Case study: Calderdale & Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust

Using personalised postcards to invite people to reunions

The challenge

Although we wanted to run re-union meetings every three months to support people who had completed the patient skills programme, there was no clear process for arranging these. Sometimes they did not take place, and, when they did take place, the content varied depending on which tutor from the programme was facilitating.

What we did

We had a meeting with both clinical and lay tutors to share ideas about how the reunions could be made to work better. At the meeting the tutors worked together to design a standard process to ensure that reunions were offered to all participants graduating from our courses.

To encourage people to attend and to support them to follow up the health goals they have set themselves, at the last session of the Patient Skills Programme we get participants to write their goals on a postcard, which they then hand in to the tutor. When we advertise the reunion, we send their postcard back to them two to three weeks before the meeting as reminder.

We have tested the postcards and got feedback from participants on how well it works for them as a reminder about the reunion date and their goals.

Learning

–   Three things have helped to make the postcards a success:

    –   committed and enthusiastic Clinical and Lay Tutor Team who have given up their time to focus on supporting our self management support work and the principles of agenda setting, goal setting and goal follow-up

    –   project Office support - recently set regular Tutor meetings in place to support sharing of ideas, best practice with a view to create a standard operating procedure for all sessions for Pain and COPD

    –   strong team working ethos shared by clinical and lay tutors.

–   Good ideas for embedding and sustaining change come from the whole team working together and sharing ideas.

–   A space for this needs to be created for this – i.e. a meeting space with everyone around the table and away from their usual pressured/busy environments.

–   A standard operating procedure supports processes and is necessary to sustain the principles and practices of self management support– such as ensuring the reunions are arranged and that all participants are supported in their self management journey in the same way.