



**Working with people
diagnosable with Personality Disorder:**

**REPORT OF SKILLS TRAINING
PROVIDED BY
THAMES VALLEY INITIATIVE**

February 2013 - July 2014

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www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/thames-valley-initiative

Introduction

The Thames Valley Initiative (TVi) was established in 2004 as one of eleven pilot projects funded by the Department of Health in response to the policy guidance 'No Longer a Diagnosis of Exclusion' (NIMHE 2003). TVi was one of the largest of these projects and included setting up clinical services in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire known as Complex Needs Services. Along with specialized clinical services, improved training was identified as a key requirement for improving provision.

In addition to supporting the development of local clinical services TVi have strong national links with the Department of Health (DOH) and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). We have worked in partnership with them on various projects, including the development of the White Paper 'Personality Disorder; No longer a diagnosis of exclusion' (NIMHE 2003) and the 'Personality Disorder capabilities framework' (NIMHE 2003) and more recently the practitioners guide: 'Meeting the challenge, making a difference: Working effectively to support people with personality disorder in the community' (Wood et al 2014)

TVi, as a training and service development provider, is uniquely placed to provide high quality training for people working with those who are diagnosable with a personality disorder (PD) and or self-harm. All training is delivered by expert trainers who have a clinical qualification in Psychotherapy, as well as a generic mental health qualification; they also have extensive experience of working clinically in specialist PD services, along with specialist training in the area. TVi carry out all their training in partnership with ex-service users who are part of a group called the Support, training and recovery system (STARS). More information about STARS can be found on their website : www.starspdconsortium.com. STARS are experts by experience, having completed an intensive course of psychotherapy for the treatment of PD. After completing their therapy they are in a position to share their insights and knowledge to improve services for people who are experiencing significant distress or impairment.

Thames Valley Initiative (TVi) has a reputation for providing high quality training at competitive prices, during difficult economic times. All trainings are evaluated and developed based on the needs of the workforce. They are the recognized providers for awareness level training of the Knowledge and Understanding Framework (KUF) training on Personality Disorders for the South Central region. This is a national training initiative which is supported by Department of health (DOH) and the National offender management service (NOMS). Whilst this training is extremely effective it is evident from feedback from these courses, that there was a population of workers who either could not commit to the three day modules, and on-line learning that was a necessary component of the course, or that they did not address some of the day to day challenges that they faced in working with this client group. In addition the gap between the awareness level training and other trainings provided by the KUF team, namely the BSc and the MSc was felt to be too wide.

The flagship course was developed and run by TVi, starting in Wallingford in 2003. This was closely based on the aspirations of the Capabilities Framework (NIMHE 2003) - being an open-access, multi-disciplinary and cross-agency network building and skills-based training. This course was known as the 'People Personality and Pathology course' (PPP) and has run every year since; this model has been used across the South-East of England. Once again the feedback from the course has shown that it has had a positive impact on trainee's attitudes and understanding of Personality Disorder.

However, it also became increasingly clear that trainees were still struggling to find ways to work most effectively with people who were diagnosable with a Personality Disorder.

In addition to the longer PPP course, TVi now provides whole day and standalone workshops on working with people diagnosed with personality disorders which are tailored to meet the needs of the workforce. This training is offered to a wide range of staff including medical/social work/nursing and others. Service users expressed the view that basic Personality Disorder awareness training is required as well as specific knowledge regarding assessment, diagnosis, self-harm, clinical skills and treatment options. We have developed a specific course for frontline receptionists and administrative staff as the service users also identified a need for such staff within primary care to receive basic awareness training. TVi also offer training for managers in order to develop leadership skills in relation to PD.

TVi have been working alongside service-users since its inception in 2004. One of the key aspects of our training strategy since this time is a model of working in a partnership with ex-service users and clinicians who are experts in the field of Personality Disorder, and the associated challenging behaviours, which include self-harm.

In 2007 TVi carried out a training-needs analysis, which indicated that many staff especially at HCA / unqualified nursing levels received no training on PD, meaning that they had rely on to drawing from their own experiences and 'on the job' learning. Other staff said they had received some training. However, a need for more skills based training was identified, assistance with effective treatment planning, and tools for dealing with the impact on staff teams that some patients with PD can have. Service users identified that inter-personal skills and personal experience were important attributes amongst staff; therefore any training strategy needed to develop and encourage staff in these roles. Also identified was that staff teams needed to develop specific skills and understanding related to challenging behaviour, particularly related to working with clients who use self-harm as a coping mechanism. From this we developed two Skills days, one based on the diagnosis of personality disorder and one on self-harm. These are two distinct workshop modules. They are skills based one day trainings designed with the needs of multi-disciplinary teams in mind. The aim of the training is to improve the service user experience, by increasing the skill and knowledge base of the practitioner.

“I valued the combination of a trainer who is knowledgeable and passionate with STARS who were able to provide honest and open views / experiences”

“Very friendly team - easy to talk and honest answers given”

“The way the day was structured, the calmness of the facilitators, the subject and discussions”

“Fabulous training session!”

This report covers the period between February 2013 and July 2014.

Skills Days outline

These trainings are based on a relational model of working, and seek to increase the workers understanding of both PD and some of the challenging behaviours associated with the condition, so increasing their compassion and resilience in working with these clients.

The outline of the courses includes:

- Providing an overview of the diagnosis of PD or what constitutes self-harm.
- Exploring Service-user perspectives on the underlying causes of PD, or the reasons that someone might self-harm.
- Identifying how to develop an effective therapeutic stance in working with clients.
- Developing strategies and skills to work effectively with clients experiencing distress and challenging behavior.
- Recognition of transference/counter transference issues between staff, service users and carers.
- Exploration of boundary issues and the setting of fair and realistic boundaries
- Case discussion to develop coping strategies and identify effective treatment plans, or signposting people to the appropriate service.
- Exploring ways that the service providers can work to support themselves in order to maintain optimum functioning to facilitate this work

The training aims to develop the escalator approach that is described in 'The Personality Disorder Capabilities Framework' (2003) by opening up opportunities for groups of staff whose developmental needs may have been overlooked hitherto. It is therefore a rational workforce-planning tool in relation to the development of personality disorder services & working more effectively with people who self-harm. The development of a career escalator for working with people with personality disorder enables a 'whole-systems' strategic approach to workforce recruitment, retention and development to underpin systems-wide approaches to intervening in the cycles of rejection.

Evaluation

We have run six 'Self-harm' and eight 'Working with people who have Personality disorder', skills days between February 2013 and the end of July 2014.

We use a generic evaluation form appendix 1, which allows for free writing. It is from this that all quotes have been taken.

The skills days have received positive feedback to date.

We have provided training for mixed cohorts of people, ranging in ability and experience from very inexperienced support workers, newly qualified Doctors, to experienced psychotherapists and Practitioners. We have a framework that informs our course structure, but we are flexible to the groups expressed need on the day. Most cohorts are run with one professional trainer and two STARS, This allows the group to benefit from differing service user perspectives, which has been very positively viewed. The mixed cohorts can make it challenging to pitch the information at a level to

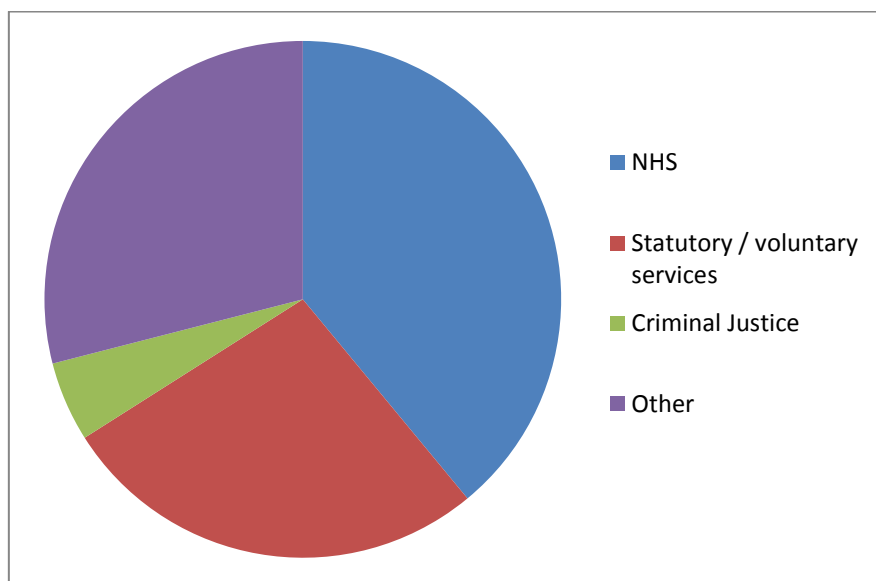
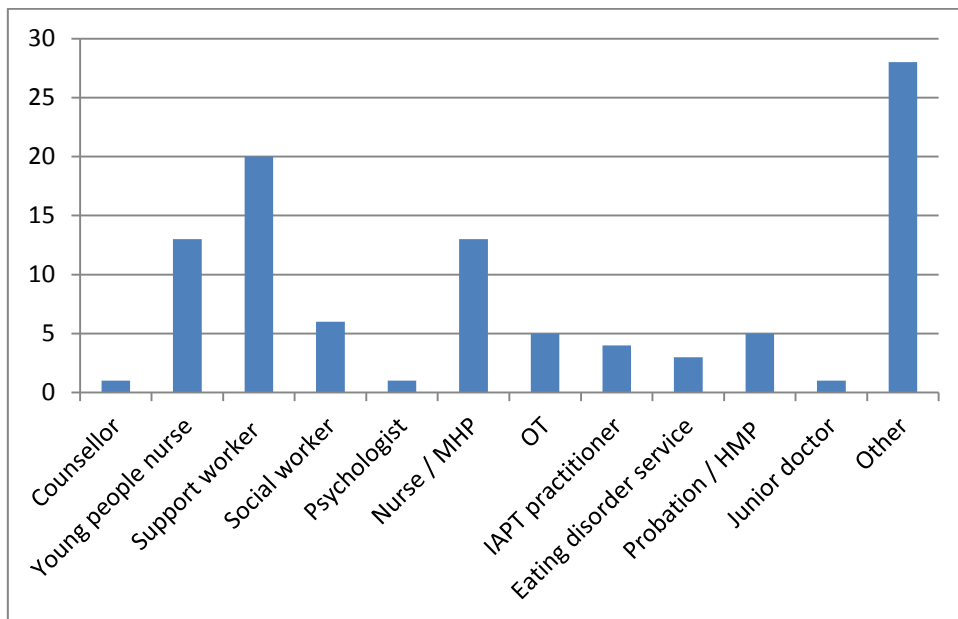
suit the whole group, but the benefits of meeting and sharing experiences with people from different backgrounds and roles far outweighs any shortfall noted.

“I really liked the Multi agency group - good networking”

Workforce attending skills days

Self-harm days

Distribution of staff attending:



One of the emerging themes that we are noting in the self-harm days is the amount of interest expressed by school nurses and those from young people's services. Several staff members have approached the team after the training, saying that they wished they had heard about our training before and how surprised they are that it was not an expectation that everyone who works with young people should attend the course. We have had requests for STARS and TVi to go into schools, to talk to pupils and staff about self-harm as it is a growing problem that is causing a great deal of concern. TVi are looking at how they can work collaboratively with schools and other's to support the early recognition of distress, and how to support the young people, so that they do not go on to developed, entrenched maladaptive coping mechanisms such as self-harm.

Other feedback also supports the idea that this training should be available to all.

"This training should be part of mandatory training at induction of new staff within Oxford Health"

The quotes below show some of the other, aspects that people have valued about the self-harming skills training.

"I will feel more confident when working with offenders who self-harm"

"The training was conducted in a sensitive and insightful way. Having service users co-facilitate helped to validate any existing practice and adapt new ways of working"

"It was a great day. I feel I have learnt a lot"

"It was much better than any mandatory training"

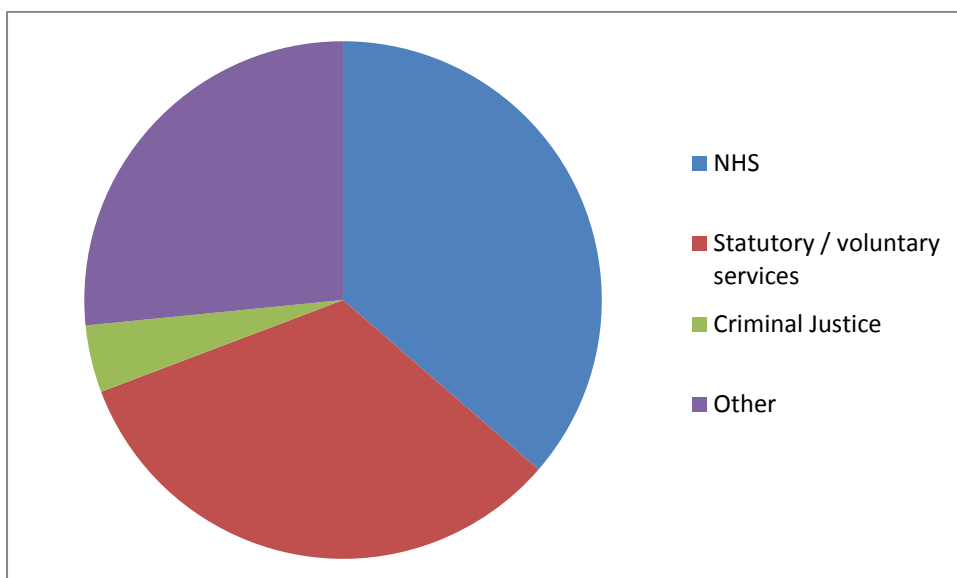
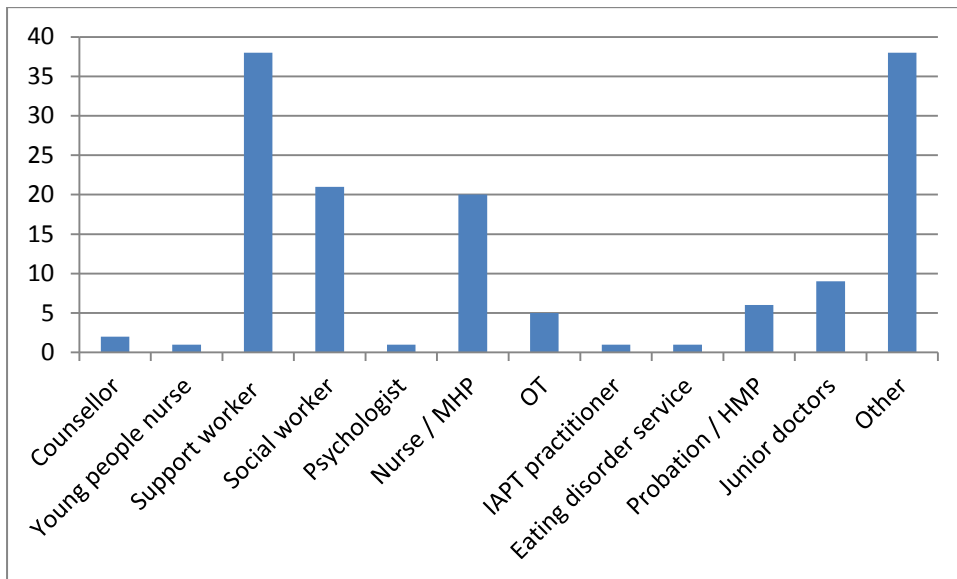
"I feel more able to work with offenders, who self-harm now"

"I valued the honest, real life perspectives - so interesting, brave, and useful!"

Personality disorder Skills Days

The personality disorder’s skills days have had a similar cross section of skilled and less experienced staff on the course. Of note is the unusually large number of support workers who are signing up for this training as well as interest from the Junior Doctors: TVi recently received feedback to say that there was a big demand for this training by these Doctors and that places were not available quickly enough to fit in with their training rotation. We are looking at how we can address this in the future.

Distribution of staff attending:



Below is some feedback from the Personality Disorder skills days.

“There was excellent facilitation. Excellent input from ex-service users with relevant personal experience”

“I think they will help me to communicate with people in a better and more positive way”

“This training will massively increase my confidence and competence in dealing / working with patients with PD”

“I think that I will have better engagement with Service-user’s - more therapeutic, productive reassuring and encouraging relationships.”

“It will help me both myself and my clients feel safe; Help me to understand why clients may do certain things. I think I will be more confident about my decisions”

“This training will give me more confidence and trust in myself”

“I can now feel more confident in care planning and risk managing and even take more positive risks than previously done”

Future plans:

We have been very encouraged by the positive reaction to these trainings, during the first 12 months of them being run. We continue to get a lot of interest in the skills days as well other trainings we facilitate. With this in mind we will be developing workbooks to be used alongside the skills days. There is some antidotal evidence that the skills days have a positive impact on service users by changing attitudes, increasing skills and promoting awareness to lessen the stigma around Personality Disorder and Self-harming behavior. In order to monitor these outcomes we plan to develop a new evaluation form which includes sections that can be quantitatively analyzed.

The quote below indicates that our training style is valued and we will seek to increase our portfolio in the range of topics that we cover.

“I would attend more teaching sessions organised by you”

TVi have already developed a very successful course for administration workers, who are often confronted with challenging situations, and are expected to manage these with little training or support, these are being very well received and are much needed. We will be reviewing where else our skills will be useful as we are very committed in giving service-users the very best provision that we can, and a trained, confident, competent staff team is an important component to providing this.

Please see our website for more information about the bespoke services and trainings that we provide as well as other opportunities for collaborative working with both TVi and STARS.

www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/thames-valley-initiative

Appendix 1



EVALUATION :
Name of training:
Date of training:



(This form can be filled out anonymously)

What did you like most about this session?

What did you like least about this session?

Was there anything else you would have liked to be included in the session?

Please list three main things you have learned from this session

For each of the three learning outcomes you have identified please state how these might impact on your future practice

On a scale of 1-5 (1 being the lowest, 5 the highest) please circle your overall impression of this session

1 2 3 4 5

Any other comments