

## Milestone Report 4

31st August 2007

### Background

The Gateshead New Types of Worker Project has been in receipt of funding through the NTOW programme since April 2004. It became a continuation site for the phase two activity in 2006/07 and this funding will end in March 2008.

The Project Advisory Group has agreed that the vacant Service Development Officer post and remainder of the Skills for Care funding will be used to tender a contract with a user led local voluntary sector provider to evidence the PDSI Partnership Board's investment in the third sector and further strengthen partnership working.

The main focus of the Gateshead project is to identify local health and social care priorities with the Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairment (PDSI) Partnership Board and oversee the themed activity of its subgroups. This involves the coordination of an action plan to ensure that the infrastructure supports positive and meaningful Service User and Carer involvement.

The key areas of activity for the Gateshead NTOW Project are:-

- The Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairment Partnership Board
- Service User and Carer involvement
- New roles/new ways of working
- Research and development

This milestone report sets out progress in the development of the new roles and new ways of working and the future activity for the project.

Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairment Partnership Board

The PDSI Partnership Board has membership from all key stakeholders across the range of health and social care provision. Service user and carer involvement remains fundamental to plan, shape and deliver our collective strategic priorities in Gateshead to:-

- Address health inequalities
- Address social exclusion
- Promote independent living
- Enhance health and well being
- Improve quality of life
- Improve economic opportunities and participation

The PDSI partnership presented it's strategic direction to the Health and Social Care Partnership in March 2007 and a copy of the presentation is attached to this report.

The barriers for the partnership continue to be lack of strategic leadership, lack of consistent administration support, carer involvement and the interface with the Long Term Conditions Partnership.

## **Service User and Carer Involvement**

There continues to be robust representation at the PDSI Partnership Board from service users with physical disabilities and visual loss however representation from people with hearing loss and family carers remains inconsistent.

Gateshead Deaf Forum has received significant support from the NTOW Development Worker and the Council's Involvement officer to enable the forum to become a constituted organisation in its own right. The chair of the PDSI Partnership Board addressed the Forum in July 2007 to discuss future representation and to share developments and changes in relation to the Council's assessment function for deaf people and new contractual arrangements being planned with NRASS a voluntary sector organisation. The forum will work closely with the Council and NRASS around the implementation of this new way of working.

The Chair of the PDSI Partnership Board is to discuss representation with the Carers Strategy Group in October 2007.

Service user membership and leadership remains a strength within the Gateshead NTOW Project Advisory Group.

## **Research**

The Multiple Sclerosis Society commissioned Northumbria University to conduct a research project in Gateshead. This research will be completed by the end of September 2007 and the final report will be presented to the PDSI Partnership Board and the Health and Social Care Partnership. It is anticipated that this

research will evidence the need for more localised and specialist service provision.

The evaluation of the Acquired Brain Injury Service to be led by service users and carers was planned to take place in April 2007 but has been postponed until a new Service Development Officer is recruited.

## **New Roles/New Ways of Working**

Sight Service is a local Voluntary Sector organisation that provides services for Visually Impaired people living in Gateshead and South Tyneside. They are an innovative and award winning organisation and have been cited nationally as an exemplar of best practice. They play an active role in Gateshead and are represented at all levels. A large amount of NTOW activity sits within the partnership working developed with this organisation.

Certificated vision impairment awareness training is planned and delivered with service users who are members of the Visually Impaired Forum to the full range of statutory providers in health, housing and social care and the voluntary and private sector. This dispels myths, promotes positive disability and raises awareness about:-

- Registration
- Eye Conditions
- Low Vision
- Accessibility Issues
- Rehabilitation
- Sight Guiding
- Disability Discrimination Act

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The past twelve months have seen detailed negotiations taking place between the Council's training team, commissioners, Sight Service, the Sensory Support Team and Service Users to develop a contract where the non complex assessment function for visually impaired people can be commissioned out to the voluntary sector. Sight Service is also developing an advice, information and low level brokerage service and involved in the emergence of new roles with the NTOW project.

This new way of working provides a more streamlined, efficient and effective service for visually impaired people living in Gateshead and the 'one stop shop' approach is a benefit with all services being available in the same building.

The impact of this new way of working on the workforce has influenced the development of the new role of Rehabilitation Assistant and will be a reconfiguration of the existing support worker role. The supervision of the new role will shift to the Rehabilitation Officers and a supervisory training programme has been achieved.

There has been considerable preparatory work undertaken and two workforce planning days have taken place in the redesigning of the roles. The job descriptions and the training plans are being finalised and the new roles will be fully operational by Autumn 2007.

## Summary

The service specification and tendering process for the reconfigured role of the Service Development Officer post using the remainder of the Skills for Care funding will be finalised with the Project Advisory Group and the PDSI Partnership Board in September 2007 and a two

year contract will be awarded in December 2007.

Future activity for the Gateshead New Types of Worker Project will focus on embedding the new roles and new ways of working and ensuring that this is fed into the regional work around NTOW. Preliminary discussions about the Rehabilitation Assistant role have taken place with a neighbouring authority and negotiations are in hand to develop training programmes within higher education. The Royal National Institute for Blind People is monitoring the implementation of the new roles so there is also potential for national roll out.

The continued support of the local Service User and Carer groups remains a priority as does the support of the Involved and Equal training programme. Work will continue to generate a platform for the Carer's voice and to ensure the needs of D/deaf people are represented at a strategic level.

The following strategic opportunities have been identified to meet both the prevention and management of long term conditions as specified in the Health and Social Care White Paper and in the PDSI Partnership's 07/08 action plan:-

- Public Health to engage within a prevention strategy, e.g. breast and cervical screening for disabled women
- Mental Health to deliver on the 'Towards Equity and Equality' services for D/deaf people
- Learning Disabilities to work on eye and hearing screening for sensory impaired users
- Older Persons to raise awareness of sensory impairment and influence service developments

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- Health and Social Care Partnership to consider the recommendations from the MS Research and support the PDSI Partnership around implementation

The Gateshead NTOW Project is being closely monitored by the regional Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) Human Resources sub group as an example of best practice in workforce training and development. The project is meeting it's milestones and hopes to continue working with Skills for Care both regionally and nationally to share the learning, embed good practice and develop strong partnership working through the New Types of Worker Programme.