



HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 14TH MAY 2013

SUBJECT: VOLUNTEER SCHEME

REPORT BY: ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information to members on the volunteer scheme previously known as befriender service, following a request received at a previous scrutiny committee.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Learning Disability Services currently operates a Volunteer Befriending Service as part of their Community Support Services. This has been in place for over 25 years there are 46 service users matched to a Befriender with a further 30 service users on the waiting list. The aim of the scheme is to provide service users with opportunities to establish and maintain friendships, socialise and access community based activities and services. This is achieved by 'matching' volunteers with service users, who will help them take part in activities of interest to them. Volunteers are also placed within our Establishments and help run social clubs within the community.
- 2.2 In November 2011 members of Adult Services DMT agreed to implement a pilot scheme to provide service users known to the Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment (PDSI) Team with opportunities to access the Volunteer Befriender Service.
- 2.3 This report sets out the financial savings achieved, costs avoided and outcomes achieved for service users from the pilot.
- 2.4 The review of management structure for Day Services for Older People, which was agreed at Scrutiny in March, established a post for the Volunteer Befriender Service.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Health Social Care & Well-being Strategy
- 3.2 Fulfilled Lives Supportive Communities – 2007
- 3.3 Sustainable Social Services for Wales – Framework for Action – 2011
- 3.4 Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Bill
- 3.5 Medium Term Financial Plan

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The service was established over 25 years ago as an outcome of the All Wales Strategy For People With a Learning Disability and until recently, has been known as the Volunteer Befriender Service. The service is offered to those service users known to the Learning Disability Team, whereby an assessment is carried out by a care manager who then identifies the needs of the individual within their care plan and determines if the person is eligible to receive a service. A suitable volunteer is 'matched' with the service user, who will support them take part in activities of interest to them within their local community.
- 4.2 For a number of years the service has been extremely successful at recruiting volunteers from a broad spectrum of the community and to date the service has a total of 75 volunteers, many of which continue to be long serving. No previous experience is needed to become a volunteer, although a robust recruitment process and relevant checks are undertaken and regular contact and supervision maintained. As a direct result of volunteering, many have also been successful in gaining employment or enhancing their further educational placements. The service has proven very successful in 'matching' volunteers to service users that have encouraged natural friendships and support mechanisms to be developed, which is greatly valued by service users and their families. It is also pleasing to note that service users themselves have also become volunteers.
- 4.3 In addition to 'matching' service users to volunteers, the service has also developed Social Clubs within the Risca and Rhymney area, with Risca recently celebrating its 10th anniversary. The Social Clubs are run by the volunteers and provide an opportunity for those service users with a Learning Disability to interact in social activities within their own community on a regular weekly basis. Volunteers have also been successfully placed within our residential and day care establishments.
- 4.4 The pilot commenced in PDSI in January 2012, this was initially for a 3 month period with the aim of matching up to 8 service users, this was realised and savings made at this time were reinvested to extend the pilot which has funding until June 2013. Throughout the duration of the pilot, 22 service users known to the PDSI Team have been successfully matched with existing suitable volunteers, based upon their interests and geographical areas. There are also a total of 24 service users currently on the referral waiting list.
- 4.5 In addition to the 22 service users matched, three young ladies have also been supported to form a social/friendship group. A suitable volunteer has been supporting the group, which has proved successful with natural friendships being formed and the ladies feeling confident enough to regularly contact each other and meet up without the support of the volunteer. Due to this positive outcome, discussions are now ongoing with other service users who have expressed an interest in being part of a social/friendship group and opportunities to access community resources.
- 4.6 There is a second group that has been formed that is supported by a volunteer who is actually a service user in their own right who wished to expand their own social circle and support others.
- 4.7 We have received feedback from the service users that took part in the pilot, (captured and recorded during the 12 week review of their service). This feedback has evidenced a positive impact on the confidence, wellbeing and ability of these service users to access the community and individuals say that they feel more involved in their local community and less isolated as a result of their volunteer. It has further been evidenced that it enables people to make use of community and council resources that they previously were unable to access Carers and family members have also reported positive changes. (See attached Appendix 3).
- 4.8 The Volunteer befriender Service is also being developed as part of Day Services for Older People. To date 2 'matches' have been made and a total of 13 service users are on the referrals waiting list, which based on current figures, could also realise further savings of

approx £23,378 (see Appendix 2).

5. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 An equalities impact assessment hasn't been completed at this time.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Throughout the pilot data has been captured in respect of the financial savings made due to:-

- Volunteer Service offered instead of paid/commissioned services
- Commissioned services being reduced due to Volunteer Service
- Commissioned services replaced with the Volunteer Service

6.2 As at March 2013, the actual savings made for the financial year were £12,111 this was reinvested in the scheme to extend the pilot and realised a further cost avoidance savings of £27,365. This is forecast at a full year saving of £41,303 for the 2013/14 financial year should these service users continue to access the service. (See Appendix 1).

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No implications in relation to this report

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 All consultations have been included in the body of the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members note the content of the report and the positive implications of the pilot.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Positive outcomes for service users achieved and wider options of services to meet service users needs.

10.2 Increased motivation for staff.

10.3 Cost effective and sustainable service due to financial savings achieved and costs avoided.

10.4 Enable social services to be prepared for changes being introduced in the Social Services and Well Being Bill (Wales)

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Appendices:

- Appendix 1 PDSI Volunteer Befriender Pilot Savings & Cost Avoidance (Matched Service Users)
- Appendix 2 Volunteer Befriender Scheme – PDSI Pilot Waiting List
Financial Savings Forecast 2013 / 14 (Full Year effect)
- Appendix 3 Feedback From PDSI Pilot