

#PeerTalk

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Got news?

#PeerTalk is the monthly newsletter for the Kensington and Chelsea, Queen's Park and Paddington area.

We aim to keep you up to date with what's going on in our Peer Support Network, peer support locally and nationally, and to inform you of any peer support related opportunities.

If you have any news, are aware of any peer support events or opportunities, or have some peer support related opportunities or events coming up within your organisation, please let us know – we would be pleased to include them!

Promote your peer support work, opportunities and events through our newsletter – get in touch!

Elefriends in your pocket

Elefriends ~ Mind's online peer support community ~ is now available in your pocket!

You can download the free Elefriends app by searching 'Elefriends' in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

Give and get help on the go with the Elefriends mobile app



The app is available on Android smartphones and tablets, as well as iPhones and iPads.

Using the app, you have Elefriends in your pocket wherever you are, so you can give and get help on the go.

The app enables you to post to the wall, private message your friends and share pictures straight from your phone. There is also a PIN code feature so that your app is secure and accessible only to you.

Come join the herd and download it today



Are you a Peer Worker?

We recognise the value peer workers find in coming together for mutual support, and so have set up a Peer Worker Network.

If you are a peer worker **currently working in Kensington and Chelsea and/or Queen's Park / Paddington** you can join our monthly Peer Worker Network meetings to meet other peer workers working in the area.

This will be a time where peer workers can come together to share experiences, celebrate successes, address challenges, problem solve and build a collective identity.

Meetings will last an hour and a half and will be facilitated by Zoe Copeland (*K&C Mind*) and Karen Nelson (*CNWL*)

The next meeting will take place on **Tuesday 5th April** from 2 – 3.30pm, with subsequent meetings at the same time on the first Tuesday of the month. Please contact zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk to register your place.

“The value of bringing all peer workers together for group supervision and mutual support cannot be over-estimated... As a group they gain strength and solidarity, they can support each other effectively and solve problems together.”

ImROC ~ Peer Support Workers – a practical guide to implementation

Workshops and Training

Our cohort of Peer Support trainees finished the final session of the course in February.

All seven trainees have now received their certificates and we wish them well in their pursuit of further peer support.

“Good to share experiences”

“Confidence builder, useful for developing communication skills and utilising previous experience”

Feedback from trainees on our Peer Support Training course

We will soon be looking to run workshop for managers / supervisors of peer workers, peer projects or prospective peer projects. Please let us know if there are any topics you would find useful. Suggestions so far are:

- Supervising and supporting peer workers
- Recruiting peer workers

There has been continued interest in the Peer Support Training ~ for individuals with personal experience of mental health / emotional difficulties who are interested in using these experiences to help others.

This training will run again; if you are interested in attending this course, please email zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk to be placed on the waiting list.

Open Dialogue Conference

Tuesday 2nd February 2016 saw the annual Open Dialogue Conference, held in Euston, London.

The morning opened with presentations about the Open Dialogue approach to treating psychosis, whereby the family/community is treated together, along the principles of 'nothing about me without me.'

"To know what your suffering is and how to use it in the healing of yourself and other people is a profound thing."

~ Jacqui Dillon
at Open Dialogue UK Conference 2016

The event took the form of presentations, panellists' reflections and questions from the audience. Peer support was a theme throughout the day, as many panel members acknowledged and drew from their 'lived experience.'

There was a presentation on the Open dialogue training, which requires trainees to look at themselves and their 'family of origin,' which is not a required form of reflection for staffing disciplines such as nursing and psychiatry. Amongst many other aspects, the training examines the internal dialogues we all have, and the 'therapeutic use of self,' which has obvious overlaps with peer working.

Nottingham Health Trust has allowed peer workers to train in Open Dialogue based on their 'lived experience' rather than medical or care professional background.

The afternoon focused on peer support. We heard from the Parachute Project in New York, who support individuals experiencing psychiatric crisis using the Open Dialogue approach and peer support. They meet in people's homes and work with the person to form a 'network' to include people of their choosing, such as family, friends and vocational staff. These network meetings then take place where the person is, including if they are in hospital.

However, it has not been without its challenges... in branching out into Boston, they found a challenge both in Open Dialogue not being seen as a credentialed approach as well as being greeted by the idea that the use of Peer Specialists undermined the hospital's treatment programmes. Find out more about Parachute [here](#).

The 2nd Annual Conference on Peer-Supported Open Dialogue will be held in London on 25th April 2016, hosted by North East London NHS Foundation Trust and the Academy of Peer-Supported Open Dialogue. See [here](#) for more information.

"What we've been able to develop is to challenge each other and open the membrane of how we relate to others and the world around us. When we're in someone's living room and they don't know what's going on, we take a deep breath and start from that 'we don't know' place."

~ Leslie Nelson
at Open Dialogue UK Conference 2016

Found peer support useful?

...then why not turn your experience into a story for Mind to share?

The Side by Side programme has several aims, including to raise the profile of peer support and to demonstrate the impact and benefits of peer support. We also want to be able to tell the Big Lottery Fund how their support has made a difference.

A great way for us to do that is by using local stories of real people ~ like you!

Questions to consider for your story

- Which project are you involved in and where?
- What brought you to the project and how did you get involved?
- What were you worried about before you got involved?
- Did anything make it difficult for you to get involved?
- How has being involved in the project been important to you?
- Has it made a difference? How can you tell?
- What have you got out of the project?
- What will you do next?

If you have accessed peer support and would like to consider sharing your story to help spread the word, get in touch!

Contact zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk for guidance through the process.

BME researcher

The Side by Side project is recruiting a BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) researcher to support and advise programme partners on engaging participants whose first language is not English to complete the evaluation.

“Communication is critical in mental health treatment and support, and when there is a language difference it is particularly important to address this.”

BME Commissioning Excellence
Briefing – National Mind

The creation of this post will ensure inclusivity in the programme and its research. This is particularly important as one of the Side by Side programme aims is to ensure peer support is accessible to those from BME and rural communities.

The post is 4 days per week and based in Leeds and hosted by Leeds Mind, working 3 days for Leeds Mind and the other day in other hub areas.

The advertised vacancy closes at the beginning of March, so we look forward to updating you on progress as it unfolds.

“Peer support initiatives should be developed in ways that mean people from BME communities can participate and benefit.”

BME Commissioning Excellence Briefing –
National Mind

Spotlight on young people

The term 'young people' usually refers to individuals between 14 - 25 years old, although definitions vary.

There are many factors in society today which contribute to mental health challenges for young people as they grow up. This includes family breakdown, media pressures, 24 hour social networking, bullying, sexualisation and body image in the media, drugs, violence and crime, and the changing education system.

It is important that young people are able to manage their mental wellbeing and resilience in order to develop into healthy and resilient adults. Mental health difficulties can affect anyone at any time, so it is also important that young people are aware of mental health and sources of support they can access if they need it.

Peer Support is becoming increasingly recognised in schools, and already exists in many areas around specific topics such as bullying and buddies for children starting secondary schools.

There is a move however, to recognise the value of peer support specifically around mental health difficulties - you will have seen in our February issue how important peer support was found to be for LGBT young people ([Queer Futures](#) research), and now even the government is recognising its value too!

This issue we will look at examples of peer support for young people.

Education ~The Department for Education has recognised the value of peer support as they have listened to young people's requests for both more peer support for mental wellbeing, and help in providing it effectively.

The Department of Education want to find out...

- [what works in peer support for children and young people's mental wellbeing](#)
- [the approaches that are currently available](#)
- [how things might be improved](#)

As a result, the DfE has launched a call for evidence to find out more. They are keen to hear from young people and anyone who works with young people with an interest in their health and wellbeing.

Find out more, including the link to their online survey [here](#) and the government press release [here](#).



The Voice Collective ~ Run by Mind in Camden, The Voice Collective is a London-wide peer support project for children and young people who hear, see or sense things other people don't.

A variety of support is offered, including peer support and online support for children and young people, but also peer support for parents, families and carers to share experiences and get new ideas. Find out more on their [website](#).



The Project ~ Devon based peer support network, The Project is based in Axminster and works to support young people aged between 13 – 24 with mental health issues.

Peer support groups meet fortnightly in the evening and are split into age categories; 13-18s and 18-24s. The focus is on prevention and early intervention.

“Our aim is to provide young people with a range of information and tools which they can use to manage their symptoms and improve their emotional resilience.”

The Project

The Project exists to support young people who do not satisfy the criteria to receive help from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), adult mental health services or other services. It can also provide additional support to those under a mental health team or in transition from CAMHS to adult services.

Groups are facilitated by a Group Worker and Mental Health Support Worker, and are assisted by a team of trained volunteers who either have personal experience of mental health difficulties or have relevant qualifications. Find out more about The Project on their [website](#).

Students ~ The average age of higher education students overlaps with the most common age that people first experience mental health difficulties. In one year, a quarter of students experience psychological distress

Student Minds is a UK charity for student mental health who believe in informal, student-led support. They train up student volunteers to become facilitators of peer support groups.

The peer support programmes on offer are for university students over the age of 18 experiencing mild depression and eating difficulties. There is also a two-part workshop for those supporting friends and family with eating difficulties.

“That is the point of a support group: we are constantly bringing together people who understand. People who know what you are talking about without it having to be spelled out. We know that it can be difficult to talk, but in a group setting everyone is in the same boat.” ~ Student Minds

Student Minds exist in over 30 universities across the UK. Their current work at London universities include Kings College London, Queen Mary, St George's, UCL and Westminster. Find out more [here](#).

Are you involved in peer support for young people? Let us know what's out there!

Are you a young person who uses or wants to use peer support? Let us know what you think, or what you want to see! Tweet us [@KandCMind](#)

Peer Support News

Peer Mentors recruited ~ Free Your Mind is a Child Domestic Violence and Mental Health support and awareness service. They are now recruiting peer mentors in London with experience of childhood domestic violence. See [here](#) for more details and to apply.

Peer Support for older people ~ The Living Well Service is a CNWL community service for older people in Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster with mental health difficulties, including dementia. The great news is that peer support is now an aspect of the multi-disciplinary team working within the service. Find out more [here](#).

Free training resources ~ The Scottish Recovery Network (SRN) has produced a new, free peer support training resource called Peer2Peer.

Peer2Peer was developed as part of a European Union funded partnership project to train people with personal experience of mental health difficulties to support others.

Watch a video on Peer2Peer [here](#) and find out more and download the training manual [here](#).

Peer support for students ~ The charity Student Minds is currently offering Peer Support Training to students to become volunteer facilitators for its peer support programmes at Anglia Ruskin, Bath, Bournemouth Arts, Derby and Oxford universities. Find out more [here](#).

Don't forget...

Peer Directory

We are compiling a directory of peer support services and organisations available in the local area.

Make sure you're included – contact us to fill out the basic details to be added to the directory.

Peer Bank

The Peer Bank is a list of details held of individuals interested in working in peer support locally – paid or voluntary. The form is [here](#).

This list will be made available on request to local organisations looking to recruit peer workers.

Tweet all about it...

Help us raise the profile of peer support nationally via Twitter...

#SidebySide for the national programme, **#K&CPeerTalk** for our local project, and of course

#PeerSupport. Follow us [@KandCMind](#)



Mind is focusing on sharing people's experiences of peer support and helping to promote the different kinds of peer support involved in the Side by Side programme.

Would you like to share your experience of receiving peer support? Get in touch!

Dates for the diary...

What is it?	Who is it for?	When is it?	Where is it?	How do I register?
Peer Worker Network Meeting	Peer Workers (paid or voluntary) in K&C and/or QPP	Tuesday 5 th April 2 – 3.30pm	K&C Mind Meeting Room	Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk
Recruiting & Employing Peer Workers	Managers of local organisations (K&C / QPP)	Wednesday 13 th April 2.30 – 4pm	K&C Mind Meeting Room	Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk Register before 6 th April
Supporting Peer Workers in the Workplace	Local managers / supervisors of peer workers (K&C / QPP)	Wednesday 27 th April 2.30 – 4pm	K&C Mind Meeting Room	Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk Register before 6 th April
Peer Supported Open Dialogue Conference	People interested in finding out about Peer Supported Open Dialogue and how this has been used and experienced so far	25 th April 10am – 6pm	Bloomsbury, London	With organisers - North East London Foundation Trust & Academy of Peer-Supported Open Dialogue Eventbrite link here .
Peer Support Training	Individuals with personal experience of mental health / emotional difficulties	4 week course Thursdays 7 th – 28 th April 10am – 1pm	K&C Mind Meeting Room	Email zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk To be placed on the waiting list



Improving mental health through peer support

