

# #PeerTalk

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## Peer Fusion: Save the date!

The exciting news we've been looking forward to unveiling... to mark the end of the 2 year project, Peer Fusion will be taking place on Monday 23rd January.

We anticipate plenty of room for everyone, so put the date in your diaries now! The focus of the event will be peer support, with plenty of opportunity to network.

Peer Fusion will be open to anyone with an interest in peer support, from service users and carers, peer support workers, mental health staff, managers and organisations, and anyone else! Further details soon...

## Seminar for health staff

On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October we will be holding a short Peer Support information seminar for health and social care staff ~ save the date!

The event will be open to all health and social care staff in the wider local community (Kensington and Chelsea and/or Queen's Park and Paddington) who want to find out more about peer support to boost their confidence and understanding to better guide the people they work with.

During the event there will be opportunity for local service users, peer workers and projects to speak about peer support and the services they run / work for / have accessed.

If you would like to showcase your experience or promote your service on the day, contact [Zoe](#).

Further details of the event will appear in the next newsletter and will be circulated throughout the Peer Support Network. To register your attendance at the event and receive further details directly, contact [Zoe](#).



## Peer Bank

Kensington and Chelsea Mind hold a Peer Bank. This is a folder we hold, of basic information about individual peer workers.

The peer workers on the bank are interested in paid and/or voluntary work, full and/or part time work and in various aspects of peer work.

Organisations are welcome to contact us for access to the Peer Bank, which they can shortlist from and make contact with individuals as part of their own recruitment procedures. We will also use this ourselves as opportunities arise.

Until now, the peer bank was open to all individuals with personal experience of mental health difficulties interested in peer work.

As we now have a lot of interest in peer support and our Peer Support Network is growing, we want to ensure consistency.

To achieve this, we have decided to set a new requirement for joining the Peer Bank, which is to have attended either our internal Peer Support Training, or an accredited peer support training course.

Our next Peer Support Training course is running this month and currently has spaces – please contact [Zoe](#) to find out if there is space for you.

The course will run again in the winter – check the newsletter for updates or contact [Zoe](#) to be put on the waiting list.

## Peerfest 2016

Peerfest will be on Thursday 13th October 2016. Organisation of the event is underway; if you are interested in:

- Running a workshop
- Holding a stall
- Offering a wellbeing activity
- Being a keynote speaker
- Volunteering as a steward
- Delivering a presentation
- Contributing artwork
- Performing in the evening

then contact the Peerfest team via their [website](#).



Ticket bookings will be open from the beginning of September.



Click [here](#) for the Peerfest website, to subscribe to their mailing list and keep up to date.

**'Brilliant to meet so many amazing people/projects and share ideas. My enthusiasm and ideas have been refuelled.'**

*Attendee, Peerfest 2015*

## Peer Perspective

August saw our 4<sup>th</sup> cohort of Peer Support trainees receive their certificates. With 7 new certificates, our total has now reached 23 trained prospective peer workers.

During the course, trainees considered different aspects of the role...

When considering starting out in peer support, the following were identified as what the trainees were looking forward to and apprehensive about:

ImROC (Implementing Recovery through Organisational Change) are an organisation working directly with the NHS nationally to ensure mental health services are becoming more recovery-focused.

ImROC have been involved in peer support design, training and implementation across NHS trusts and have created [Briefing Papers](#) as guidance. These papers substantiate the importance of training peer workers, providing ongoing training opportunities for peer workers and of training staff teams in peer support prior to implementation.

### Looking forward to:

- Sharing own experiences
- Inspiring people
- Giving hope
- Being back in paid employment
- Being valued
- Proving people wrong (about limitations)
- Developing new friends
- Developing new working relationships
- More structure

### Apprehensive about:

- Being able to get up in the morning
- Going back onto a ward
- Return of symptoms
- Bringing back memories
- Travelling in alone
- Fear of flashbacks
- Sharing own experiences
- Bumping into staff/patients known during admission
- Becoming unwell
- Conversations about own mental health with manager

This underlines the importance of both training for peer workers as well as staff teams.

Have you had peer workers start in your team recently? Did their induction cover the points raised in the apprehensions above? Has your staff team had training on peer support, how peer workers fit within your organisation and what to expect of a peer worker?

Theory and peer workers concur...

**'...we believe that peers – properly selected, trained and supported – can improve the quality of services at no extra cost, possibly even with cost reductions.'**

*'ImROC Briefing Paper 5 ~ Peer Support Workers: Theory and practice*

## Spotlight on homelessness

Homelessness doesn't only refer to people living on the streets; it includes people who have no place of their own to live. They may be staying with friends, sofa surfing, sleeping in hostels or in emergency accommodation.

In addition to the practical problems of housing, people who are homeless face specific difficulties and barriers. Some of these include:  
*(statistics from Health Needs Audit by Homeless Link)*

18% homeless people refused registration with doctor / dentist

**Stigma & discrimination** ~ People who are homeless experience the stigma associated with homelessness, and are often discriminated against on the basis of these misconceptions. Homeless people often experience different difficulties simultaneously, which can exacerbating each other and lead to multiple discrimination. This discrimination can come from society as well as institutions, for example health care services and the police.

**Physical health problems** ~ A significant number of homeless people are not registered with a GP or dentist. This would make seeking help with a healthcare issue difficult, and there is a higher incidence of A&E use by homeless people.

Almost 80% of homeless people report a physical health problem, the most common being muscular-skeletal problems, followed by

dental, then chest/breathing problems. A large proportion of homeless people smoke, and/or use drugs and alcohol, all of which are known to negatively impact health.

- 78% homeless people smoke
- 78% homeless people report a physical health problem
- 44% homeless people report long term physical health problem

**Mental health problems** ~ The main reported and diagnosed mental health problem amongst homeless people is depression, which has an incidence of over 4 times that of the general population.

- 85% homeless people report a mental health problem
- 44% homeless people have been diagnosed with a mental health problem

**Loss** ~ Some people become homeless because they have experienced significant loss; their house, job or relationship. Others experience loss due to becoming homeless.

- 24% rough sleepers are not registered with a GP
- 72% rough sleepers not registered with dentist
- 38% homeless people used A&E within the last 6 months
- 82% homeless people used GP within last 6 months

**'I mean the older [police officers], some of them are okay. Yeah, they know, do you know what I mean? But the young ones, they can cause you so much hassle at night, they treat you like dirt 'cause you're on the street anyway, you know, they treat you like \*\*\*\*, they really do.'**

*Living in Fear, Crisis*

**Substance use** ~ The use of drugs and alcohol is higher amongst homeless people than the general population, and are a more common cause of death; 22 times more common than the general population. Substance use can be a barrier to finding and maintaining accommodation.

- 64% homeless people receiving support for alcohol use
- 58% homeless people receiving support for drug use
- 21.7% deaths of homeless people are due to drugs

**Money problems** ~ To find the money, for example for a night's accommodation, some homeless people end up begging, working in the sex trade, are in undesired relationships or commit crime to spend the night in custody.

**'Drugs and alcohol are known to be both a cause and consequence of homelessness.'**

*Homelessness: A silent killer, Crisis*

**Crime** ~ Due to their difficult lifestyle, sometimes homeless people are caught committing crimes, which they resort to due to the limitations of their situation or in their search of a roof for the night. However, homeless people are vulnerable and often victims of crime, particularly violent crime.

- 25% homeless people have been in prison
- 52% homeless people experienced violence in the last year (*Living in Fear, Crisis*)

### **The benefits**

Peer support for homeless people can be beneficial as it means being supported by someone who has also faced multiple disadvantage and similar struggles.

Peer support acknowledges the person's situation and background without judgement; the peer worker is unlikely to be shocked that the person may have used substances or been involved with the criminal justice system. It can be a means to reduce social isolation in a way that is accessible and helpful to the person. The transition from being homeless to being housed and the changes and expectations this entails can be overwhelming.

**'I suppose you feel vulnerable unless you've got your own sort of like house, flat, bed-sit, whatever thing. You always feel vulnerable no matter where you are because you never know what's round the corner'**

*Living in Fear, Crisis*

Sources of peer support for homeless people...



**Brentreach** ~ is a service of the London-wide charity, [Thamesreach](#). It is a homelessness prevention service open to all residents of Brent. Brent shares some postcodes with Queen's Park and Paddington and Brentreach secured a grant through the Side by Side project to establish a team of peer mentors to support vulnerable people.



**Groundswell** ~ provides a peer advocacy service, offering 1:1 support to overcome barriers to addressing health needs. Support is delivered by Peer Advocates who have experienced homelessness themselves. [The TB Project](#) also provides Peer Educators to raise awareness and promote screening for tuberculosis.



**St Mungo's** ~ have a Peer Advice Link available to those leaving its hostels by internal referral only. The service is staffed by volunteers who have experience of using and moving on from services. Peer support and advice aims to help integrate people into their communities and build support networks.

## BME Peer Support Meeting

Back in May, we held a meeting for organisations providing peer support to people from BME communities.

This request was made as organisations providing peer support to BME communities face particular barriers, such as culture and language.

The organisations who met found it helpful to exchange information with each other and find out how different organisations approach peer support differently.

At the meeting it was agreed we would meet on a quarterly basis for the remainder of the project, which brings us to September.

The next BME Peer Support Meeting is scheduled for the morning of Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September. If your organisation or project is providing peer support for people from BME communities and would like to attend, please contact Zoe to reserve your space on 0208 964 1333 option 8 or [zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk](mailto:zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk)

**'Homeless people feel judged, that causes a lot of anxiety. A Peer Advocate can help, having someone by your side who won't judge you, someone who has been there as well'**

*Peer Advocate for Groundswell*

## CPD Opportunities

Training / event	Date	Location	Content	Cost
<a href="#">Mental Health First Aid Lite</a>	Wednesday 19th October Wednesday 7th December Wednesday 18th January Wednesday 15th February	Kensington and Chelsea Mind	Three hour introductory mental health awareness course	Free for those living and/or working in Kensington and Chelsea
<a href="#">Essential Knowledge of Psychopharmacology</a>	Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> September	Liverpool Street	A workshop for psychologists and other mental health professionals to develop and update knowledge.	£20
<a href="#">Mental Health in the Community – Training for self-help groups</a>	Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> September	Wandsworth	Aimed at self-help group members and peer facilitators. Covers depression, anxiety, suicide, self-care, resilience, sign posting.	Free
<a href="#">Mental Health Matters</a>	Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> October	Embankment	Focus on children and young people. Key speakers: Sarah Brennan (Young Minds), Lord Victor Adebawale (Turning Point), Jonny Benjamin (activist)	Free
<a href="#">HEALING Voices Movie</a>	Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> October	Bloomsbury	Premier screening and audience discussion	From £9.50
<a href="#">Voices Unlocked Conference</a>	Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> November	Blackfriars	How forensic services can support people who hear voices, see visions and experience mental distress	From £10

Other websites to check regularly for mental health / peer support training and events include:

[Young Minds](#) [Time to Change](#) [Eventbrite](#) [NSUN](#) (National Survivor User Network)

## Peer Project: The Butterfly Project

The butterfly project is a community based support group run by survivors for survivors of domestic Abuse.

The survivors support each other focusing on creative group led activities helping to build on awareness of domestic abuse.

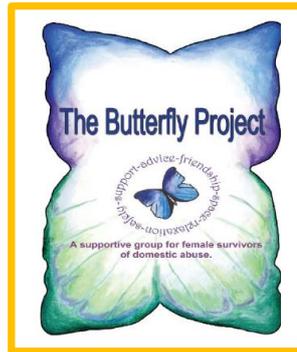
By focusing on creativity and group-led activities, this enables the survivors to look forwards and develop themselves while being able to relax, have fun and make new friends.

The Butterfly Project is open to anyone who has or is currently experiencing domestic abuse. Separate groups run in each of the tri-boroughs.

For further details and to refer yourself or someone else, contact [angeloureferral@hestia.org](mailto:angeloureferral@hestia.org) or your local Butterfly facilitator ~ Kensington and Chelsea on 0780 093 8851, Westminster on 07964 121 967, or Hammersmith and Fulham on 0780 092 3894.

**'Since coming to the refuge I attend the butterfly project. I find it very helpful and doing different activities each time helps me to take my mind off my problems.'**

*Member of The Butterfly Project*



## Peer Support News



**Free Your Mind video** ~ In their new [video](#), Simone, peer support worker for the domestic violence charity Free Your Mind, talks about her experience of her role; what she does and why.



**Elefriends video** ~ '[Stories from the herd: Finding local support](#)' is narrated by the Elefriends themselves, and looks at real people's experiences who have started to find offline peer support in their own communities.

**Peer support booklet** ~ National Mind's information resource, Making Sense of Peer Support, is now available as a printed booklet. You will be able to download this for free or order copies in the Mind [shop](#) in the next couple of weeks.

**'Things I was ashamed of and felt guilt for were common in the group. It was a profound and powerful experience.'**

*Making Sense of Peer Support*

## 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	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> September 10 – 11.30am  Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2.30 – 4.30pm	Kensington and Chelsea Mind	Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk
Peer Support Training	Individuals with personal experience of mental health difficulties	Thursdays 8 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> September	Kensington and Chelsea Mind	Email Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk
Peer Support Network Meeting	Local organisations offering/wanting to offer peer support (K&C / QPP)	Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> September 10 – 11.30am	Kensington and Chelsea Mind	Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk
BME Peer Support Meeting	Local organisations providing peer support to BME communities	Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> September 10 – 11.30am	Kensington and Chelsea Mind	Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk
Seminar for Health Professionals	Health professionals working locally (K&C / QPP)	Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> October	St Charles Centre for Wellbeing	Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk
Peerfest16	People with lived experience of mental health difficulties	13 <sup>th</sup> October	Rich Mix Shoreditch London	<a href="#">Official website</a>
Peer Fusion	All local people / workers interested in Peer Support	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2017	TBC	Expressions of interest to Zoe.copeland@kcmind.org.uk



Improving mental health through peer support

