



Ethnicity Training Network



Good Practice Showcase

Wednesday 14th November, Host Media Centre, Leeds 8

Workshop

Learning Disability Partnership Board South Asian Sub Group

Presenter(s):

Tony Ovenell (Clinical Psychologist) Janice Muhanna (Professional Development Nurse) and colleagues

Background - why did you develop the work?

We have a large South Asian (predominantly Muslim) community and wanted to improve our service to them.

What did you aim to achieve?

Our ultimate aim is to make our services more accessible/acceptable to local Asian people and to encourage Asian community organisations to be more inclusive of people with learning disability. In working on this, we also aim to build links with Asian service users, community organisations and religious groups.

We have been keen throughout to take practical steps to build links and change services.

What did you actually do?

We are still working on the project. We have a steering group, which has now become a subgroup of the LD Partnership Board. This has:

- Developed leaflets about our service, geared to Asian
- Families (including one in Urdu)
- Arranged for staff to run stands at local Asian community events, and in Islamic awareness week (These included information about services, and also about membership of and employment within The Trust)
- Set up a consultation group, where Asian service users, carers and staff meet.
- Organised training events for staff on issues relating to working with Asian families
- Held a consultation event with local imams
- Provided representation on a new group set up within the local mosques to improve access for disabled people, including people with learning disabilities
- Run a workshop at a local conference on services for people from BME Communities
- Published articles about our work in the local press and in the Trust news letter.

How did you measure the impact of your work?

We have not undertaken a formal evaluation of the impact. However, we do now have some tangible results of the work (e.g. the leaflets), which have been well received. We also have a much improved network of contacts, and a significantly improved profile within the Asian community.

What results or feedback have you had?

We have achieved good attendance at our groups (though there is more to do). We have had extremely positive feedback from members of the local Asian community, including religious and community leaders. We have been invited to take part in the local community group, which we regard as a very positive development. We have also been invited to attend other events organised by people within the Asian Community.

Conclusions and recommendations – what have you learnt from doing this work? What lessons would you pass on to others?

We have built very helpful links, and learnt a great deal about the particular needs of Asian service users. However, also the process is as important as the product and knowing people and being known by them is as important as knowing about cultures and religions.

We have learnt that people respond positively to questions about their religion and culture, if they are asked sensitively, with respect and in good faith. We now feel more able to ask, when we do not understand.