

MEETING: 24/11/2016

Ref: 13467

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving Londoners' Mental Health

EACH Counselling and Support

Adv: Shegufta Rahman

Base: Ealing

Benefit: Brent

Amount requested: £169,390

Amount recommended: £153,200

The Charity

EACH Counselling and Support (EACH) was set up 23 years ago to meet the needs of the Asian community in Hounslow tackling alcohol dependency. Over the years, it has developed counselling and support services on alcohol, drugs, mental health and domestic violence. Operating across a number of boroughs in West London, the organisation believes that through its provision of inclusive services, individuals and families from diverse communities are able to empower themselves to tackle these issues.

The Application

EACH is seeking funding to establish and deliver *Connect and Change for Better Health*; a culturally appropriate mental health counselling and support project in Brent. Specifically targeting Asian, Tamil, African-Caribbean and Somali people, the project will aim to improve their mental health and achieve long-term recovery from the impact of trauma on their health and well-being, depression and isolation.

The Recommendation

In the context of significant reductions in funding, EACH has demonstrated resilience and a track record of operating through such difficult times by continuing to support beneficiaries across a number of West London boroughs. The amount advised is at a reduced level as the original request included disproportionately high overhead costs.

£153,200 over three years (£50,600, £49,700, £52,900) for the full-time salary of the BME Outreach and Engagement Community Worker and associated project costs for the Connect and Change for Better Health project.

Funding History

None

Background and detail of proposal

Brent is in the top 15% of most deprived areas (Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2015) and mental health remains the largest cause of morbidity in the borough with a quarter of all adults affected by this issue at some point (Brent CCG Mental Health Board papers, 2016). Although mental health is set as a priority in the Brent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2014/15, there is a gap in the borough for specialist counselling and support services for the African-Caribbean community, and in Somali, South Asian and Tamil languages to address specific needs on depression, anxiety and trauma.

The current statutory provision to address mental health is through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service delivered by the NHS. However, current data highlights the lack of access and engagement by BMEs (Brent CCG led

IAPT service procurement workshop, November 2015). EACH consulted with stakeholders such as GPs, social services and community groups, who all indicated that this was due to a lack of cultural understanding, language barriers, and the short-term nature of the IAPT services.

In late 2015, the charity conducted a service user survey with over 100 respondents. This survey highlighted the need for and value of counselling and therapeutic support offered in key languages within community settings to enable BME people to recover from the impact of mental health and to find the solutions that will help them to sustain long term health benefits. The survey also stressed the need for support to help beneficiaries engage with each other through social activities and be able to self-manage. Through the charity's experience working in Harrow and Hillingdon, BME individuals are more likely to experience social disadvantage such as unemployment, poorer housing, ill health, but also experience difficulties in seeking help due to language, stigma and cultural/religious issues. These difficulties are compounded by a lack of understanding of mental health; often seeking advice and help from religious leaders in the first instance, before subsequently presenting in crisis and requiring supervised medication with intensive support.

Financial Information

Forecast income in the current year is £1,188,073 of which £964,204 (81 %) is confirmed as at October 2016.

The charity's actual reserves policy is a target of 3 months of operational costs which are included in the table below. The organisation ended 2015/16 with £357,858 in designated funds, up from £148,064 at the end of 2014/15. However, the charity advises that this will be spent down over 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 primarily on specific projects, strategic developments and premises costs.

The cost of generating funds was reported as nil in 2014/15 and 2015/16 accounts due to relevant staff time and overheads not being apportioned to this category of spend. The charity has advised that such costs will be classified appropriately in future and the 2016/17 forecast figures have been amended to include these.

Year end at 31 March	2014/2015 Audited Accounts	2015/2016 Audited Accounts	2016/2017 Forecast
Income and Expenditure	£	£	£
Income	2,080,936	1,396,026	1,188,073
Expenditure	2,034,161	1,370,452	1,184,823
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	55,206	25,574	3,250
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(8,431)	0	0
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	46,775	25,574	3,250
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	2.2%	1.8%	0.27%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	0	0	5,750 (0.4%)
Free unrestricted reserves			
Unrestricted free reserves at Year End	486,177	304,636	307,886
How many months' worth of expenditure	2.87	2.67	3.12
Reserves Policy target	508,000	340,000	309,000
How many months' worth of expenditure	3	3	3
Free reserves over/(under) target	(21,823)	(35,364)	(1,114)