



Mental Health Action Group

Update for HWB Steering Group – 11th April 2024

Current Activity

The Mental Health Action Group has not met since the last meeting of the Steering Group. Its meeting scheduled for 14th March had to be postponed because of a large number of apologies due to other work commitments and sickness.

Some work has been continuing in the meantime, including the following:

- There has been further work on setting up a Mental Health Forum bringing together a wider range of voluntary sector organisations, service users and mental health service providers to regularly share information and raise issues to feed into the Mental Health Action Group. This would, to some degree, take the place of the previous 'Thinking Together' events which were larger but with the same range of members. To ensure the new Forum is equally accessible and open to all, a meeting was held with professionals and service users to co-design it. Details of structure, process etc. are being finalised and it is hoped to have the first meeting later in the year.
- There has been further work on investigating bereavement as one of the 'transitions across the life course' that the delivery plan seeks to address. This has included consideration of remit and arrangements for an initial meeting of interested parties.
- Various members of the MHAG have continued to be represented on the Steering Group for setting up the Mental Health Integrated Community Service (MHICS) in West Berkshire. The service went live at the end of January and has gradually been increasing the number of people it has been able to see. When it is fully staffed, it will be able to receive referrals from a wider range of sources.
- We have also started to investigate what support is, and could be made, available for people with mental health challenges (or other problems) to deal with officialdom, such as filling in forms or dealing with utilities and other service providers.

Future Actions

- Further work is going to establish the Mental Health Forum.
- A meeting is being planned to investigate what, if any, additional help is needed for people suffering bereavement, where the normal emotional response spills over into mental health difficulties.
- We continue to monitor and support the establishment of the Mental Health Integrated Community Service.
- We will continue to investigate what support could be available for people dealing with officialdom.
- We hope to make contact with others doing work on digital inclusion, with a view to providing mutual learning and support.
- MHAG will be supporting national mental health campaigns including dying matters week and mental health awareness week.