

# “Advonet

Newsletter March 2014

## Supporting & Promoting Advocacy

### Leeds Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (LIHCA)

As I write this LIHCA has been in existence for just under 12 months and the service has evolved since I last wrote to everyone. We have had some staff changes within those twelve months but we now have a full team. Our team is made up of 1 full time and 3 part time advocates, Stella, Pauline, Bushra and June; 3 advocate assistants Nazia, Rachel and Jacqui; then me, Anne-Marie, the co-ordinator. The team are pictured here. Most of the team work part time so if you are in the office you probably won't ever see us all together however we do work very closely as a team.



Just to remind everyone what we do, LIHCA gives people the opportunity to speak to someone independent of the NHS to discuss their concerns about their NHS Care and Treatment. We talk about their options and what they would like to achieve through making a complaint. We can provide information about the NHS complaints procedure and can support people through the process in a way that best suits their individual needs. Our client numbers have risen steadily over the year, we have provided support in various forms to 274 people and are currently supporting 143 clients with complaints about their NHS care and treatment.

All our advocates started the National Advocacy Qualification by attending 4 full days training in December and they are now working on their individual portfolios. Everyone in the team has also completed the Advonet Effective Advocacy and Negotiation Skills training.

Don't hesitate to get in touch if you want more information or to refer anyone to us and if you pop in I'm sure we can rustle up a cup of tea, I can't promise a biscuit though as we are all trying to watch our waistlines!

Anne-Marie Ledson  
LIHCA Co-Ordinator

### Advonet Conference

On Tuesday 21 January Advonet held a conference for advocates, administrative staff, volunteers, managers and directors who work for Leeds Advocacy, Advocacy for Mental Health and Dementia, Advocacy Support and of course Advonet itself.



Seventy people attended various parts of the day. The aim of the conference was to look at how the four organisations had fared since the inception of the new advocacy contract in Leeds. We looked at the many successes, how things had changed and what future challenges had to be met. We reviewed what we can do to strengthen our sense of being a united service and we agreed that we would develop stronger ways to share information and skills. We will look at raising the profile of advocacy, conducting social audits and identifying how we have reduced demand for other services e.g. health, social care, advice services and welfare benefits, and how advocacy has improved delivery of these services.

Everybody recognised that we are stronger as a consortium, and it's on this basis that we have secured the funding contract for advocacy in Leeds.

Paul Seccombe—Chair of the Board





## TRAINING

### Effective Advocacy and Negotiation Skills

Our ever popular introductory training course on advocacy was fully booked in February with 21 people attending – and a waiting list! People came from across Leeds and 10 organisations to listen, participate and learn. Our next course will be in April. You can download the booking form from our website or contact Pauline Crichton at the office.



### Fire Safety Training

Most of the staff from Advonet joined with Leeds Advocacy staff for some fire safety training in November. As well being potentially life-saving training everyone had fun trying out different types of fire extinguishers on pan fires lit outside.



### Publisher

Two of our Advonet team attended a day's course on publisher to brush up their skills to help in the production this newsletter!

### Management and Leadership Training

With funding help from the Skills Enhancement Fund 8 people from across Advonet's core members are attending Management and Leadership training. Modules include The Successful Manager, Management Style and Culture, Achieving Results, Developing Performance, Developing People and Managing the Priorities of Time.

### Advocacy Directory

Our new directories have been printed. Details have been updated for 2014 and if you wish to replace your old copies or order any please contact the Advonet office. Alternatively you can download a copy from our website under the tab "About Us – Our Publications" or look up an advocacy service under the tab "Find an Advocate".



### Single Point of Access

As we are coming up to the first anniversary of operating the single point of access (or "SPA" as it is affectionately known among the consortium), we decided to have a formal review. A facilitator came to aid discussion and we looked at our successes as well as where improvements could be made. 12 people from the core member organisations contributed to the review, including managers, administrators and advocates. Internal processes and improvements have been identified to increase the quality of the service.



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