

LEARNING VISIT REPORT
Off The Record Twickenham 12572

1.1 Date of visit: October 13 th 2016	1.2 Name of visiting Grants Officer: Joan Millbank	1.3 People met with: Sophie Adam, Trustee/ Volunteer Fundraiser. Deborah Kerper, Co-ordinator.
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1.4 Programme Area & Outcomes:
Improving Londoners' Mental Health: More children and young people receiving specialist help, resulting in improved mental health.

MONITORING INFORMATION

2.1 Project Outcome 1:

70% of young people report an improvement in their lives as a result of counselling, for issues including relationship issues, self-esteem, depression, anxiety, self-harming, and anger.

Progress made: The charity uses the national Clinical Outcomes for Routine Evaluation (CORE NET) as its monitoring tool for its counselling services; it is a British Association of Counselling-recognised measurement tool. Information is compiled from young people's responses gathered at each counselling session. The 2015-16 figures show a clinically significant improvement for both those aged 11-16 years and those aged 17 years and over, with 75% of young people overall showing demonstrable improvement across both age groups. Young people who presented with some form of mental distress and ill health have benefited shown real improvement across a range of measurable criteria including level of anxiety, feeling despair and hopelessness, suicidal ideation, panic and self-harm.

2.2 Project Outcome 2:

90% of young people say the Drop-in Information service is informative and useful.

Progress made: In addition to using a clinical monitoring tool the charity has devised a user feedback form in collaboration with its youth advisory group. The form provides a formal opportunity for the individual young people receiving support to give their views four times per annum. The responses are collated, findings discussed with the youth advisory group and then an overview with recommendations reported to the trustees.

2.3 Project Outcome 3:

All young people who attend OTR have the opportunity to participate in the co-production of resources, service delivery and service review

Progress made: All young people are invited to participate in the advisory group, which has been set up within the past year and which will meet 3-4 times each year. Participants are self-selecting and currently there are 11 regular attendees. In the past year the group conducted a needs survey of 200 young people; this identified

the need to create walk-in help which the charity is investigating further through its drop-in service.

GRANT OFFICER COMMENTS

In the last year the charity received 867 referrals, undertook 165 assessments, and closed 149 'cases'. 198 young people and young adults aged 11 to 24 years received a minimum of 8 counselling sessions each. Of the issues raised within the face-to-face counselling sessions, 60% were found to be mental health related. The average number of weekly appointment-based sessions per young person was lower than predicted (8 rather than 10); this change allowed more young people to benefit from the service than originally estimated. There are 70 young people on the counselling service waiting list. The charity continued to offer the only walk-in crisis counselling in Richmond, providing 50 sessions over the last year, and an outreach service (in school and youth clubs) funded through two statutory contracts.

The main challenge for the charity is how to cope with a growing waiting list. Borough statistics show that Richmond continues to have a high number of young people at risk of alcohol, sexual exploitation, mental ill health, and self-harm. The local CAMHS service has raised its threshold for referrals in response to its own pressure of demand and funding situation, and there are no other borough-based voluntary counselling services available for young people. The charity has responded by providing fewer sessions per young person (although it continues to provide sessions as required for more extreme cases, and 're-admitting' young people as required) and is trying to secure more volunteer counsellors.

Members of the Youth Advisory Group have been very engaged in learning about and constructively informing the borough's Transformation Plan for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. The plan sets out the borough's rationale and key proposals for bringing about the transformative change required across the whole children's mental health system, in line with the Government's policy 'Future in Mind', and NHS England guidance.

Off the Record is very appreciative of the grant provided and of its relationship with the Trust, which it says is extremely supportive. As a small organisation with limited paid staff time, it did find the financial breakdown requirements both at initial assessment and at the first year monitoring stage a bit taxing as it generated additional work i.e. because the funding year is different from the charity's financial year.

The charity extended a warm welcome to your grant's officer and has extended an offer to visit at any point to the Trust and its committee members.