Beacon Day Services Review

During 2010-2011 Niamh undertook a comprehensive needs assessment within the 14 Beacon Day Support schemes across Northern Ireland, providing baseline data describing the level of wellbeing, provision of care and support needs of 306 Beacon Members with mental health problems. A summary of results along with recommendations for capturing outcomes data are presented.
Foreword

In Niamh we strive for our services to be the very best we can offer. We work hard to deliver modern services that are both safe and of a demonstrably high quality - services that are focused on meeting the needs of those who use them as well as inspiring confidence in those who have commissioned them.

We are committed to continually improving and developing what we do, involving those who use our services in helping us to improve them. Our aim is to make a positive impact on their lives, delivering positive outcomes for them through services that we know are effective because they have a credible and well researched evidence base. As a reflection of this commitment, and for the first time in Niamh, a comprehensive review of the needs within Beacon Day Support services has been undertaken. This review seeks to help us understand better the physical, psychological, social and emotional needs of our Beacon Members.

Our vision for this document is that it can be used to support the continuous development and modernisation of services, giving reassurance to commissioners that what we deliver is relevant to the needs of the people who we seek to support.

Our commitment is to offer services that are strength based, need specific, offering hope, opportunity and control; namely all the components of recovery focused services.

While this research is primarily intended to help us develop our day support services within Niamh, we believe it is also useful as a wider commentary on the needs that remain unmet in mental health services as a whole and can be used to inform other service developments and commissioning.

Through the continued development of our services, and in our commitment to continuous improvement, we remain an organisation that is focused on listening and responding to the needs of those we seek to support. We believe that this report gives voice to some of those needs.

Billy Murphy
Director of Mental Health Services.

This internal review of Beacon Day Centres has been undertaken and compiled by Dr. Lynette Hughes (Head of Research at Niamh), Professor Gerard Leavey (Director of the Bamford Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing) and Ms. Janeet Rondon (Research Assistant).
A health-needs assessment is a systematic method for reviewing the health needs within a population, leading to a set of priorities and resource allocations to improve health and reduce inequalities.

This work, referred to as the Day Services Review (DSR) is the first step towards measuring the impact of Beacon Day Support as an intervention or support to those experiencing mental illness.

Its design was to capture detailed information about the physical, social and emotional needs of Beacon Members attending day centre services.

Day services are an integral part of community mental health services, seen as serving three main functions:

1. to provide an alternative to inpatient care;
2. to shorten the duration of inpatient stay; and
3. to promote recovery and maintenance in the community (Marshall, 2005).

The reconfiguration of day services provision (From Segregation to Inclusion, 2006) has a renewed focus on the promotion of recovery, social inclusion and self-determination and the reduction of social isolation.

In this way day services should:

- Provide opportunities for social contact and support
- Access mainstream social pursuits
- Help people retain existing social roles
- Support people to access new roles
- Provide opportunities for SU’s to run their own services
- Help maintain relationships
- Maintain social activities that are valued

We used a cross-sectional survey among people who are current users of Day Support Centres. The survey was carried out using face-to-face interviews with Beacon Members using standardised well-validated instruments relevant to health and social care needs.

Each Beacon Member was informed of the study and its aims. Participants were provided with information sheets and asked to provide written consent.

All service user data was anonymised and provided with a unique ID number.
Participants and response rate:

- A stratified sampling system was used to select 50% (n=504) of our entire Service user population across all Day centres.

- n=101 were removed as they were non-attending (n=55) or had been discharged (n=46). n=140 did not respond to invitation, 56% point blank refused to participate, a further 10% were deemed to lack capacity at the time of review with a further 3% in hospital at the time of interviewing.

- 306 interviews were completed by a total number of 34 interviewers and two researchers.
The profile of Beacon Members indicates 44.4% are male, 55.6% are female.

The average age of members who took part was 52 years with just 6.5% under the age of 35 years and 93.5% are 35 years or older; 51.5% are single (never married) and 94.1% are unemployed or retired.

48% of Beacon Members have been diagnosed with a Common mental disorder (CMD; anxiety, depression, PTSD, Alcohol abuse, OCD and phobias), 30.3% a Serious Mental Illness (SMI; schizophrenia, psychosis, personality disorder and bipolar disorder), and 21.6% with dual diagnosis.

30.4% (n=93) of Beacon Members reported living with people suffering from health problems.

The majority of day service members reported the day centres meeting most (50.8%) or all of their needs (36.4%).

Summary of Beacon Members:
- The availability of help or emotional support may serve to protect from some of the negative consequences of major illness or stressful situations.

Beacon Members: Summary
- The profile of Beacon Members indicates 44.4% are male, 55.6% are female.
- The average age of members who took part was 52 years with just 6.5% under the age of 35 years and 93.5% are 35 years or older; 51.5% are single (never married) and 94.1% are unemployed or retired.
- 48% of Beacon Members have been diagnosed with a Common mental disorder (CMD; anxiety, depression, PTSD, Alcohol abuse, OCD and phobias), 30.3% a Serious Mental Illness (SMI; schizophrenia, psychosis, personality disorder and bipolar disorder), and 21.6% with dual diagnosis.
- The average number of years since members were diagnosed with a mental illness was 18.2 years.
- 72.9% of members were exposed to at least one traumatic event.
- 60.9% of Beacon Members reported being very or somewhat religious or spiritual.
- 41% said their religious or spiritual beliefs helped them ‘very much’ in coping with their mental health problems. 59.3% cited praying or meditating as being beneficial whilst 41.4% cited attendance at religious services as beneficial to their wellbeing.
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Summary of Physical, Social and Emotional Needs of Beacon Members
- A high percentage of members are being treated for medical ailments that are linked to early death (Blood pressure, 33%; diabetes/epilepsy, 21%, and heart disorders, 17%)
- 35.3% are getting treated for back problems and 15% treated for skin disorders which are psychosomatic symptoms associated with mental illness.

48% (n=144) of members being treated from Common mental disorders (CMD).
30.3% (n=91) of members being treated for Serious Mental Illness (SMI).
21.7% (n=65) of members reported having a dual diagnosis.

Members with SMI reported significantly better general wellbeing than members with CMD.
41.8% (n=49) of drinkers had clinically significant scores indicative of addiction.
35.2% (n=105) of members reported smoking.
Training, Employability and Learning

- 61.6% of Beacon Members completed secondary education until GCSE or A-level. A further 10.4% went on to third level education.

- 94.1% of members are currently unemployed despite 95.8% being previously in employment.

- On average it has been 17.4 years since members last worked.

- The mean score for satisfaction amongst members with their financial situation was 4.13 (on a scale of 1-7) reflecting “mixed satisfaction”.

- 30.5% (n=93) reported low satisfaction with regards to their overall financial situation.

Technological Capabilities of Beacon Members

- 46.9% of Beacon Members did not have access to or own a computer.

- 52.9% did not have access to the internet.

- 41.8% are incapable of using a computer.

- 48.6% are incapable of using the internet.
Social Needs

**Emotional Loneliness of Beacon Day Services Members**

- 65.6% \(n=197\) of members were intensely or quite emotionally lonely.
- Only 13.7% \(n=41\) were not emotionally lonely.

**Social Loneliness of Beacon Day Services Members**

- 53.4% of members were intensely or quite socially lonely.
- 28.7% reported not being socially lonely.

- Female Beacon Members reported significantly higher emotional loneliness than males.
- Those divorced or separated reported the highest social and emotional loneliness.
- Members with Common Mental Disorders (CMD) scored higher on social loneliness than members with diagnoses of Serious Mental Illness (SMI).
- 96.1% reported sedentary behaviours with only 23.5% engaging in physical activities.
- 63.3% of members do not drive. Of these, 31% do not have someone to give them a lift if required.
- 46.2% of Beacon Members reporting feeling restricted to go somewhere due to a lack of transport.
- 25.4% \(n=38\) of those using taxi’s do so because of avoidance reasons such as not liking or not knowing how to use buses, feeling safer or more comfortable or because of experiencing panic attacks or anxiety in crowds.

The availability of help or emotional support may serve to protect from some of the negative consequences of major illness or stressful situations.
Religion as a Beneficial Social Activity

- Praying or meditating (59.3%), attending religious services (21.8%), discussing beliefs with others (42.9%), and reading religious texts (29.1%) were the religious activities members found most helpful.

Social Relations

- On average members were “mostly satisfied” with their social relations.
- 14.7% reported the highest satisfaction with how well they get along with other people.
- 25.4% of members reported mixed to low satisfaction with how they get along with other people.
- 53.6% of Beacon Members were either “mostly satisfied” or “pleased” with the number of friends they had.
- 33.3% indicated dissatisfaction or mixed satisfaction with the number of friends they had.
- 36% of Day service members had 3 or less close friends or relatives.

Family Relations

- 51.6% of members reported having daily contact with a relative.
- On average members were “mostly satisfied” or “pleased” with their family relations.
- 33.8% reported mixed to low satisfaction in relation to the amount of contact they had with family.
- 30.4% of Beacon Members reported living with people suffering from health problems.

Availability of Support for Beacon Members Attending Day Support Services (MOS Social Support)
Emotional/Informational Support

This refers to the expression of positive emotions and empathetic understanding, the offering of advice, information, guidance or feedback.

- Beacon Members who are married report having greater emotional/informational support than divorced members.
- 34.7% reported having emotional/informational support available “most of the time” or “all of the time”.

Tangible Support

This measures the provision of material aid or behavioural assistance available.

- 17.8% reported having tangible support “none of the time” or a “little of the time”.
- Males, Protestants, and married/cohabitating members reported having significantly greater availability of tangible support.

Affectionate Support

This involves measuring the availability of expressions of love and affection when needed.

- 20.8% reported the availability of affectionate support “none of the time” or a “little of the time”.
- Married member’s reported significantly higher affectionate support than members who were single/unmarried or divorced/separated.

Positive Social Interaction

This measures the availability of other persons to do fun things with.

- 23.4% of members reported the availability of positive social interaction “none of the time” or a “little of the time”.

Overall Support

The mean score for overall support on the MOS was $m=63.89$ ($sd=17.41$) which reflects lower overall support available to our members than was found in patient samples with a mixture of physical and psychological health concerns (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991).

- On average Day service members were “mostly satisfied” with their living situation.
- The majority of Beacon Members reported a good degree of satisfaction with their living situation (61.1%), the people they live with (73.4%) and the prospect of staying there a long time (52.8%); the independence (77.8%), influence they have (73.4%) and privacy of their residence (83.9%).

- 38.9% of Beacon Members reported mixed to low of satisfaction with their living situation and similarly 46.4% were not satisfied with the prospect of staying there a long time.

- 66.6% reported a good degree of satisfaction with their safety however 33.5% reported mixed or low satisfaction with their safety.
Quality of Life, General Wellbeing and Happiness

- On average members were “mostly satisfied” with their quality of life.
- On average members had “mixed” satisfaction for their general wellbeing.
- The primary things Beacon Members cited that would improve their quality of life were improved mental and physical health (35.5%).
- 11.8% reported their life as having been “very happy”.
- 24.3% reported their life as having been “pretty happy”.
- 27.1% reported their life as having been “not happy”.
- 30.3% of members scored between 10-40% in the outcomes measures, indicative of perceptions of low outcomes for their lives to date.
- 40.7% of members scored between 70-100% reflecting perceptions of high outcomes from life.

Self-Esteem & Positive and Negative Affect

Self-Esteem Amongst Beacon Members

- The majority of members (78%) reported moderate self-esteem.
- 3.6% (n=10) of members had low self-esteem.
- 18.3% (n=51) reported having high self-esteem.
- 42.4% of Beacon Members reported low positive affect meaning unpleasurable engagement with the environment and a lack of emotions such as enthusiasm and alertness, joviality, self-assurance, and attentiveness.
- 37.2% of members reported high positive affect, indicative of a behavioural system which lends towards rewarding situations that yield pleasure.
- 49.6% have high negative affect reflecting high levels of distress and un-pleasurable engagement with the environment.
- 34% score low on negative affect reflecting the absence of distress and presence of pleasurable engagement.
Stigma

Challenging mental illness stigma is essential in helping individuals accomplish recovery-related goals (Corrigan & Wassel, 2008).

Compared to those mental health service users in King et al’s (2007) sample Beacon Members scored:

- Lower on Global (overall) stigma.
- Lower stigma perceived in disclosing their mental illness to others.
- Lower negative reactions of other people (discrimination) towards them.
- Higher on positive aspects meaning perceived fewer positive outcomes from their experience of mental illness or poorer acceptance of mental illness.

**Contributors to Stigma**

- The diagram below indicates what contributes to stigma for Beacon Members. Anti-stigma initiatives should therefore focus on increasing support and satisfaction with legal and safety issues, supporting members in accessing satisfactory living accommodation and reducing emotional loneliness, tackling stigma early as young members reported highest stigma, and exploring the impact of neighbourhood violence.

**Stigma Dimensions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stigma Dimensions</th>
<th>Beacon Day Support Members Mean (sd)</th>
<th>King Mean (sd)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure subscale</td>
<td>22.37 (8.21)</td>
<td>24.7 (8.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination subscale</td>
<td>21.38 (8.58)</td>
<td>29.1 (9.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive aspects subscale</td>
<td>12.24 (2.88)</td>
<td>8.8 (2.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global stigma score</td>
<td>56.51 (13.80)</td>
<td>62.6 (15.4)</td>
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Traumatic Experiences

- Being a witness to someone else being seriously injured or killed or where you feared they would be (27.5%), and exposure to an attack/ beating or mugging (27.1%) were traumas commonly experienced amongst our member population.

- Day centre members were exposed to political violence in their region to a greater extent than the general population (36.5% compared to 22.0%).

- Beacon Members had a higher exposure to witnessing someone else being seriously injured or killed than the general population (27.5% compared to 19.9%).

- 47.7% of Beacon Members had been exposed to an attack, beating or mugging, compared to 23.4% reported in the N.I. general population.

- 19.6% of Beacon Members had been exposed to a serious accident (car, work or elsewhere) compared to 14% of the general population.

- 10.1% of Beacon Members had been exposed to a life threatening illness in comparison to 8.8% reported for the general population.

- 16.3% of Beacon Members had been exposed to unwanted sexual contact compared to 8.5% of the general population.

Beacon Members Experiences of Traumatic Events (%)

- Witnessed someone being seriously injured or killed: 27.5% (n=84)
- Close family member died violently: 23.5% (n=72)
- Seriously injured or fear of serious injury or being killed: 11.8% (n=36)
- Unwanted sexual contact: 16.3% (n=50)
- Other attack/beating/mugging: 27.1% (n=83)
- Physical punishment/beating (before 18 years old): 20.6% (n=63)
- Life-threatening illness: 10.1% (n=31)
- A serious accident (car, work or elsewhere): 19.6% (n=60)

Northern Ireland Specific Questions

- 35.9% reported having personally suffered “some” or “a lot” as a result of the Northern Ireland troubles.

- 36.5% reported “some” or “a lot” of political violence in their neighbourhood.

- 10.9% of members have personally experienced damage to their residency as a result of a bomb.

- 7.7% had suffered personal injury due to cross-community violence.

- 19.3% of members had family or friends injured in cross-community violence.

- 44.4% reported close friends and family had suffered “some” or “a lot” as a result of the Northern Ireland troubles.

- 16.7% members had to personally move home due to intimidation.
Day Centre Specific Questions

- 33.1% said they had “no or low expectations” of the day centres which could be reflective of not enough information being received about the day centres, or indeed state of wellbeing at the time of entry into services.

- Expectations centred on having “social interaction” (21.4%), obtaining help in “managing their mental health” (10.7%), receiving other “help or support” through the service (10.7%).

New Activities

Activities provided through the day services deemed important to members and their wellbeing were predominantly:

- Recreational (42.5%).
- Educational (16.7%).
- Social (11.25%).
- Wellbeing promotion (11.5%).
- Relaxation (10%).

New Skills

New skills developed through attending the day centres deemed important to members and their wellbeing were predominantly:

- Recreational (21.8%).
- Training/learning (19.4%).
- Managing physical and mental health (17.9%).
- Social skills (16.3%).
- Personal development (14.3%).

Additional Information or Advice

Information or advice members accessed through the day centre that was personally beneficial included:

- Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) (28.8%).
- Mental health related (12.3%).
- GP or other health related information (9.8%).
- Signposting to volunteering programmes (14.4%).
- Signposting to other social, recreational and community centres (10%).

Personal Benefits of Attending the Day Centre

Beacon Members reported the following personal benefits of attending Beacon day services:

- 76.2% help with managing their mental illness.
- 67.7% social interaction and social activities.
- 33.2% the help and support provided by the staff.
- 14.8% personal development.

Ability of the Day Centre to Meet Members Needs

- 50.8% of members expressed very low levels of satisfaction with the prospect of returning to live in a hospital.

Day Centres Ability to Meet the Needs of Members

- 87.2% of Beacon Members reported the day centres met “most” or “all” of their needs.

Few of my needs
Most of my needs
All of my needs

- 36.4%
- 12.8%
- 50.8%
Next Steps

From all the information gathered, we can see that Beacon Members have a number of needs to help in the road to recovery.

Social needs:

- Reduce social loneliness and distress with the environment amongst members.
- Develop social skills particularly for those who lack intimate relationships and those suffering with Common Mental Disorders.
- Opportunities to widen social support networks to build on the amount and quality of relationships outside the mental health support network.
- To improve member satisfaction with the amount and quality of contact had with family, the availability of support, and the promotion of full engagement with family activities amongst members whilst helping reduce perceived stigma.
- Support to those members living with other people who have mental and physical health problems.
- Support for members not satisfied with living and legal conditions to maintain wellbeing.

Physical needs:

- To provide physical health interventions and education to improve the quality and length of lives of members.
- Focus should be on integrating physical health and social activities into mainstream society.

Emotional needs:

- To address high levels of emotional loneliness amongst members through the provision of therapies and interventions.
- To improve the availability of support to members for example, through online materials and literature.

Training/Learning needs:

- To build upon the strengths and skills of members that may have been lost as a result of mental illness.
- Engagement in using skills schemes (IT training, interview skills, volunteering programmes and initiatives to help back to work) for those capable to reduce time out of employment.
- Training initiatives that promote social inclusion and community integration.

Thank You

The Niamh Research team would like to say thanks to all those who helped make this Day Services Review possible.

First and foremost, thanks to all the Beacon Members who completed interview questionnaires.

We appreciate your input and could not complete this work or indeed improve our services without your feedback and help.

Thanks also to the staff at the Beacon Day centres across Northern Ireland for their time and effort in both helping members engage with the needs assessment process and in facilitating research volunteers throughout the process.

Full copies of the report can be downloaded from www.niamhwellbeing.org