working with the team on ensuring that accurate and up to date information is available, at all times, to staff, service users and carers, both in electronic and leaflet form. The team will be contactable for advice and consultancy in working hours and can, when appropriate, carry out assessments on the unit, prior to discharge or follow up patients when they have been admitted to an in-patient ward. The options and outcomes for homeless people who are seen in the central place of safety will be greatly improved by this development.

BME engagement

In addition to the above engagement, the Clinical Lead for the CPoS was invited to attend the Lambeth Black Health and Wellbeing Commission meeting on the 14th July. CPoS operational issues and the collection of data of people from BME communities detained under s136 in the central place of safety were discussed and it was agreed that the operational policy and the current proposed data set would be shared with the group. The introduction of the CPoS was seen as an opportunity to collect accurate and meaningful data and to understand further and look at options to address the longstanding issue of the over representation of people from BME backgrounds to places of safety. The Clinical Lead for the CPoS will attend the meeting again in October.

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