Welcome to the fourth newsletter for the programme for Better Mental Health in Oxfordshire (BMHO). The aims of BMHO are to provide a setting for adults by 2012 in which:

- People can stay well
- When people become unwell they will get better quicker
- Services will deliver effective, timely and appropriate interventions

We have made a lot of progress in the programme so far and this is an important time, with many changes taking place in services that may affect you. This newsletter will update you on the key achievements and areas of change and will tell you where you can find out more.

Understanding the needs of people with Aspergers Syndrome

In November 2010 NHS Oxfordshire published a needs assessment which looked particularly at the needs of those with AS (we use the term AS to mean Asperger’s syndrome and other autistic spectrum conditions with no co-existing learning disability definition). This told us about the sorts of needs and the services to meet those needs that those with AS and their carers feel would make a real difference to them. We learned that some of the service gaps are seen as being in support in college and work, support with social activity and through the transition between services from children’s to adult services.

What you told us

A workshop was held in December attended by 69 people including a wide range of service providers, carers and those with AS to talk about the report. This gave us an opportunity to consider what we could do about the needs identified in the report, bearing in mind that funding is quite limited. One particular area explored was how the services that are already there can use the resources and skills they already have in place.

A questionnaire was sent out to all those who had joined the consultation on the Talking Health section of NHS Oxfordshire’s website and a discussion forum about the future governance of the work was started.

All these pieces of work have been brought together in a report which can be seen on Talking Health. From this we identified some key points. We would want to consider support and diagnosis services; training and the needs of families were also seen as important. There was support for a clear governance model to include carers and their families but it should be established in way that enables them to participate on equal terms.

What happens next?

A small amount of money has been identified for services this year and for the next 2 years. This year the money will be directed to the following service pilots:

- Launching an alert card for people with autism to carry with them
- Training for key staff across autism pathways, starting with GPs, housing providers, integrated youth services and Connexions
- Employment support to help people gain and retain work, and support employers

Further information on the Aspergers consultation can be seen at:

Keeping People Well - the new services

Keeping People Well is a programme to help people living with mental health problems stay well and manage their own care in the wider community. Following extensive consultation with service users, Carers, existing providers of day time services, clinicians and other key stakeholders NHS Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council have commissioned (bought) two new services:

- **A Recovery Service** which will provide a range of structured interventions to help people develop skills and confidence to live independently and make decisions around their own life. The recovery service will be provided by Restore in partnership with Bridewell Organic Gardens and Root and Branch.

- **A Well-being service** which will provide a range of services, information and advice to help people understand mental ill-health, identify what keeps them well and obtain practical support along a pathway to recovery. The Well-Being service will be provided by Oxfordshire Mind.

The new services will commence on 7 March 2011.

Maximising Recovery Interventions and Outcomes (MaRIO)

What is MaRIO?
Maximising Recovery Interventions and Outcomes (MaRIO) is a project that is mapping the care pathways within adult mental health services in a way that is more useful and can be easily understood and navigated by users of services, their families, carers and professionals.

These pathways will have a common format:
- identifying the problem(s)
- understanding the problem(s)
- agreeing a plan
- addressing needs
- describing and enabling and individual to move on

They will also support a more holistic approach to mental health, based on the clustering of a person's individual needs.

Engagement activity
A clinical workshop for relevant health professionals will take place on 8 February to examine these pathways. The public engagement activity will begin shortly afterwards and continue until the end of March.

The transition process
There is a process of transition that is being worked through at the moment by providers of the services, NHS Oxfordshire and OBMH to ensure support is in place for everyone that needs it.

All current users of day time services are being offered the chance of a referral into the Recovery service. **If you would like a place in the Recovery Service you need to talk to your current provider of services now** so that they can complete a referral form with you.

The Well-being service will be available by self-referral. More details on what this service will look like and how to access it will be published later in February.

More information and updates are available in the Keeping People Well newsletter. To get a copy please contact:
[mailto:talking.health@oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk](mailto:talking.health@oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk)

What happens next?
Following the engagement activity, the agreed care pathways will be included within the contracts which the Commissioners hold with the Mental Health Trust. They will also be included in the 'pathway specifications' which give more detail on exactly what services should be made available to those that need it in Oxfordshire.
What is From Supported to Independent Living?
From Supported to Independent Living (SIL) is a strategy for NHS Oxfordshire and the County Council aimed at ensuring that people with mental health difficulties have the right housing and proper support to achieve independent living in the community. Part of this strategy is the purchasing of a range of mental health housing and support services which will help individuals develop the skills and resources that make recovery from mental ill health and ordinary living possible.

What has happened so far?
In a difficult financial climate, we have managed to buy more places of support than we had previously (from 450 to over 500 places).

We have continued to invest in accommodation based services which will focus on supporting people with higher support needs.

There will now also be a greater emphasis on flexible floating support in which support is not tied to a particular tenancy and can 'move' with the individual if they move.

All these services will work together as a pathway with the focus on helping people to develop the skills to live independently in the community.

New services will start on 7 March 2011.

How will this change affect service users of current mental health housing and support services?
For the great majority of service users we anticipate that there will be no change in either the location or overall type of support they currently receive. At this stage, we expect that 15 out of over 400 service users will need to move prior to start of new services. These service users, their care teams and the current providers of the service they receive have all been informed and considerable work is being done which will ensure they continue to be properly supported and accommodated during the transfer of services.

How can I find out more?
For further information about Supported to Independent Living, including a diagram of the SIL pathway, visit:


Older Peoples’ Mental Health

The consultation
A consultation on the draft strategy for Older Peoples’ Mental Health took place from September to November 2010. The strategy is designed to provide direction for the future of mental health services for older people until 2015. It looks at holistic, person-centred care services which address mental as well as physical health needs to deliver non-discriminatory mental health and care on the basis of need, not age.

What you told us
The consultation report and recommendations for the final version of the older people's mental health strategy and associated action plan can be seen at the following link:


The key themes and recommendation that were identified in the consultation included:

- Financial concerns
- The need for more training for staff working with older people
- Importance of social/group activities
- Improve the awareness of support available for older people’s mental health
- Greater support for carers
- Concerns regarding access and isolation of older people
- More preventative activities

These issues have been taken forward and included in the final strategy. This is now available at:

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)

Following a counselling service review and stakeholder feedback in 2010, counselling services for Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) are currently being re-commissioned to keep practice based counselling at GP surgeries. The full consultation report and recommendations can be seen here [https://consult.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/consult.ti/IAPT/consultationHome](https://consult.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/consult.ti/IAPT/consultationHome)

New services are currently being procured (purchased), with the new provider(s) anticipated to be awarded the contract by 28 February 2011 with a planned start date of April.

TalkingSpace (the current provider of IAPT services in primary care for people with mild to moderate depression and anxiety) are also continuing to make improvements to access.

- TalkingSpace has introduced self referral and people can join an introductory workshops to help them understand what Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) does and then move to assessment if appropriate. These run 3 times a month and are working well
- Anyone waiting over 3 months is being contacted to see if their requirements remain the same and alternative signposting arranged if not
- TalkingSpace has improved communication with GP practices including regular meetings, a newsletter for primary care and are nearing completion of their website
- TalkingSpace is accessible to Carers as part of the general population and all information is distributed to carers organisations for information


Central government has also now confirmed roll out of IAPT to include children and young people, older people, people with severe mental illness, and people with long term (physical) conditions. This is also to include an expanding range of therapies to improve choice, experience and outcomes.

**Key Dates - 2011**

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<td>18 February</td>
<td>Public engagement activity on MaRIO begins, looking at the creation of clearer care pathways in mental health</td>
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<td>7 March</td>
<td>Start date for new day services and housing services for mental health (through Keeping People Well and Supported to Independent Living)</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>New services start for Primary Care counselling services (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies)</td>
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**How we will know we’re on track**

We will continue to gather and use feedback from people on what makes a difference.

**To get involved or to find out more, contact:**

Email: talking.health@oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk  
Web: www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk  
Phone: 01865 334626