

APPENDIX 1

Needs analysis for Personal Advisors training course

The Children and Young Person's Health Partnership (CYPHP) is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of young people in Lambeth and Southwark. The public health work stream is looking in particular at those in the 10 – 24 age group, with a view to improving their access to holistic health support. CYPHP gathered evidence on the local needs of looked after children and care leavers and conducted a literature review, highlighting concerns about the emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of looked after children at the time of leaving care. It was identified that the personal advisor is the key professional responsible for co-ordinating each care leaver's support, ensuring the needs of the young person are met. At present there is little structured education provided for personal advisors and no clear qualification or career path which the personal advisor must follow, unlike the structured programme for foster carers.

A preliminary needs analysis, including an exploration of current educational and training opportunities for personal advisors, was carried out by CYPHP and presented to the LAC working group. As a next step, combining the resources of the CYPHP training and education and public health work stream, it was agreed that CYPHP would focus on the needs of care leavers by coordinating the creation and delivery of a bespoke training programme aimed at those professionals directly delivering services to them.

A modular approach was agreed, as follows:

- Module 1 – skills
- Module 2 – knowledge
- Module 3 – attitudes values and beliefs

To inform the structure and content of the training programme, including duration and mode of delivery, and to ensure its relevance, we carried out a comprehensive needs analysis including the following:

1. Focus groups with personal advisors
2. Focus groups with care leavers
3. Questionnaires for personal advisors and advanced practitioners

The outcomes and results of our needs analysis are summarised and discussed below. It is hoped that this work will be helpful not only in designing this training programme but also in offering valuable insights for both local authorities to better understand the challenges and opportunities of the work carried out by personal advisors, including the structures supporting their development, as well as the needs of their care leavers.

1. Focus Groups with personal advisors

Focus groups were conducted with Personal Advisors in Lambeth and Southwark with the aim of:

- Gaining a better understanding of the role of personal advisors, including local opportunities, challenges and constraints;
- Exploring what training personal advisors had been previously accessed, its benefits and potential barriers to its application in day to day practice;
- Gathering personal advisors' views about their own training needs and preferences about training delivery.

From Lambeth 7 personal advisors were able to attend (additionally one of the managers attended); from Southwark 8 personal advisors were able to attend (additionally 4 of the managers/advanced practitioners attended).

Methods

The two focus groups were held on the same day with personal advisors in each borough at their respective workplaces, lasting approximately 60 minutes.

Members of the CYPHP team facilitated the focus group discussions using a pre-set format with questions and exercises prompting a facilitated discussion (see Appendix 1). The questions were organised around three domains:

- what is it like to be a personal advisor
- previous training and training desires
- exploration of the possible content and structure of the 3 training module eg skills and knowledge needed for the role, and attitudes/values/beliefs that are helpful or unhelpful.

The personal advisors were actively engaged in both focus group sessions and participated well in the discussion. Key points that emerged from the facilitated discussions were recorded at the time directly onto flip charts by a CYPHP facilitator, creating a mind map for each domain. The personal advisors were encouraged to review the flip charts during and at the end of the session and had the opportunity to correct any misinterpretations that were documented. Additional points raised in the conversation as a clarification or further development of the same point were also recorded.

Analysis

The mind maps were thematically analysed and categorised; the data from both groups then combined to produce an overall understanding of their experiences, their knowledge and skills and training needs. A meta-map was created once data collection was completed for both focus groups, incorporating all the major themes that emerged and showing how often a given theme came up. The meta-map was then used as a basis for writing up the findings from the consultation in a standard report form, making use of the illustrative quotes recorded separately.

Results

Differences in the reported needs across the two groups of Personal Advisors were noted and perhaps reflected the already known differences in experience. The Lambeth team were less established with a mean of one year in the role, compared to 7 years for the Southwark team. Both groups reported similar professional backgrounds in youth work, social work or residential care work.

Being a Personal Advisor: what is it like?

The two groups identified similar responses in relation to 'what is it like to be a personal advisor'. A strong theme was that of being a supporter; being able to provide friendly support for the young person to develop their potential and transition into adulthood despite experiencing challenges from them at the same time.

Skills needed	Challenges experienced	Rewards experienced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporter • counsellor • developer • organiser 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misunderstood • frustrating • overwhelming • punching bag • last stop on social care continuum • ending of looked after journey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with YP • connecting with YP • progressing YP

'Step in as a parent'

'Jack of all trades, master of none'

Previous training and training desires

The PAs were able to identify a number of previous training opportunities they had accessed, both from internal and external providers, focusing on topics like emotional well-being, domestic violence, self-harm, working with homeless young people, mental health and sexual exploitation. These courses varied in duration (from seminars lasting a few hours to yearlong course eg a 12 weeks training course on emotional wellbeing delivered by the Tavistock) and structure eg seminars, lectures, facilitated group work, simulation based training with role plays.

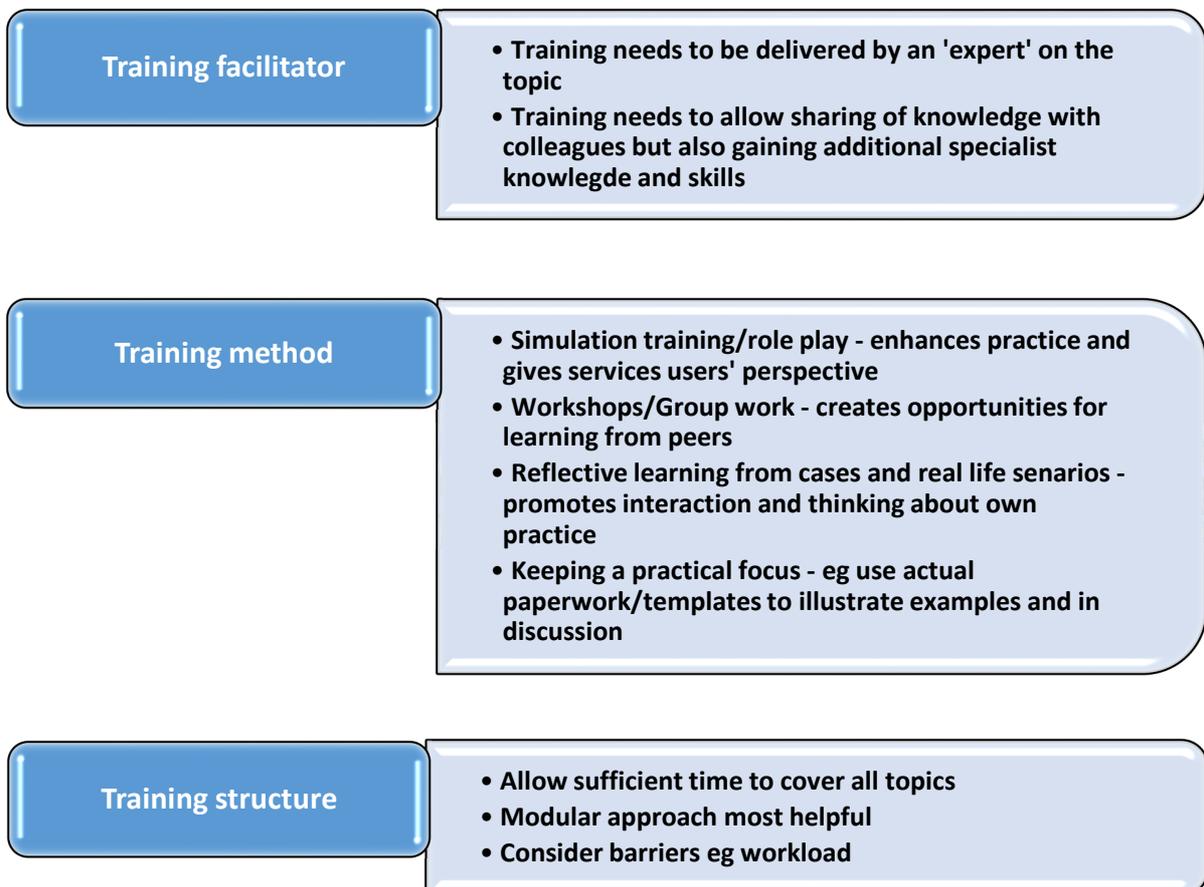
The Lambeth group identified that they like learning from an expert. They reported previous negative experiences of being taught by facilitators who did not have a broad knowledge of the topic. They reported working in groups as beneficial for sharing knowledge with each other but feeling that they had gained little additional knowledge of the topic in the process.

The Southwark team reported a strong preference for training that allows them to better understand the reasons why young people behave in a certain way, including the links with young people's upbringing and traumatic experiences. They expressed a dissatisfaction with training that just promotes a 'reactive' approach eg learning about one specific skill without an understanding of

the context; they reported valuing opportunities for reflective learning and thinking about their practice.

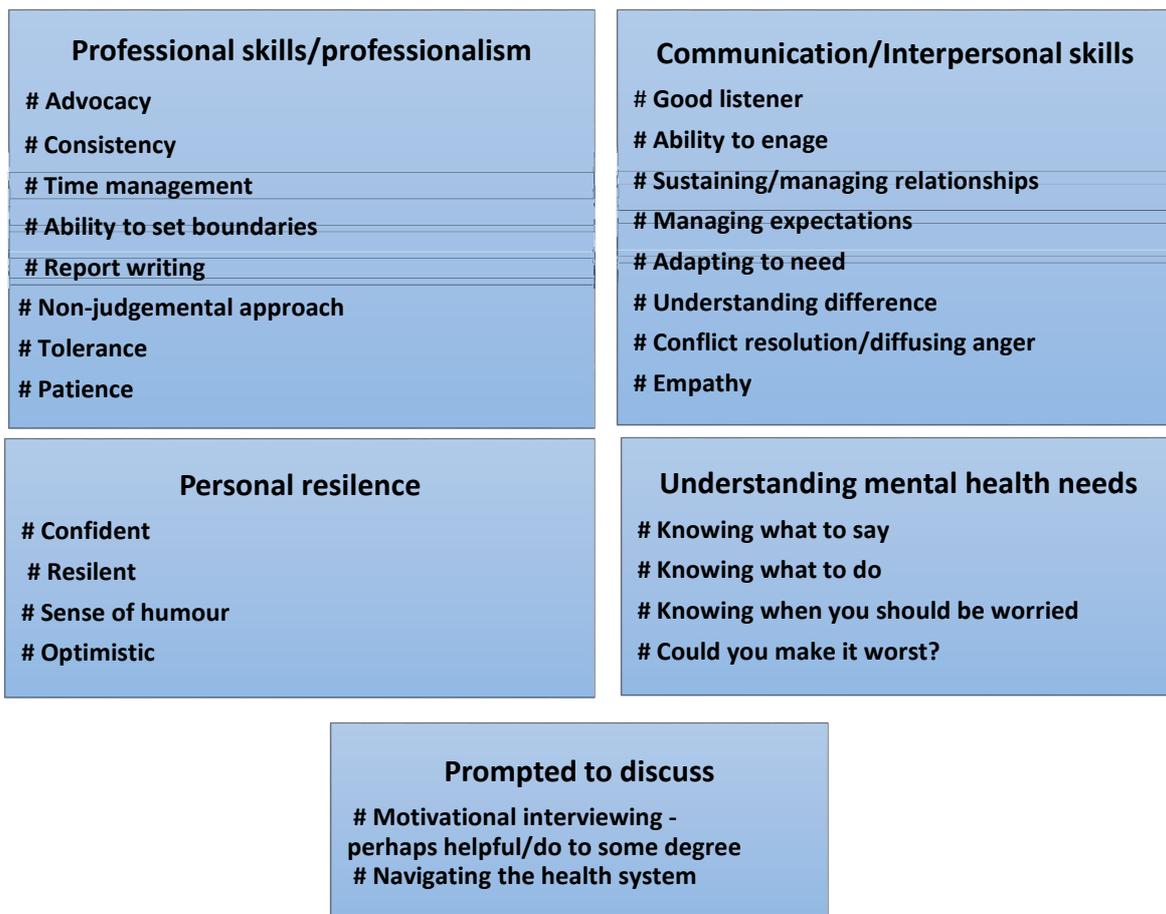
Both groups reported the need to fill knowledge gaps with regards to recent changes in the law and regulations pertinent to the work with care leavers. Both groups had previously experienced being taught through mixed education methods, which they had enjoyed, with some lecture style work combined with interactive group work. The Lambeth group reported that they like learning away from the work environment and benefit from peer learning and discussion. They suggested using case reviews and real life scenarios to practice skills and apply knowledge.

The following main themes were identified:



Skills – what competencies do you need to have?

Similar skills requirements were identified by both groups with a focus on personal advisors needing to develop a set of interpersonal skills allowing them to work with young people in challenging circumstances and with additional needs. Discussion also involved the ability to set firm boundaries, some personal advisors found this difficult when still developing the relationship with the young person, while others found setting boundaries more straight forward. Some personal advisors also mentioned the difficulties in trying to engage young people who did not want to engage with them or were resistant in accepting help from other professionals eg GPs.

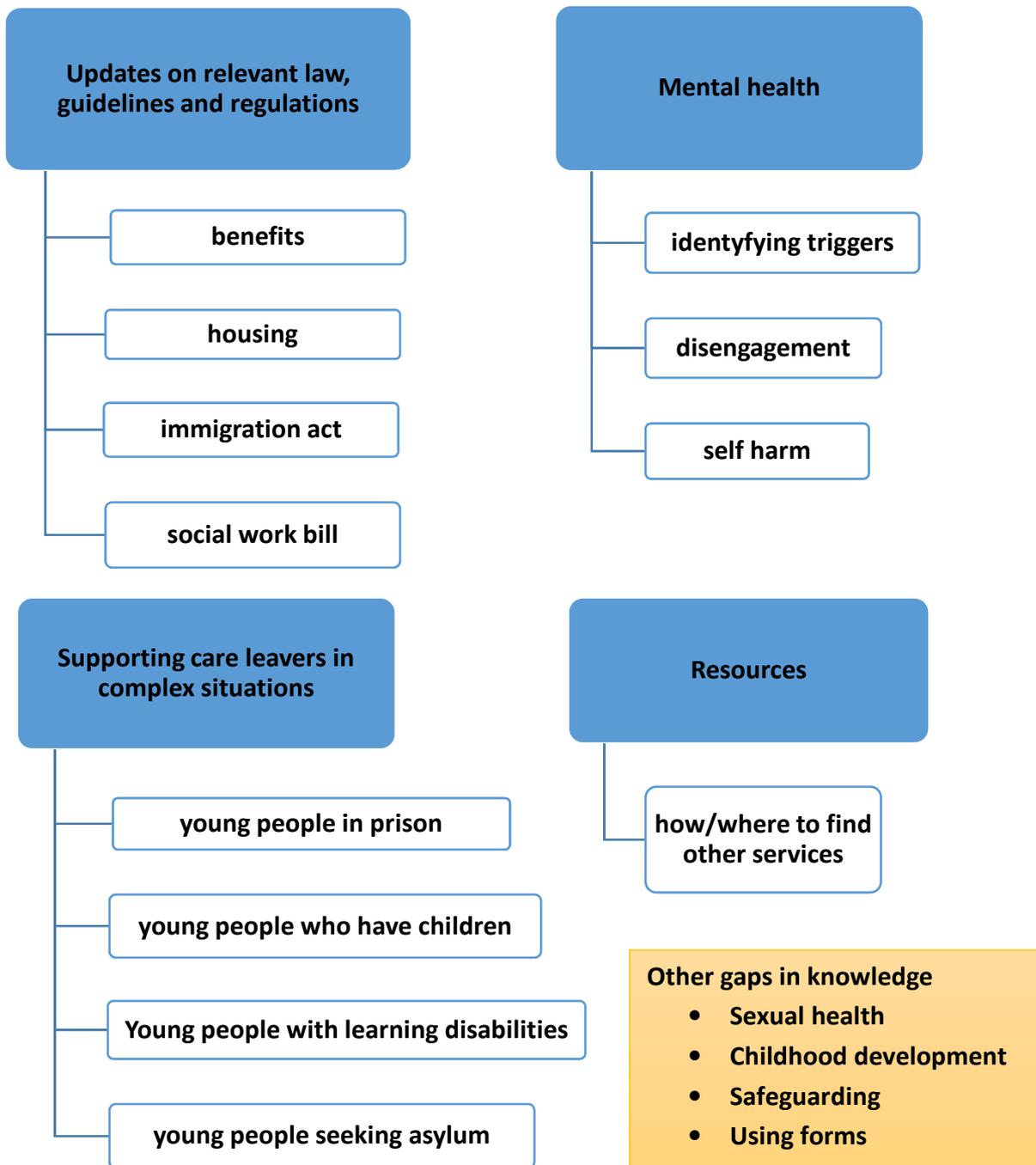


Knowledge - what do you need to know/know more about?

Similar themes were identified by both groups. Concerns around having sufficient knowledge as well as the skills of supporting young people with mental health issues were common. This was particularly relevant as often young people do not meet threshold to be accepted by mental health

services but still need support. Questions included - what other services can I direct them to, how do I recognise anxiety/depression, and what do I do if they are self-harming? PAs were also concerned about missing potential mental health triggers and the implications for the young person in that situation.

The following main areas of interest were identified:

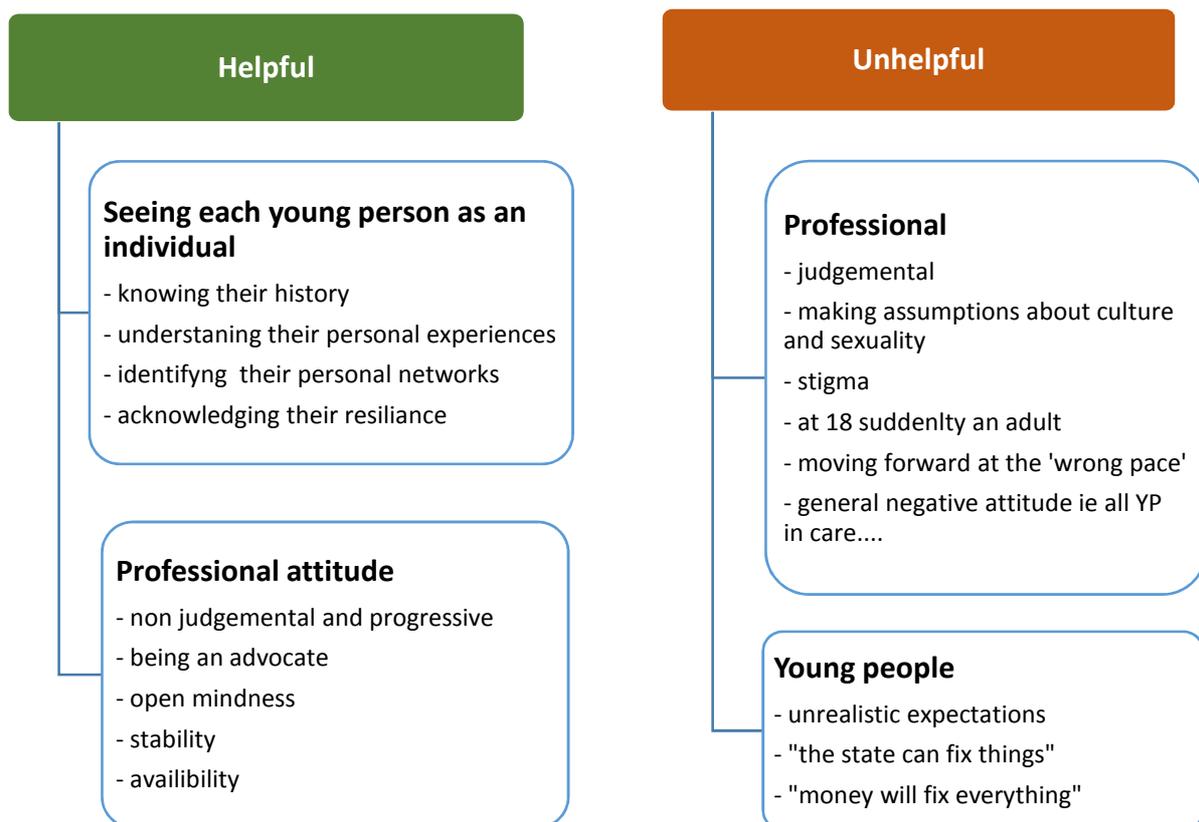


Attitudes, values and beliefs

There were some differences across the two groups as to how well personal advisors engaged in the discussion about their experience of supervision and of feeling supported in their reflective practice as well as their willingness to discuss the impact of values and beliefs in day to day practice. The Southwark group was well engaged in this section, participants described a good experience of supervision and a number of opportunities to discuss their work including individual, group and systemic supervision. They discussed opportunities for both clinical and managerial supervision although they indicated a preference for clinical supervision and would wish to receive it more regularly. Participants in Lambeth didn't seem to acknowledge having sufficient supervision; one anonymous comment was that supervision is not liked:

"I don't like supervision. Prefer to talk with fellow staff just feels like a time wasting exercise and nothing is ever followed up. No real accountability".

Participants in Southwark were able to share ideas freely around helpful/unhelpful attitudes they had experienced in their practice; contribution to this discussion were also made by participants in Lambeth, see below



All participants described the experience of working with young people who felt discriminated against, for different reasons, sexualised and marginalised; in addition young people's views of their personal advisors are heavily influenced by their previous negative experience of children services and their journey into care. This is a very challenging aspect of their practice.

2. Questionnaires from personal advisors

The needs analysis questionnaire was developed to learn more about the PAs' role, their previous training, the needs of their service users and their professional development. The aim was to provide PAs with a platform to express their view in an anonymous and therefore non-threatening way, to encourage openness and honesty about their thoughts and experiences.

Methods

Questionnaires were designed for the purpose of this needs analysis (see Appendix 2). and given to all PAs to complete. The Southwark group were sent the questionnaires by their managers, filled them out ahead of the focus group session and returned them on the day of the session. The Lambeth group were not sent the questionnaire ahead of time; they were given them to complete and return after the focus group session.

The questionnaire included 15 questions, 12 questions were open ended requiring free text response and 3 questions required selecting an answer from identified options. The questions were divided into four sections:

- Your role
- Your previous training
- The needs of your service users
- Your professional development

In the Lambeth group 3 questionnaires were returned at the end of the focus group session. In the Southwark group 9 questionnaires were returned (7 from personal advisors, 1 from a manager and 1 from an advanced practitioner) at the completion of the focus group.

Analysis

The questionnaires' responses (12 questionnaires in total) were collated onto an excel spreadsheet and analysed for emerging themes. The two groups were compared individually as well as collectively to identify any similarities or common training needs as well as looking for any differences.

Results

The PA role

The Lambeth PAs had all been in their current role for up to one year and had a professional background in youth work/social work. The Southwark PA's had been in their current roles from one

to 13 years, the mean time in role being 8 years and had a background in social work, secretary, counselling and residential care.

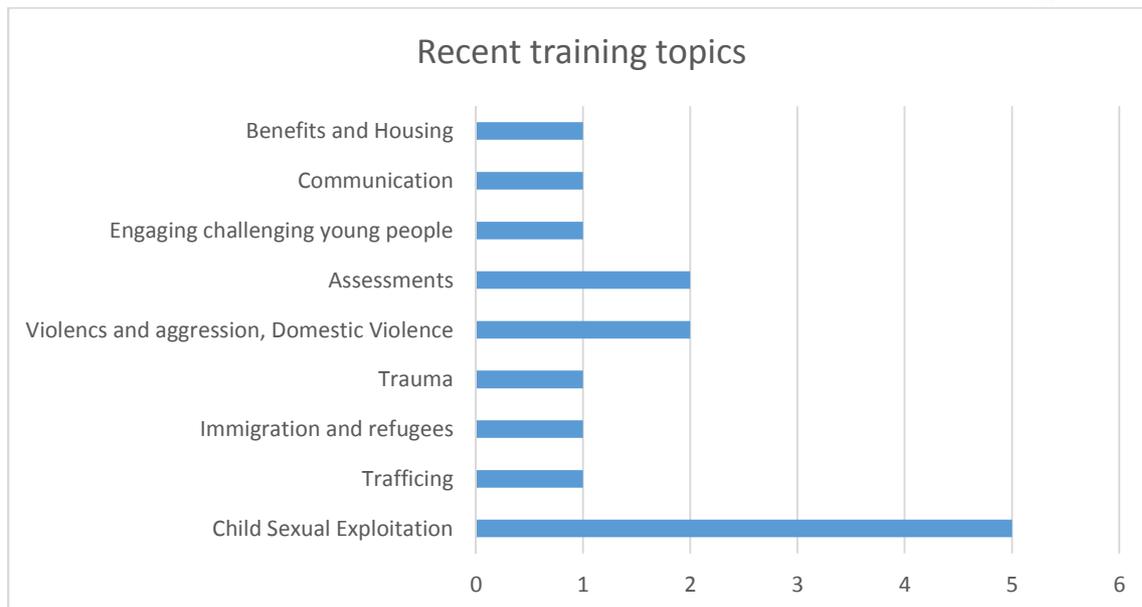
The skills necessary to be an effective PA were similarly identified by both groups. These included people skills, knowledge of the Law/Legislation/Policies and keeping ahead of policy changes and an ability to understand the YP's journey and needs while building and maintain a positive relationship.



Previous training

Eight of the participants identified previous training completed within the last 12 months. Training had been attended equally across both boroughs with one person from each borough not identifying any training attended.

The training delivery was classroom based workshop/lecture style delivery and the PAs found it was relatively easy to put the training into practice. One participant however having received training around violence and aggression, child sexual exploitation and communication found it very difficult to put into practice.



Time was identified as a barrier to applying learning from courses and training into day to day work. Other factors included care leavers' expectations and the personal advisors ability to remember the training when not memorable. A PA commented '*A lot of courses while well-meaning are irrelevant to day to day practice as they appear to try to make non-practitioners into practitioners*' (PA Lambeth).

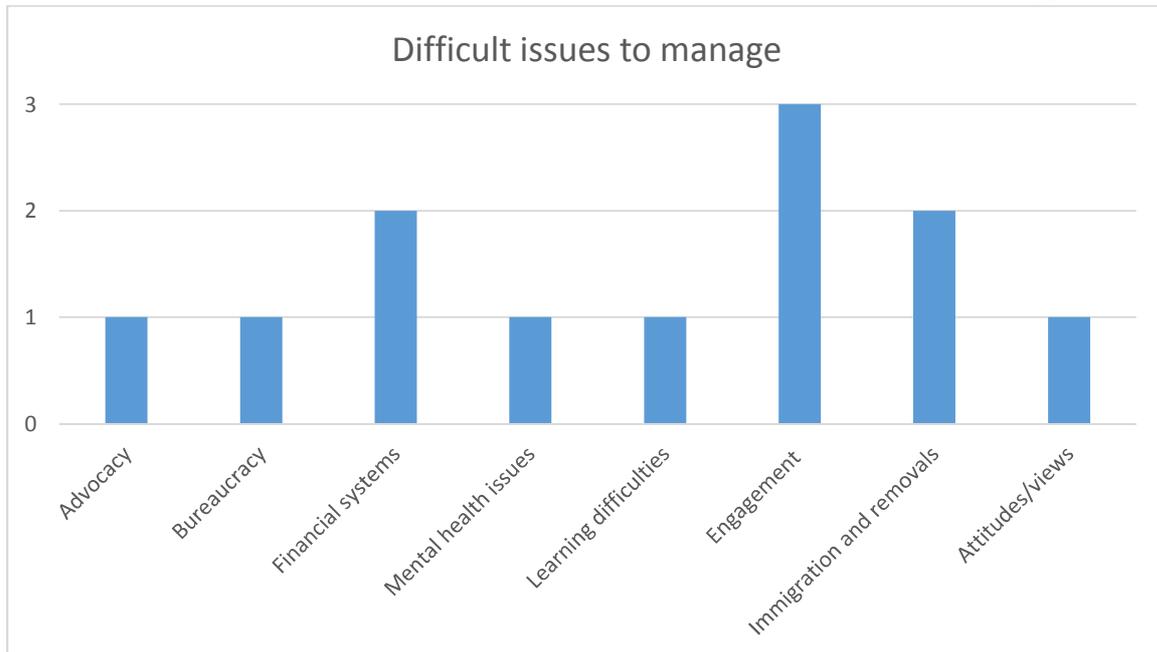
The needs of your service users

The PAs identified diverse challenges they encounter in their working relationships with their service users. These challenges tend to stem from three areas – issues developed prior to engaging with the PA, issues that arise in engaging with their PA and external factors beyond the PA's control.

The young people may already have significant issues they face before engaging with a personal advisor. These include significant learning needs, unaddressed mental health issues, a dislike of social services and a distrust in professionals.

Engaging with the YP presents its own unique issues. These include a lack of motivation from the YP, difficulty communicating, challenging and unhelpful attitudes, aggression, unrealistic expectations and YP with complex needs requiring more time than the PA has available to offer – '*Motivating young people to engage with services they need, that will benefit them*' (PA Southwark). External factors contributing to the challenges for PAs include poor resources, a lack of facilities and complex legislation needing to be followed.

When thinking about situations that PAs have struggled to deal with engagement also presents as a theme. Non-engagement from YP, poor engagement from YP with mental health issues and a lack of engagement were all identified – '*Trying to help a young mum to engage with support and guidance to keep her child*' (PA Southwark).



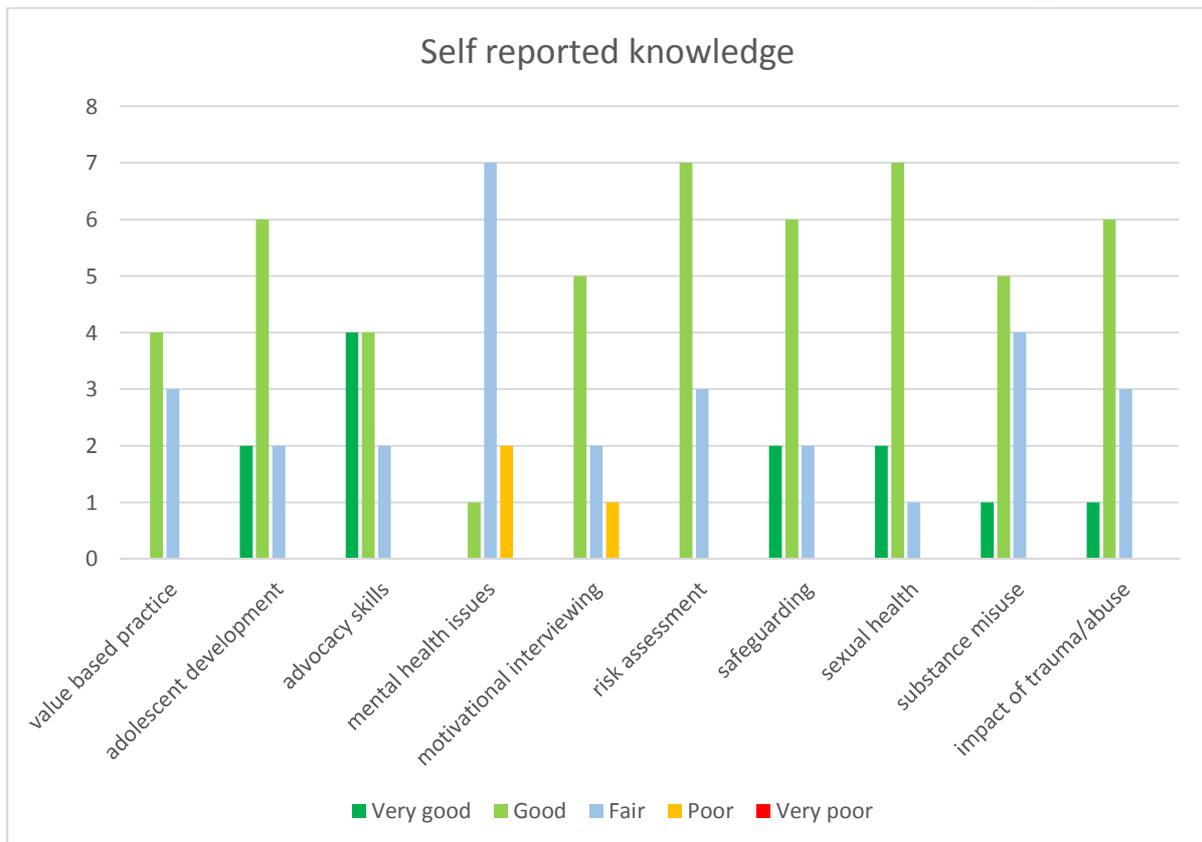
When asked what service users need or want more of, PAs identified strongly the issue of time, honesty and consistency *'More of their PA's time than can practically be given'* (PA Southwark). This was followed by better access to mental health services and mental health support from alternate providers. Interestingly one PA from Lambeth noted *'more consistency, social workers with people skills who can actually relate to/empathise with YPs.'*

Your professional development

PAs would like to develop their knowledge in legislation and the law. This is in relation to housing, leaving care and immigration. They would also like to develop knowledge in managing mental health issues, attachment and safeguarding issues.

Only four of the participants identified barriers to participating in further training. Two identified caseload/workload and two identified time as a factor. There was broad agreement around the preferred training delivery formats, indicating a preference for workshop style days that include simulation based training with case based discussion and reflective learning. The training needs to be able to hold the participants attention and be relevant to keep the participants engaged *'Fall asleep if just being spoke to'* (PA Lambeth).

Personal Advisors felt confident with their knowledge in relation to risk assessment, safeguarding and sexual health but less confident with their knowledge in relation to mental health issues and motivational interviewing (see table below).



Discussion

The questionnaires did provide a platform for the PAs to share their ideas anonymously. Formatting the questionnaire in the way that it was with open ended questions and comment boxes however did require time for the PAs to complete. Asking the PAs to complete the questionnaires ahead of time perhaps would have produced a better return rate from the Lambeth group which would have provided a richer understanding and stronger analysis.

Mental health was an area of concern for PAs, this was correlated in the self-reported knowledge section scoring the lowest for them. It was felt that YP have mental health issues that were unaddressed prior to engaging with their PA, the PA then felt they didn't always have sufficient knowledge to help and support the YP and the referral to mental health support agencies was not a straightforward process.

Law, legislation and policy was an area that the PAs described as wanting to develop knowledge in and perhaps would have been interesting to include in the self-reported knowledge section to gauge a baseline from.

Interestingly both Mental Health and Law & Legislation were themes that were identified within the focus groups themselves. These themes were explored more in-depth in the focus groups and a more specific understanding around the specific components of each theme and what the PA's need in relation to developing their knowledge was gained.

3. Focus groups with young people

Two focus groups were held with care leavers, one in Lambeth (at the Prince's Trust premises) and one in Southwark at Telford Place. The recruitment of young people for the group was agreed by the service group leaders in both local authorities and facilitated by their engagement officers. Refreshments were provided at the end of each group and also young people were given an incentive voucher (£20).

The groups broadly followed the same structure (see Fig. 1 for session's timetable) though this was also influenced by the number of participants in each group (17 participants in Southwark and 3 participants in Lambeth).

The focus groups were facilitated by CYPHP staff. A professional artist/illustrator was engaged to help with the publicity material, the design of the group and producing visual summaries/presentations of the results.

Young people engaged well in both groups, offering their insights and suggestions as well as discussing their previous experiences and hopes for the future. Their feedback about the events was very positive (fig 2). A number of participants expressed a willingness to contribute to the Personal Advisors' training course (module 3). One young person in Lambeth indicated that she would find participating in future similar events very helpful and suggested that we might aim future events/training more specifically at developing the role of care leavers as advisors/trainers.

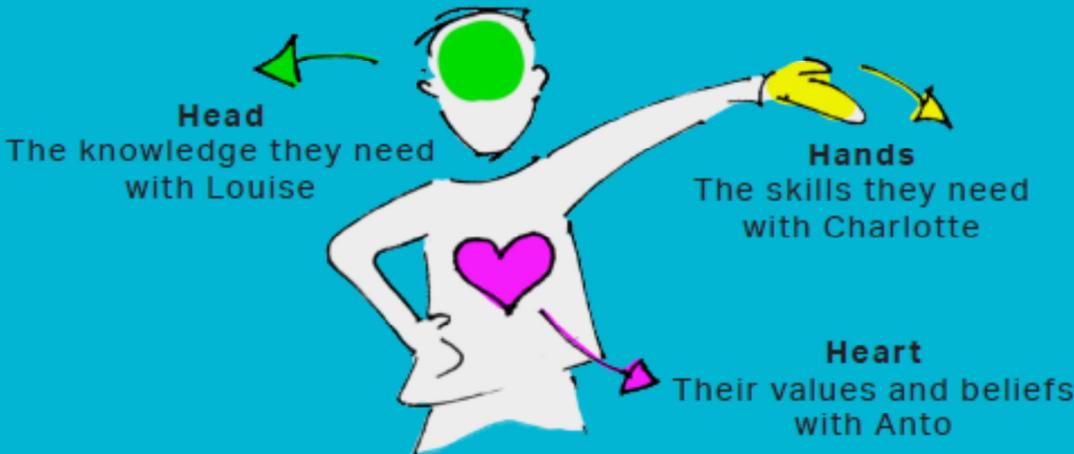
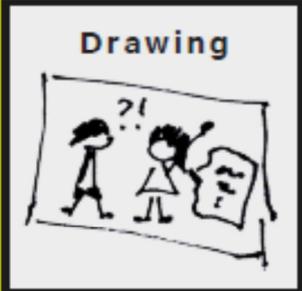
<h1>HAVE YOUR SAY</h1>	
15 mins	"Would you rather...?"
30 mins	<p style="text-align: center;">Your ideal personal advisor</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Head The knowledge they need with Louise</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hands The skills they need with Charlotte</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Heart Their values and beliefs with Anto</p>
30 mins	<p style="text-align: center;">Your own experience described through</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Drawing</p>  <p>with Charlotte</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Story writing</p>  <p>with Anto</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Vlogging</p>  <p>with Sue/Louise</p> </div> </div>
15 mins	Share Back

Figure 1- session timetable

Care Leavers Event Feedback

Southwark



I feel as though our feelings and thoughts were heard and understood.



Beneficial for helping young people build a better service.



Was tolerable, and found it interesting.



Came late but had fun and met some new people.



It was interesting and I feel like it will be beneficial.



It was good - learning more about PAs.



Better space if there's going to be a lot of young people.
(Facilitator: Our main room was too small for 16 people, partly due to the unexpected high numbers in attendance.)



It was engaging it made us think and get involved. We also got to hear others points of view and care experience.



Very interactive. Enjoyed group activities.



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Lambeth



Nice space, friendly people :)



Was quick and relatable, hope the information was useful, thank you.



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Figure 2 - Young people's feedback

Your ideal personal advisor

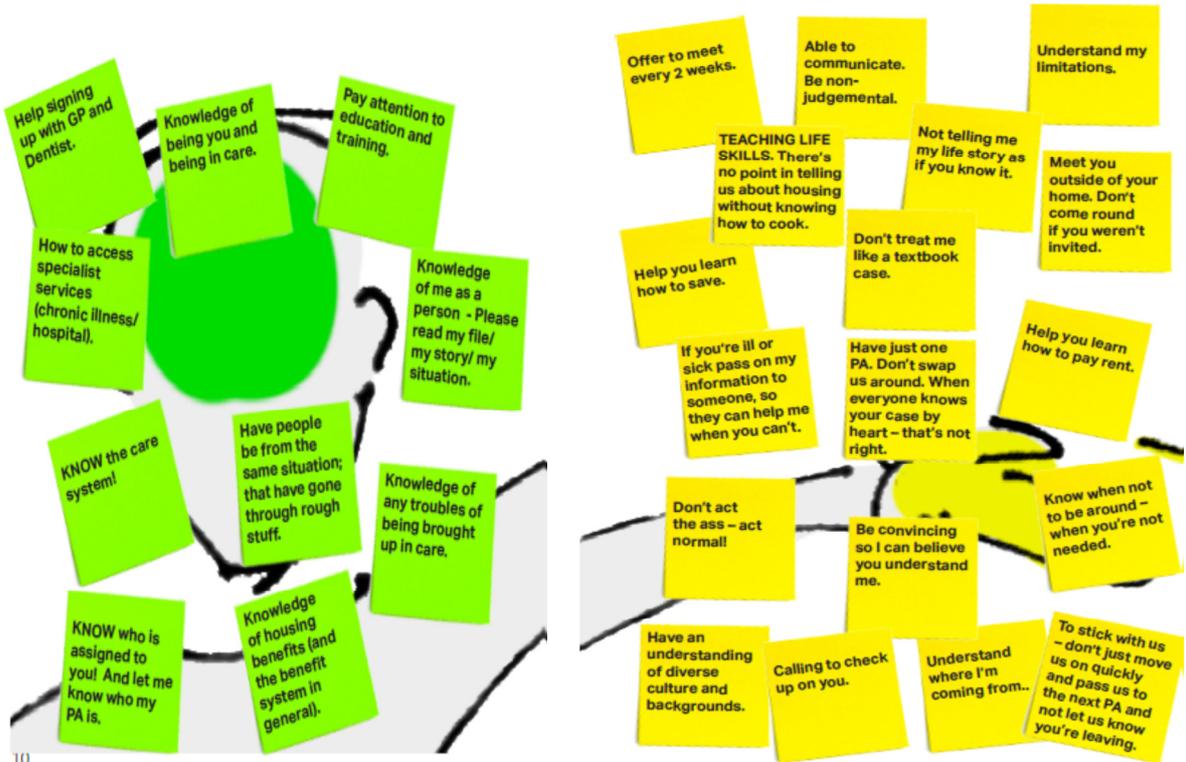
Young people in Southwark were split into 3 different facilitated groups to think about their ideal personal advisor in terms of knowledge (*their head*), skills and competencies (*their hands*) and their attitudes, values and beliefs (*their heart*). Young people's suggestions were collected, with help of facilitators, and written on post-it notes and then shared in the large group (Fig. 3).

Due to the smaller number of participants young people in Lambeth did the same exercise together, their comments and contribution were recorded through live sketch noting by the artist (see Fig. 4).

Your own experience

Young people were prompted to describe their own experience of working with personal advisors, choosing to use drawing, story writing or vlogging.

Results to follow.....



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Figure 3 - your ideal personal advisor, Southwark group



Figure 4 - your ideal personal advisor, Lambeth group

Appendix 1 – focus group structure

Focus Group Session with Personal Advisors in Lambeth and Southwark

5th July 2017 10.00am – 11.00am

Aim – an interactive engagement session to facilitate understanding and the specific needs of personal advisors and gain their views to help shape the training development package

Process:

1. **Room Set-Up:** Before the group arrives, set up the flip chart. Label four sheets:
 - 1) What's it like to be a personal advisor
 - 2) Previous training/Training desire
 - 3) Module 1 - Skills
 - 4) Module 2 – Knowledge
 - 5) Module 3 – Attitudes, values and beliefs

Set up A3 poster with details of the course

2. **Welcome:** As the participants arrive ask them to sign in on sheet provided. Hand out to each participant the participant pack. Ask them if they have not already completed the questionnaire if they could kindly do so (questionnaire included in participant pack).
3. **Introduction:** Introduce the group to the session (see introduction sheet) including the format of the session for the next hour. Allow time for questions before starting the flip chart work.
4. **Documentation:** Ensure all feedback materials collected back in before session finishes.

Remember to take:

- Posters
- Flip chart/pens
- Participant packs
- Sign in sheet/questionnaires
- Blue Tack (to affix flip chart papers to wall)

Focus Group Format - (Approximately 60 minutes to complete)

1. Introduction – The Needs Analysis (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Provide a brief introduction to the purpose of the needs analysis:**
 - Aim is to develop a useful and meaningful training course that is relevant to the needs, skills and knowledge of Personal Advisors.
 - The course structure is in development, personal advisors can help shape/develop the training to ensure relevance.

✓ **Provide a brief introduction to the proposed training course modules:**

- **Module 1** – Healthy bodies, healthy minds, healthy lives - Supporting skills development through simulation training.
- **Module 2** – Knowledge - What do you need to know?
- **Module 3** – Attitudes, Values, Beliefs
What qualities do you need to have?

Explain that we are not trying to evaluate or judge any one person's opinions or experiences but rather capture the thinking of as many people as possible.

Exercise – What is it like to be a Personal Advisor? (Perhaps reflect on opportunities and/or challenges they experience).

In pairs or on their own ask them to please describe this using words, sentences, a song, etc. Document on post it notes and collect these back. Attach to flip chart, read and discuss answers with group to ensure facilitator's understanding.

2. Previous Training and Training Desires (15 minutes) *Ask the following and document answers on flip chart.*

- What training has/hasn't worked in the past? Why?
- How will training impact on the PA's workload/practice?
- What is your experience with simulation training? Is it a useful way to learn in relation to your role with care leavers?
- How would you like to see the delivery of module 2 and 3 in relation to time/content?

3. Skills – What competencies do you need to have? (10 minutes) *Introduce module one. Ask the following and document answers on flip chart.*

- What are the top 5 skills needed for a Personal Advisor?
- (If group does not identify, prompt to discuss advocacy, motivational interviewing, navigating the health system. Identify any prompted questions with an asterisk on flip chart so evaluator knows later on)

4. Knowledge - What do you need to know about? (10 minutes) *Introduce Module two. Ask the following and document answers on flip chart.*

- If you were a new staff member what would you need to know to do your job well
 - What further support and/or training would you like around your knowledge development?
- Exercise: Hand out the A4 paper headed with the following – 'Areas I know well/a lot about - Areas I would like to know more about' and ask the personal advisors to complete.

5. Attitudes, Values and Beliefs - What qualities do you need to have? (10 minutes) Introduce module three. Divide the group into two, each facilitator to work concurrently with each sub-group. Ask the following and document their answers on A4 paper.

- What is your experience of support/supervision within your organization?
- What opportunities do you have to reflect on your practice, including the impact of the work on the practitioner (e.g. debrief session)?
- Exercise: Attitudes, Values, Beliefs – helpful and unhelpful beliefs the personal advisors have encountered in their work.

While in the sub-groups ask the participants the above question. Give them each a post it pad to write down examples. Collect post it notes back and reflect with the sub-group participants their answers to ensure facilitator understanding.

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6. Conclusion: Wrap up

With the group back together thank participants for their time and views. Let them know their input is very helpful and valued. Their feedback from today will be collated and used in shaping the training package.

Appendix 2- needs analysis questionnaire

This anonymous questionnaire is part of a needs analysis being undertaken by the Children and Young People's Health Partnership (CYPHP), prior to the delivery of a training course for professional working with young people leaving care. Please answer openly as all answers will be treated confidentially and will help inform the structure of the course and our efforts to make the course meaningful and relevant to your practice.

Part 1 – Your role

- How long have you worked as a Personal Advisor? _____

- What is your professional background and/or previous role?

- What skills are necessary, in your opinion, to carry out your role effectively?

Part 2 – Your previous training

- ✓ Have you received any training within the last 12 months? If yes, please give details of topic(s) covered

- ✓ How was this training delivered? Please give details e.g. classroom based, workshop, seminar, online/web-based etc.

- How easy has it been to use the learning from previous training in your day to day work?

Very easy	Easy	Neither	Difficult	Very difficult
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- What barriers have you encountered in applying learning from courses and other training to your day to day work?

Part 3 – The needs of your service users

- What challenges have you encountered in working with the users of your service?

- Have there been any situations that you have struggled to deal with? Please give examples

- What do you think your service users need/ want more of/ would like to change? What support or training would you need to make these things happen?

Part 4 – Your professional development

- Are there any areas of your practice, skills, knowledge that you would like to develop/feel more confident about?

- Are there any duties or aspects of your job you tend to avoid or would prefer not to do? Why do you think this is?

- What barriers can you envisage in participating in further training?

- Which of the following training formats would you be more likely to engage with? (Please check all that apply)

Lectures Day long workshop-style event Simulation-based training
 Case based discussions Learning sets Reflective learning
 Other (please specify) _____

Please explain your choice for the above answers

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- How would you rate your knowledge of the following topics:

✓ Value based practice

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ adolescent development

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ Advocacy skills

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ Mental health issues

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ Motivational interviewing

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ Risk assessment

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ Safeguarding

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ Sexual health

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ Substance misuse

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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✓ Impact of trauma/abuse

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
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Thank you very much for taking time to complete this questionnaire