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WHO ARE WE?

Carers Federation is a Nottingham-based charity that works nationally, providing services for carers and their cared for, in addition to hosting the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) and Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) in several regions across England.

MAY 2011 NEWSLETTER



A letter from the Chair of the Research Forum

Welcome to the May edition of the Carers Federation Research Forum quarterly newsletter! Here you can read about all the exciting research projects and events that are active and upcoming within Carers Federation.

The Carers Federation research Forum is becoming well established, with several active local research partnerships covering a wide variety of topics, which you can read more about in the articles below.

The Research Forum holds a meeting on the [4th Friday of every month](#), and is open to all members of Carers Federation staff with an interest in research. If you would like to come along, or have any questions, please contact Emma Richardson, Research Development Worker, using the details at the end of this newsletter.

Wishing you every success with your research activity,

Dr Cheryle Berry

Barriers to service users and carers engaging in research: a progress update!

Dr Emma Richardson, Carers Federation Research Development Worker (left) and Dr Siobhan Laird (below), from the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Nottingham, are currently conducting a study investigating ways to enable carers and service users to engage in research. Focusing on Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities,



the project aims to elucidate what BME communities understand about research, what might encourage them to get involved in a research project, what might prevent them getting involved in research, and how those problems may be overcome.



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF CARERS FEDERATION



New research by Carers UK, in partnership with academics at the University of Leeds, has suggested that carers are now saving the economy £119 billion per year – a figure that breaks down to an astonishing £13.6 million every hour!

Many will find this a bitter pill to swallow in light of the numerous cuts to services and benefits that carers and their loved ones face across the nation.

It is my hope that with good research we can challenge injustices and inequalities that may arise as result of these cuts, and that creative and innovative ways of working can be identified to provide quality services in an era of financial austerity.

With best wishes,

Trish Cargill

The pair recently co-presented the interim findings of their study at the first European Conference for Social Work Research, held at St Catherine's College, Oxford University 23rd-25th March 2011. The session was attended by around 20 other delegates, and was well received.

The data collection stage of the research has now completed. Both researchers are currently working on a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal – watch this space for further developments!

Carers, Disabled Service Users, and Personal Budgets



Carers Federation are pleased to announce that they are embarking on a research project with Dr Mary Larkin from De Montfort University, Leicester (pictured left). Mary first met with the Research Forum at a conference hosted by Carers Federation in 2009. Since then, Mary has worked collaboratively with Julia Tabreham to develop and refine a model of partnership working between civil society organisations and academic institutions, with the aim of maximising research outputs via collaboration in an age of increased financial austerity. The model is now being embodied by this new research collaboration, which will investigate the effects of the personalisation agenda from a carers' perspective.

The project will see 40 spousal-type carers of physically disabled partners interviewed to investigate how personal budgets have affected the relationship the carer has with their partner, and how the carers' life may have changed as a result of their partner being awarded a personal budget to pay for their social care costs.

Several interviews have already been conducted, with some interesting themes already beginning to emerge. The researchers are currently still recruiting into the study, so if you would be interested in taking part in the research, or know someone who may be, contact Emma using the details at the back of this newsletter.

Peer support for persons experiencing mental health difficulties



In 2010, Carers Federation, as part of a multi-agency bid, led by Dr Julie Repper from the Institute of Mental Health, won funding from The Health Foundation 'Closing the Gap' competition. The innovative project will employ Peer

Support Workers to engage with persons experiencing mental

SEND TO A FRIEND!

Know someone you think should read this? Ask us for more copies of this newsletter!

GET INVOLVED!

If you would be interested in taking part in current or future Carers Federation research projects, working collaboratively on a project, or commissioning the Research Forum to carry out research on your behalf, then please get in touch with Emma Richardson by:

- e-mail: e.richardson@carersfederation.co.uk
- or telephone: (0115) 9621776

Please also contact Emma if you would like to comment on any of the articles in this newsletter, or would like further details about any of the projects listed.

health difficulties and their carers across Nottinghamshire, and seeks to change the culture in mental health services.

Almost 50 applications were received from persons wishing to enter into the accredited 10-day Peer Support Worker training course, and after several days of group interviews this figure was whittled down to 18 people who began their training on April 1st 2011. Some of the unsuccessful applicants have since completed the 'Awareness to Peer Support' course, and it is hoped that opportunities for placements into programmes such as the befriending scheme will become available for these candidates.

Each person who successfully completes the Peer Support Worker training course will be eligible to apply for paid work as a Peer Support Worker, employed by Nottinghamshire Health Care NHS Trust, working alongside existing mental health services.

Evaluating public and patient involvement in research

Carers Federation have also had success with a second grant submitted in collaboration with Dr Julie Repper. The application was submitted in response to a joint call from the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) Health Services Research (HSR) unit and INVOLVE, an organisation that promotes public and patient involvement (PPI) in research. The call was for original pieces of research that will help to determine what impact PPI is having on health research. This call was highly competitive, and the project was one of five funded from a pool of 200 applications.



Both Dr Emma Richardson and Trish Cargill were named on the grant to act as researchers during the project. The project will assess the extent of PPI in research projects currently running across the nine Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) units across England, using a toolkit designed by the CLAHRC-Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire (CLAHRC-NDL) service user reference group. Each CLAHRC is a partnership between academia and healthcare, and exist to develop new approaches to healthcare research and enable more research to be carried out. They are focused on patients' needs and putting findings into practice more quickly to improve the care and treatment that patients receive.
