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Abstract

NHS Tayside Department of Spiritual Care has successfully run a listening service in GP surgeries in Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross, called 'Do you need to talk?' (DYNTT) for seven years.

Patients are referred by their GP, or self refer, to the listener who provides 50 minute sessions to allow the patient time to explore their situation.

The aim of this project was to develop this model of listening in a community setting, Dundee Association for Mental Health (DAMH), and to evaluate the effectiveness on clients' feelings of hopefulness, confidence and mental wellbeing.



Inside The Willows

Methods and Materials

Dundee Association for Mental Health (DAMH) agreed to run a test of change of the listening service.

Clients were introduced to the service through discussion with the Project Manager and given the opportunity to engage with DYNTT. The listener was given only the name of the person.

This gave the client space to explore their story in a non judgmental setting with the goal from this exploration that they would be able to understand their life and its challenges better.

Results

Over the test of change period from May to December 2014, 11 clients accessed the service.

On completion of their listening sessions they were asked to complete an anonymous feedback form considering issues such as hopefulness, confidence and mental wellbeing.

At a subsequent focus group clients were asked to identify a picture of how they felt before engagement with the listening service and afterwards. The pictures tell their own story.

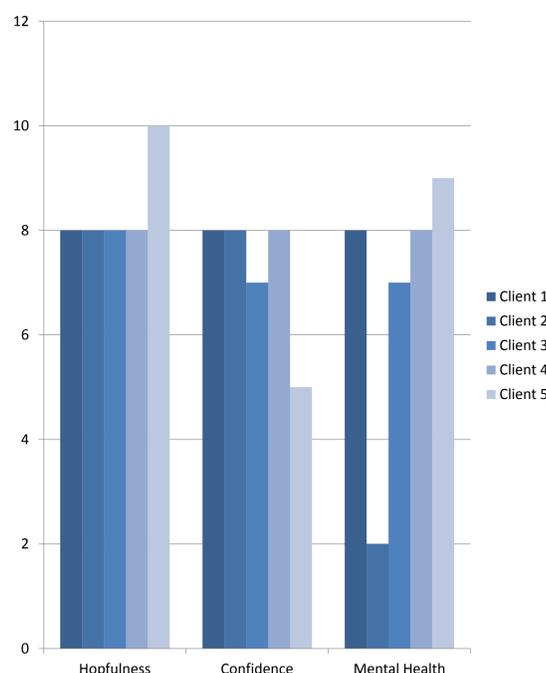
The results showed that people overwhelmingly felt more hopeful, more confident and that some reported an improvement in their mental wellbeing.

From the organisation's (DAMH) point of view they valued the service and they felt this provided a helpful option for their clients which hadn't previously been available.

Benefits of a Community Setting

In the clients own words:

- Easy Access to service
- It felt safe
- You don't have to wear a face and can be yourself
- It de-medicalises the process
- The length of time for the appointment makes a difference



After the listening service clients were asked to score from a scale of 1-10 if the session had any impact on the above

Clients Experience



Before

"I felt like a black cloud had been lifted"

"I'm glad this service exists"

"I felt better about myself"

"I can grow again as a me, I was left behind"



After

"Support and trust. Service is being there, understanding, relational"

"I appreciate any support that is offered as the support services are inadequate"

Conclusions

In conclusion, the results show that in offering the service in a community setting people can have the opportunity to explore their story which has a positive effect on their wellbeing.

The community setting also produced a far lower 'Do Not Attend' (9%) percentage compared to the GP setting (16% to 20%).

All this in turn could reduce the pressure on front line services and allow people to maintain a better level of mental wellbeing supported in the community.

Contact

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References

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