

Buddies Peer Support Service

Update January 2014



Buddies is:

Buddies is a Wellington-based Peer Support service with two Coordinators and staffed by Volunteers who spend the majority of their time supporting Peers at the Acute Adult Inpatient Ward, Te Whare O Matairangi, at Wellington Regional Hospital in Newtown. The service also facilitates community events, publishes a quarterly newsletter and provides regular training for Volunteers.

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Introduction

This is a six-month report to provide an update on ongoing developments for the Buddies Peer Support Service.

Partnership underpins Programme

The Peer Support Coordinators, Kim and Andrea, are committed to a positive and ever-developing relationship with the staff and leadership of Te Whare O Matairangi. The Coordinators, along with Kites' Manager, meet regularly with the Team Leader of Te

Whare O Matairangi, to exchange information and keep each other updated about matters such as the roster of current Volunteers, any issues Volunteers may have raised, and upcoming events.

In early October, to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Week, and to embed its 2013 message of 'Connection', Buddies held a barbecue lunch alongside the Occupational Therapy teams of Te Whare O Matairangi for people currently staying there, and the broader staffing team. Volunteers worked with the OT team to prepare the meal, serve it, and tidy up afterwards. We see working together in this way as vital for continuing the strong relationship that ensures the Peer Support Programme operates successfully.

Volunteers

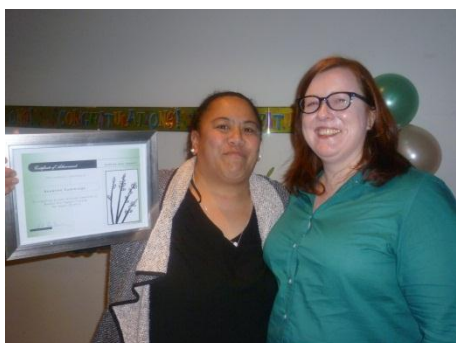
There are currently fifteen Volunteers within the Peer Support Service, with twelve of them regularly active as Volunteers. The focus for Volunteers has been spending time with people staying at Te Whare O Matairangi. Buddies regularly visit on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays.

New Volunteers were trained in late November and early December 2013. This injection of new energy brings a number of fresh faces and, given their broad life experience, new perspectives for those staying there. Their range of experience also adds depth to the service by the ideas and possibilities that are generated.

One such possibility is extending the number of visits Volunteers make to Te Whare O Matairangi. We will begin reworking the Volunteer roster in April 2014, once the new Volunteers are more familiar with their roles.

We held a graduation celebration for the 2012 trainees in August 2013. It was a fun evening shared with whanau and friends, and a

valuable recognition of the time and commitment of the Volunteers.



We are planning further recruitment to begin in May 2014, with the intention of holding another training programme in September 2014. This involves advertising, interviewing, reference checks and Police vetting, followed by four days training with an independent peer support specialist.

Resources

Given the increase in Volunteer numbers, there is a corresponding increase in demand for financial resources, particularly as Volunteers' travel costs are reimbursed. Travel to and from Te Whare O Matairangi creates the most immediate pressure on finances with Volunteers coming from such diverse places as Wellington City, Porirua, Titahi Bay, Woburn, Newlands, Karori and Strathmore.

The Peer Support Coordinators are attempting to alleviate this issue by seeking sponsorship from oil companies, however most Volunteers use public transport, which means the need for reimbursement funds will continue to grow.

Funding the service is an ongoing issue and at times we need to seek financial support in addition to the funding we receive from Capital & Coast DHB.

Examples of additional costs include providing all Volunteers with printed T-shirts, saying 'Buddies Peer Support, Volunteer'. This is to

assist Volunteers in their initial interactions with Peers and to ensure Peers know who they are talking to. These T-shirts will make clear that the Volunteers are there in a voluntary capacity, and that they are not staff of Te Whare O Matairangi, which is often a stalling point in the Volunteer-Peer relationship. The T-Shirts are in addition to the name tags currently worn by volunteers.

Volunteers also want to take board games into Te Whare O Matairangi. The games at Te Whare O Matairangi are not in the best condition, and the Volunteers want resources at Te Whare O Matairangi that they can use during their visits. Te Whare O Matairangi has also established a library that is open for permanent borrowing, and so needs topping up regularly. The Peer Support Service intends to extend the sponsorship drive to include books.

Keeping in Touch

The Peer Support Service sends out a three-monthly newsletter which covers events, what's happening in the community, resources, and services available. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep people informed of developments in the sector, to provide information about peer support and to give people options for things they can do with their spare time. It is also useful publicity for events arranged by the Peer Support Service. The newsletter is sent to over one hundred people who have registered to be on the mailing list.

Quality Maintenance

The new Volunteers received the Policy and Procedures Manual in their training folders, and had its purpose explained to them. They have all been encouraged to read it carefully.

The first round of performance reviews using the new Policies and Procedures are scheduled to take place before 31 March 2014.

'Friends of Buddies'

There is a small group of people who have been Volunteers, or who have been associated with the service, who wish to stay involved and are keen to help with the promotion of the service. Development of this group is being driven by former Volunteers, and we are working to their timetable.

Peer Support Training

One Volunteer has completed the Peer Support Workers Certificate (Level 4) since the last report, and another is currently well through the course. This training was sponsored by Te Pou and the Peer Support Service.

Training

The Service offered all current Volunteers 'Mindful Peer Support' training in mid October 2013. This course was based on the principles of Intentional Peer Support (©Shery Mead), and run with the approval of that organisation. Held over two days by two experienced trainers, the training was seen to be of great value by the Volunteers who attended. The Peer Support Coordinators had completed Intentional Peer Support training some years previously and were keen for the Volunteers to benefit from learning about this way of thinking and acting.

Another training session offered by the Service and taken up by Volunteers was 'Getting the Most from Supervision' with Aly McNicoll from the New Zealand Coaching & Mentoring Centre, in August 2013. The session helped Volunteers to know what is possible and how best to utilise their monthly supervision session (which follows on from the monthly team meeting). Part of the cost of this training was offset by external people attending the training for a fee.

Ongoing Training

Ongoing training for all current Volunteers occurs once per month in a scheduled two

hour meeting. The programme was created in 2013 and received great feedback from the Volunteers. Topics are chosen for the value they will add to the Volunteers, with the 2014 programme commencing in February. There will be developments of topics from 2013 and some topics will be repeated for the new intake of Volunteers, such as the two sessions spent exploring the Treaty of Waitangi, its history and its role in contemporary New Zealand.

PeerZone

PeerZone is a series of peer-led workshops in mental health and addiction where people explore recovery and whole-of-life wellbeing.

A PeerZone training series was held at the end of 2013, facilitated by former Volunteer Carina Allen, who is currently employed at Te Whare O Matairangi. Eighty percent of participants rated the workshops as excellent.

Funding is being sought for the annual PeerZone licence and, if successful, more PeerZone trainings will be run.

Events

The second half of 2013 was busy with events including a midwinter picnic at Newtown Community Centre, a Guy Fawkes evening at Freyberg Beach on Oriental Parade, and the annual Christmas Party. All events were well attended, in particular the Christmas Party. We were pleased that staff members from Capital & Coast DHB were able to support people staying at Te Whare O Matairangi to attend. A number of people would not have received permission to attend if staff had not accompanied them. It was also great to see members of our wider community supporting the event. The evening included a shared meal, games, and carol singing accompanied by piano.



Reporting

PRIMHD reporting remains an issue for the Peer Support Service. Collection of names (we only ask for first names) has highlighted that some people are not comfortable with this, as some people give a false name. This shows that the need to ask for personal information, even just a first name, is in conflict with the principles of equality and mutuality that are fundamental to the integrity and practice of Peer Support.

A further issue is the unavoidable reliance on Te Whare O Matairangi for the provision of data, adding to their administrative load.

And Onwards

The Peer Support Service has addressed the key points agreed on at the Action Planning Day 2013. We have had a recruitment drive, training for new Volunteers, and a number of community based events.

The Peer Support Service is currently contracted by Capital & Coast DHB until the end of June 2014. A number of current mental health contracts will be ending in June 2014 as new service developments associated with Te Ara Pai are implemented. The Peer Support Service is not part of this process due to its specific focus on Te Whare O Matairangi, and as a response within the acute service continuum.

An issue that has arisen recently is the collective understanding of the differences

between a Peer Support Worker (someone who works in a Peer Support Service) and a 'peer worker' (someone who has disclosed personal lived experience and works in the mental health sector). Peer Support Workers specifically work to the principles of Peer Support within the framework of recovery through connection, authenticity, equality, mutuality, hope and self-determination. Within the environment of in-patient facilities, Peer Support is differentiated from the clinical DHB services, some of which may employ 'peer workers'. This enables Peer Support workers to stay true to the principles and practice of Peer Support and recovery, such as choice and non-coercion.

The Buddies Peer Support service is unique and irreplaceable; its foundation is volunteerism, removing barriers between Volunteer and Peer until the only difference remaining is the Volunteer's right to leave Te Whare O Matairangi. The Volunteers are passionate about their work, and their commitment is worthy of exceptionally high praise.

The Team

The Peer Support Service operates under a contract between Kites Trust and Capital & Coast DHB.

Peer Support Co-ordinators:

Kim Eruera (since July 2011)

Andrea Bates (since September 2012)

Volunteers

Mandy	Ange
Suzanne	William
Aaron	John
Mel	Damon
Maggie	Richard
Cathy	Stephen
Jack	Daniel
Warren	

Supervisors

Colin

Madeleine

Carol

The Money

Income for the six months from July to December was \$44,071 (DHB contract).

Expenditure is as follows:

