

MEETING: 25/09/2014

Ref: 12372

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving Londoners' Mental Health

Positive East

Adv: Ciaran Rafferty
Base: Tower Hamlets
Benefit: London-wide

Amount requested: £76,376
{Revised request: £85,867}
Amount recommended: £86,000

The Charity

Positive East is one of London's leading HIV charities, serving 10,000+ people per year. It champions a community-based approach, where services are structured on a model of self-empowerment so that people can be in control of their own lives and helped to maintain their independence. Services include: individual counselling and advice; support groups; courses; and information. The charity works closely with other HIV organisations in London and has excellent links with healthcare professionals. In June 2014 the charity was informed that it had received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service – equivalent to an "MBE" for organisations.

The Application

In 2011 you awarded three year funding for the Re:Assure Women's Project – a dedicated counselling and support service to help and support migrant women living with HIV to recover after trauma, violence and/or sexual abuse. This application is for a further (and final) two years' support and which now includes the production and dissemination of a learning resource (hence the revised sum requested).

The Recommendation

The Re:Assure project is the only one of its kind in London and is unique in that it targets migrant women living with HIV (particularly from the African communities); is led by an eminent psychologist; has potential to inform policy and practice within healthcare services; and empowers the women to help and support each other and to regain their self-worth. It is appropriate to consider this proposal as being eligible for a further two year's support:

£86,000 over two years (£47,000; £39,000) towards the salaries of a Clinical Psychologist and a Support Worker and costs of the Re:Assure project. The grant in yr 1 includes £9,500 for the creation, publication and dissemination of a Learning Resource aimed at professionals and charities working in this field.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
07/09/2011	£112,500 over three years (3 x £37,500) for the salary and operational costs of the Re-Assure Women's Project.
13/06/2002	Declined as very substantial application inadequately supported by very little information..
25/01/1996	£50,000 over three years (£23,500; £16,500; £10,000) to develop support services at a centre in East London for young people affected by HIV/AIDS.

Background and detail of proposal

The Re:Assure Women's Project focuses on HIV+ migrant women who have experienced rape, sexual violence and/or other forms of abuse. Many of these women have complex needs related to past and current traumas and many are living

in difficult economic and social circumstances. The psychological therapy is led by a qualified and experienced clinical psychologist whilst the group work and peer support is led by a Supporting Services worker. The demand for the work is high.

Since it began, the project has enabled and recorded dramatic changes in women who have attended. On first encounter many of them are described as "desperate" (some suicidal) but they have the potential to turn things around, which is the aim of Re:Assure. The project's strength lies in the ability to provide more than clinical intervention – it involves outreach; talking therapies; joint assessments; emotional support; and access to other in-house services (eg housing advice).

Most of the project's original clients came from Uganda and Zimbabwe though more recently they include women from Nigeria, Ghana, Somalia and the Caribbean. As clients have progressed through the project many have returned as peer supporters and volunteers - instrumental in encouraging the self-referral of more women, particularly those worried about the stigma of seeing a psychologist or those in non-supportive families or relationships. The use of these volunteers, especially those with direct experience of the process, has brought much added value to the project.

Whilst the project is held in very high regard by local GPs and statutory health services (who refer), there is much about the charity's approach and delivery which could be disseminated further as a model of good practice. Consequently, the organisation has requested an additional sum in year one to recount and evaluate the history of the project, so that a lasting resource will be available.

Financial Information

The current year forecast shows confirmed income only (£1,541,000 as at August 2014) although there are additional bids planned for tenders and to trusts and foundations (including this one) to balance their budget. Whilst the table only shows secured income, the expenditure shown of £1,604,076 represents a worst case scenario and, therefore, should not increase.

The cost of generating funds includes the employment of a fundraising team of three and the operation of a subsidiary trading company providing catering.

Year end at 31 March	2012/13 Audited Accounts	2013/14 Draft Outturn	2014/15 Current Year Forecast
	£	£	£
Income and Expenditure			
Income	1,710,309	1,736,105	1,541,000
Expenditure	1,691,320	1,777,163	1,604,076
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	49,239	(41,057)	59,485
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(30,250)	-	(121,762)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	18,989	(41,057)	(62,277)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	1.1%	(2.4%)	(4.0%)
Cost of Generating funds (% of inc)	£160,526 (9.4%)	£181,959 (10.5%)	191,432 (12.4%)
Free unrestricted reserves			
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	401,231	379,289	317,012
How many months' worth of expenditure	2.9	2.6	2.4
Reserves Policy target	845,660	888,581	802,038
How many months' worth of expenditure	6	6	6
Free reserves over/(under) target	(444,429)	(509,292)	(485,026)