



## LGBTQI+ Have Your Voice Heard

### FEEDBACK

St Georges Centre Leeds, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018

We successfully held a consultation event where all local mental health services were asked to promote the event and bring along their service users. As well as having lived experience speakers we had a few professionals throughout the day letting us know the good things that are happening in the city. Flyers were also handed out for months leading up to the day in the Freedom Quarter in Leeds. Around 70 people came throughout the day and it was a great success. Feedback was that we needed more opportunity for LGBTQI+ to meet and indeed have their say on services within the city. We had round the table discussions on the following themes:

#### **Overall challenges LGBT people experience when accessing services**

- Self confidence, self worth, judge mentality, depression and anxiety
- Discrimination, Homophobia
- Identity difference= bullying in schools/work/family
- Non acceptance from peers
- Stigma
- Stereotyping

- Reluctance to speak out
- Feeling isolated
- Lack of understanding
- Hidden identities- not feeling able to tell families
- Sports people- still difficult rugby/ football supporters
- Media generally - fitting into stereotypes
- Not enough services especially trans community
- Cutbacks in funding effects everyone
- Monies and funding for LGBT+ services
- Protection from discrimination
- Being referred to right services
- Not always feeling safe to be honest
- Education and training in LGBT+ issues for all staff (should be law)
- Diversity training for all

### **Young People;**

- Appropriate signposting needed
- Lack of training, need compulsory training
- Lack of community, socializing for under 18s
- Confidentiality – parents are told information when a YP comes out
- Lack of inclusive sex education, PSHCE is not compulsory
- Services not willing to work for under 16s

### **Barriers to accessing services**

- Lack of knowledge
- Ignorance
- Living by everyone else's rules (parents, schools act)
- Bullying and cyber bullying
- Its just a phase
- Terror/fear of coming out- acceptance, fear of being judged
- Stigma

### **Trans;**

- Lack of recognition – understanding
- Training
- Access to gender care
- Service ignorance
- No specific service provision
- Waiting lists
- GP dancing
- Gender service is apparently catch all
- “GIC should do that”

### **Barriers**

- Institutional barriers create the challenges trans people face
- Transphobia and ignorance
- Gendered services
- Apprehension due to past experiences
- Waiting list
- Are you crazy enough
- Too crazy but not crazy enough

### **Steps to make accessible;**

- Non gendered toilets
- Visibility to the trans community as safe spaces and a visibility policy
- Waiting times reduced
- Being informed and listening to patients
- \*\*\*Mental health issues NOT effecting gender treatment
- Not relating everything to being Trans / Queerness

### **Community Support;**

- Being judged by community
- Denial
- Isolation
- Fear of rejection
- Loneliness

- Lack of communication
- Lack of knowledge
- Not knowing what services are out there

## **Barriers**

- Professionals not having the right training.
- Lack of self acceptance- coming from social oppression
- Being pigeon holed into specific LGBT+ support
- Risk of abuse
- Confusion
- Social environment
- Labels come with set of assumptions and stereotypes can be detrimental
- Straight assumptions from services restrict access
- Having time to discuss complex issues with GP, who can often be the point of call
- Services not being equipped with skills knowledge to help in the first instance
- Lack of awareness of specific LGBT+ support
- Previous negative experiences of other parts of health system – E.g. when discussing contraception with GP and experiencing straight assumptions

## **BAME;**

- Fear of discrimination- work/peers
- Financial barriers
- DRs time limits
- Fear of ridicule
- Waiting lists
- Culture – Black people not depressed
- DRs gate keeping – anti histamines for sleep for awhile
- Racism
- Destitution

- Stereotyping
- Small community- worry to get help from someone you might meet in social situations
- Acceptance
- Understanding
- Access to Mental health services
- Abuse
- Discrimination by community
- Isolation

### **Steps to make MH services more accessible;**

- Training
- More signposting/advertisement of services
- Directory of LGBT+ services
- Involve service users in planning process
- Funding
- Gender neutral bathrooms
- Reach out to people/ communities

### **Domestic Violence;**

- Lack of safe spaces for male victims of dv
- Lack of safe spaces for gay/bi men who are victims of dv
- Lack of support available from other providers other than Mesmac
- Cross over between perpetrator and victim
- People not knowing how to find support
- Directory of LGBT+ services
- New pink paper type of publication- to advertise services
- 16 days of action
- Find what works in other cities

### **NHS;**

- Fertility services- misapplied policy
- Institutional Homophobia and Transphobia

- No lived experience on steering group/champions – no co-production
- No visible welcome policy
- Monitoring – How do we know if we are providing what is needed if equal opportunities is not monitored

**Key issues faced by organizations working to support LGBT+ MH in Leeds:**

- Funding
- Compulsory training for all staff
- Building positive relationships
- Monitoring
- Have representative staff
- Sharing positive results
- Awareness of services/ appropriate signposting/ knowing where to find out information about support
- Lack of understanding
- Waiting lists/ response times
- Safe spaces/venues (non scene)
- Engagement – SU don't want to be outed, identified or found out
- Gender neutral toilets

Karen Marshall Aug 2018 Touchstone