



January 2013

Welcome to Issue 2 of the Connecting People Newsletter...

In this issue we've some great first-hand accounts of the Connecting People intervention being put into practice. But to start...

If you haven't done so already, be sure to reserve your place today for the Connecting People Workshop on **Friday 15th February** at **King's College London!** (space is limited)

The workshop is tailored both to agencies participating in the study and those who are new to this model of practice, providing an opportunity to reflect on practice and connect with other professionals. It will feature an introduction to the model/study, small seminar-style discussion groups and training activities, a panel of experts from health and social services, and a networking lunch.

For further information and to reserve your place please contact Meredith Newlin at meredith.1.newlin@kcl.ac.uk

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Connecting People Workshop

Friday, February 15th 2013
10am—1pm
King's College London
FREE event!

The Connecting People Intervention Study is a multi-site pilot aimed to promote well-being and social participation amongst adults with a learning disability or mental health problem.

Agenda

- Introduction to the Connecting People Intervention model from members of the research team
- Reflection of practice with other health and social care professionals
- Panel discussion with directors and workers from a diverse range of agencies
- Networking lunch

www.connectingpeoplestudy.net
Email meredith.1.newlin@kcl.ac.uk for more information and to book a place

THE UNIVERSITY of York KING'S COLLEGE LONDON uclan BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

Updates from the Team...

Martin Webber

There has been a lot of interest in the Connecting People study. In the last few months I have spoken about the study to a conference of mental health social workers in south west London and to practitioners in Somerset. In 2013 I've been invited to speak at meetings in Lancaster, Hertfordshire, London and York. I'll also be speaking at conferences in Finland and Los Angeles to practitioners and researchers from across the globe. Please do contact us if you would like us to speak about the study at your event.



David Morris

Through my work, the Connecting People Study is linked to a number of other initiatives in the field of community engagement and social networks. Principal amongst these is Connected Communities, a five year Big Lottery funded programme in seven sites which I am working on in partnership with the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) in London www.thersa.org/action-research-centre/.../connected-communities. As the social value of communities becomes ever more important to public services, so there is increasing interest in how organisations can meet the challenge of working alongside communities to enable this to be drawn on to support the resilience and inclusiveness of communities. Connected Communities provides a practical model for doing this, based on empowered community research and social network mapping and it is a model with wide potential for use in other social care and health areas.



In other news, a new Centre has been established in partnership with the RSA and other national partners to bring together a range of policy, development and research in the field of engaged or connected communities. Based at UCLan and London, the Centre for Citizenship and Community will link the development and analysis of policy in these areas to practice development with communities and services, promoting the practical research needed to grow the evidence base for effectiveness and innovation.

David Morris continued...

Connecting People is such an approach to the evidence base that together we are building and we have every intention of using the partnerships and networks of the Centre for Citizenship and Community to make the most of its profile - and to link it to associated or complementary programmes. You may want to find out more about the new Centre or, better still, contribute to its work. If so, we will want to hear from you, so please, watch this space!

Sharon Howarth

I have spent time with a couple of different agencies in the North West, facilitating training sessions with a variety of workers, mainly NHS staff with a diverse background. Within these training sessions were inspirational anecdotes about the work individuals and teams have done with, and for, people in need.

I have also been travelling to carry out interviews, mainly in Coventry and in and around Manchester. With the exception of a few participants not showing up, the interviews have gone well. To read more about the interview experience see section Interviews with Participants.

And introducing our newest team member; **Tracey Hawkes** is a Research Administrator at the University of York. She has a particular interest in mental health and supporting individuals in the wider community after working for 5 years, until 2010, with students with mental health problems and learning difficulties or disabilities within a College of Further & Higher Education. Since 2010 she has worked on multiple research projects within the NHS focusing on Oncology and Palliative Care. She will liaise with the team to provide administrative support on the CP study until its completion.

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The Connecting People Intervention in Practice...

Now working with more than 15 agencies in the Connecting People Intervention Study we are gaining a better understanding of how the CPI model fits into existing practice. The feedback we've received from social workers, community psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists, community development workers and support time and recovery workers has been positive, with most workers affirming that the model largely describes their current work.



Here's what the workers are saying;



Paul Wyatt, *Waltham Forest Council Community Day Services Team (CDS Team)*, the team has used the skills learnt in the [CPI] training to make links with community groups and local organisations. For example, in Waltham Forest due to the council budget reductions Friends of Parks' groups have been set up to work with the Council's Greenspace team to create better open spaces. Each group helps care for a specific park or green space in the borough. CDS Team will be support people with learning disabilities to volunteer with Friends of Parks'. During the London Olympics 2012 summer period the staff team travel trained some service users to new venues nearer to their homes. More service users used public transport or walked to facilities in their area. Adults with learning disabilities have been connecting to their local neighbourhood.



Robert Goemans, *Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust*, speaks about the benefit to adults with mental health needs in the interview process and how to maintain interest across a range of workers: "Service users involved have reported that the assessment tool is rather therapeutic in reminding them of what resources they actually have. We are meeting with all our social workers to remind them of the model and update them on the study progress."

Recruitment to the Study...

After a slow start with recruitment of participants for the study, December 2012 and January 2013 have seen a real improvement in uptake. We've received feedback that agencies are getting creative in their approach to involving staff in the study. For example, one agency is encouraging each worker to nominate just one new referral from recent initial assessments; this seems to make the involvement in CPI more manageable amidst full caseloads. Another agency has decided to introduce the study to new referrals with a letter from the agency and Meredith, CPI research worker, follows up with a phone call to answer questions and schedule interviews. Yet another agency has one worker who has recruited nearly ten participants alone!



At the time of publishing this newsletter we have conducted **69** interviews with participants from **10** different agencies. Our recruitment target for the study is 240 interviews by the end of April 2013. The recruitment stage is critical to ensuring the CPI study can produce meaningful results of health and social care practice in England. With that in mind a big thank you must go out to everyone who has been involved with these interviews up to now; participants, agencies, interviewers and study administrators. Your support with this process is greatly appreciated!

Interviews with Participants...



The first of the interviews got underway back in September 2012 and have continued steadily since. As with most things, there have been a few hiccups along the way, with broken down trains, illnesses, and no-shows, however overall the interviews have been a positive experience. The majority have taken place in the agency itself; however coffee shops and an individual's home can, and have, been used as settings for the interviews.

The interviews take around one hour to complete, although this can be a lot shorter or a little longer depending on the individual. The main areas that are covered in this structured interview are personal contacts, housing and accommodation, education and health. The interviewer works through a series of questions with the participant, filling in the answers on an 'interview schedule'.

Our target for completing this first round of interviews is April 2013; there will then be a nine-month follow up interview, which will enable us to evaluate the Connecting People Intervention. We hope to demonstrate the beneficial and positive effects the Connecting People Intervention has for workers and individuals alike. We hope to start receiving more and more referrals for participants for the study, and the new information leaflets should help with this.

Case Studies...

The following case study is an example of the Connecting People Model in action within a CMHT for older people shown from the perspective of both the worker (Kay) and the individual (Deloris) (names have been changed to protect the identity of the individuals concerned).

Deloris: From the beginning I really enjoyed my time with Kay. She came round to see me every week or so and we'd have a cuppa and start chatting. I never felt like she was just testing me, or asking too many questions. We started talking about my hobbies and interests and sometimes I don't feel like I have many at all. But she helped me to think back about what Hugh and I used to do together. He was a farmer and was quite involved with the union of farmers in the county. When they met together, I would go and see the wives, but hadn't been since he passed away.



I wasn't so sure that I could go back to this group without Hugh. Kay suggested we go together. Her brother is also a farmer in the area and we decided to go to the meeting together for a few times so that she could introduce me to a few people. Well the first time I was really nervous. I hadn't been out to see people much recently and I didn't know how others would react to my being there. Also, I worried that people wouldn't be the right age. Sometimes I feel that I have nothing in common with people from the younger generation but those in my age group have many more health problems than I do. It's all they talk about sometimes!

But at the first meeting I recognised a few people and was happy to have Kay there with me. It took a few meetings before I felt ready to go on my own but I've met one woman who lost her husband too and we're now able to go to the meetings together. Next week we're planning to go to the travelling cinema that comes to the area once per week. I'm still seeing Kay regularly but with meeting new people I feel less anxious about leaving the house.

Kay: When Deloris first came to the service she had recently lost her husband. At the time that I met Deloris she was clinically depressed but seeking change in her life. Deloris has two daughters who live in London and Birmingham with their families. They visit on occasion and have expressed concern over Deloris' situation but are unfortunately unable to be involved on a daily or weekly basis.

Through our initial assessment and building a relationship of trust, I could tell that her depression stemmed very much from her loneliness and isolation. At aged 72 and living in a rural area, her husband and the couple friends they had together were her main source of social contact for many years. Although mobility was not an issue, she



has deteriorating sight and is therefore unable to drive. When Hugh passed she found it difficult to leave the house and connect with others. Because she was motivated to recover from the depression we initially worked on

exploring her interests (past and present) and setting achievable goals for getting out of the house and connecting with others. Aside from her inability to drive, she is still able to get out of the house. Together we decided to look for activities in the area that Deloris could get to on the bus, and set goals initially to leave the house twice per week. I was able to take her to some activities but wanted to be sure these were opportunities to meet new people so that she could continue getting involved without me.

How to contact us...

We hope you've enjoyed reading this newsletter. We welcome your questions and feedback about all aspects of the Connecting People Intervention Study (CPIS). If you are an agency involved in the piloting of the Connecting People Intervention and have a query for the research team or wish to comment on any of our study materials please email us at cpis@gmail.com

A member of our research team will respond to your email within one working day. **Thank you**



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

<http://connectingpeoplestudy.net>



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