

Mental Health News

Imagine Your Goals

The Mental Health News e-bulletin is a daily bulletin issued by the Mental Health Improvement Programme (MHIP) containing an item relating to a Mental Health issue, development or outcome in the North West.

The aim is to bring awareness to our stakeholders about service improvement and innovative projects underway in Mental Health across the North West, and to encourage you (the reader) to act as vehicle for ensuring that you or your organisation is engaged with the work where applicable.

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Imagine Your Goals is a three year partnership programme launched in May 2008 to tackle mental health stigma by Mersey Care NHS Trust, in partnership with Everton Foundation, the Premier League, the Football Foundation, the Professional Footballers Association and the mental health charity, Imagine. The programme offers football training opportunities in five locations. It also offers a range of football related training opportunities including coaching certificates. Any service user from Mersey Care NHS Trust is eligible to join the programme.

In addition to training, 6-a-side league matches are held monthly plus an optional tournament in Manchester. Competitors in local league include teams such as Natural Networks and Richmond Fellowship. We have 85 service users as of November 2009 actively participating in the programme. There are a total of 22 link workers who are based within community services liaising with Everton Foundation staff. There are seven objectives of the programme: Participation, Competition, Raise Awareness, Inclusion & Exit Routes, Volunteers, Paid Employment and Research. The programme is a non-medical opportunity to engage in sport; referrals are made by the service user's clinician in consultation with their Care Co-ordinator using a non medical referral form.

Evaluation of the programme was undertaken between January and April 2009 by the Service User Research Evaluation team. The evaluation shown that there was a strong sense that the programme had helped tackle mental health stigma in a very real and practical way. The evaluation demonstrated that the programme is well co-ordinated and managed and that service users are gaining enormously in terms of mental, physical and social well being.

Service users involved in the evaluation said...

"With Olanzapine, I've put on weight. This (football) keeps control of the situation."

"Lots of improvements to my health. More confidence. And there's the endorphins I get from exercise; makes me happier."

For further information please contact Matty Byrne or Jacquie Ruddick on 0151 527 3421.

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