

# Learning Disability Development Fund (LDDF) Progress report



**Name of project: Carers Link Group**

**Project Lead: Chris Lau**

**Sub Group overseeing project: Chairs Planning Group**

### **Project Targets from original bid:**

- Support two carer representatives to be active members of the Partnership Board by attending meetings on a regular basis
- Feedback to other carers through Listening Lunches/events/activities and other relevant networks to ensure that carers are getting the right information and are able to influence the design of services
- Carers feel listened to and engaged with service providers
- Listening lunches will be held on a regular basis
- Carer representatives will attend the Southeast Regional Carers' Network on a regular basis

### **How the project will do this work:**

- The Carers Centre for Brighton & Hove will carry on supporting two carers of adults with learning disabilities to be members of the Learning Disability Partnership Board as carer representatives.
- Listening lunches will be organised on a regular basis.
- Carer representatives will give an update at every Partnership Board meeting and take feedback and information back to the Listening Lunches.
- The staff at the Carers Centre will be the key contacts, both in publicising this work and encouraging carers to let them know what they are concerned about.
- Relevant information will be passed on to other carers through Listening Lunches, events, newsletters, emails and the Carers Centre website. In the same way, feedback and comments will be collated and presented at Partnership Board meetings.
- Listening lunches are organised
- The two carer representatives will take turns to attend the Southeast Regional Carers' Network.

**How much 2010/11 LDDF money the project gets: £6,734.14**

**Name of person completing this report:**

**Tess Barneveld**

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## What the project has done in April through October 2010:

In the reporting period there has been 4 Listening Lunches. The Listening Lunches have taken place at various locations in the City, from The Thistle Hotel to The Friends Meeting House. In total 39 carers have attended the 4 events.

Each event has followed a similar format. At the start of the meeting our 2 reps feedback what happened at the last LDPB and carers have a chance to ask questions and comment. We will then move on to talking about updates in learning disabilities services. In our April meeting the carers who attended the Listening Lunch identified '3 Big Questions'. These are the key areas of service delivery which were felt to be most important, the 3 were;

- Employment
- Maintaining Services
- Housing

At subsequent meetings we have focused on updates in these areas. At our July meeting Mark Hendricks, Project Officer in the Learning Disabilities Commissioning Team and head of 'A Place to Live' subgroup came to talk about housing services locally and answer questions from carers. The final part of the meeting is a chance to look at the agenda for the next LDPB and for carers at the meeting to say what they would like the reps to take forward, this might be concerns, questions or things they think are going well.

We continue to publicise the Listening Lunches in a wide range of places in order to reach as many people who care for an adult with a learning as possible. Publicity for the meetings goes regularly in;

- Brightpart website
- Carers News
- A mailout to over 100 learning disabilities carers registered with the Carers Centre
- To Carers Centre coffee mornings.

Publicity for the meetings has also gone in the Argus and local newsletters and posters for the meetings have been displayed in community venues such as libraries and GP's surgeries. We are currently developing some publicity to go into learning disabilities day services and supported housing projects.

## What the project has done in September 2010 to April 2011:

The Carers Centre has retained both its carer representatives, Joan Hicks and John Horseman. Both of these reps continue to be actively involved and are a strong voice for carers.



### • Listening Lunches

The Carers Centre organised and facilitated 4 more successful Listening Lunches on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 4<sup>th</sup> November, 6<sup>th</sup> January and 10<sup>th</sup> March, where Joan and John consulted with other learning disability carers on their views on local services. Karen Kingsland also attended and had valuable input into the discussions.

- 09/09/10 – This meeting had 9 attendees in total plus John and Joan and focused on The Big Health Check Questionnaire as well as discussion tables around 'Including Everyone'. From these discussion groups came some suggestions on how the council might better be able to include everyone.
- 04/11/10 – This meeting had 9 attendees in total plus John and Joan and looked at the feedback from the Big Health Check Questionnaire and there were discussion tables on the theme of 'Going out and meeting people'. From the discussion tables came a list of recommendations which were taken forward by the carer reps to the following LDPB
- 06/01/11 – 14 people attended in total plus John and Joan. Sue Goodwin came to talk about employment support services. Employment was one of the '3 Big Questions' which are issues that carers have identified as crucial to learning disabilities services. The group work and discussion tables focused on the upcoming budgets for LD services. Carers put together a 'wish list' – what they felt the priorities were in terms of spending in LD. Tess has typed this up and it has been shared with local councillors as well as the carer reps taking this forward to the LDPB in March.
- 10/03/11 – 20 people attended in total plus John and Joan. Diana Bernhardt came and gave a presentation on the upcoming budget

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for 2011/12. The whole meeting, as well as the group work and discussions were devoted to this and carer reps compiled a list of 'burning questions' to take forward to the next LDPB.

- **Learning Disability Partnership Board meetings**

Joan and John attended the Learning Disability Partnership Board meetings to feed back the main issues raised by carers, primarily around Housing and communication issues. Additionally, fuller notes from the Listening Lunches were recorded and sent to the Chair's Planning Group in advance, as requested.

- **Training**

Tess organised a half day training in 'telling your story' this was aimed at all carer reps and looked at empowering them to be able to tell their caring story in situations such as the LDPB. It also focused on how to tell your story to have the most impact (for instance on service providers and funders)

Joan attended this training on 'staying safe whilst telling your story' organised by the Carers Centre and facilitated by Kirstie Seabourne.

- **Publicity**

Our Listening Lunches have continued to be advertised regularly on the Brightpart and The Big Bridge websites in addition to our Carers News magazine and Carers Centre e bulletin. From December 2009 it was decided to advertise every 2 meetings in the Argus, this seems to have been effective and the attendance of January and March's meetings reflect this. The Carers who attended the Listening Lunches also suggested that we need to be more assertive in our outreach in letting carers know about the meetings and also what their purpose is. Tess attended several carers meetings at residential and day services and has circulated new publicity to these services so they can share this with carers.

## **The Future:**

The Carers' Link Work continues to be funded by the Learning Disability Development Fund.