



NORSACA
quality of life for people with autism

Nottingham Regional Society for Adults and Children with Autism

NORSACA Adult Services

PUBLIC STATEMENT - 2007

Our Services

NORSACA provides Residential, Further Education, Day Services and a variety of Outreach and support services for people who are aged 16 plus, and are diagnosed with an autism spectrum condition.

We currently provide services for approximately 160 people who are mainly funded by Social Services and/or Health Authorities.

The Service Review

The Review took place from the 6th March 2007, with the Action Plan being discussed on the 18th July 2007. This Review took into account almost all areas of our service provision, and included a total of 8 service users being visited.

The team was made up of: -

- 2 Senior Managers (1 overseeing process, not involved in the Review)
- a Registered Manager who is also the organisation's PCP co-ordinator
- 2 Service Users (1 whom lives in Residential Services and 1 who attends a day service)
- Staff Development Officer
- 2 Parents
- Day Support Worker
- Residential Support Worker Level II
- Day Service Manager
- Charity Patron (also ex-professional)

Findings

This is the fifth annual review that NoRSACA has undertaken and the outcome was of a very positive nature. With a concerted recruitment campaign at the end of last year resulting in a number of new team members; the team was able to "shadow" eight service users. This was a good increase on last year's numbers and meant that almost all areas of service were involved in the review process. For this year the review process "shadowed" more independent individuals as the two previous years had been focused on individuals with high levels of support needs.

The Review Team undertook their responsibilities extremely diligently and comprehensive information was collected on each individual. The findings generated some very healthy debates amongst the group which demonstrated a clear development of the team which is very encouraging. Furthermore, for the first time, there were no areas of the review process that service users believed NORSACA were poor with the highest proportion of opinion stating that NORSACA services were good.

The substantial action plans from previous years' reviews are still being implemented and will remain central to the development of NORSACA services for the foreseeable future. With this in mind, it was decided to focus on those areas of the review which service users on the Review Team believe to be important to the individual's development rather than the development of services. Accordingly, it was decided that the 2007 action plan would concentrate on these areas for improvement:

- Making important decisions in one's life
- Feeling safe
- The chance to work
- Staying healthy

While the identification of these aims was initially designed to perhaps develop an action plan that was focused more on the individual's life, it was quickly apparent that NORSACA's role as the facilitator would still be substantial. Without the organisation providing opportunities for service user training and development, little would happen or be achieved.

Action Plan

Once the four main aims had been identified, the Review Team evaluated the findings of their reviews to determine what the objectives should be in order to achieve those aims. The following objectives were agreed:

Making important decisions in one's life

- Developing the individual's perception of what are important decisions
- How to provide information to aid the decision-making process
- Involving individuals more in decisions about where they live, who they live with and who supports them
- Skill building to aid the decision-making process

Feeling Safe

- Increase individuals' skills and knowledge around staying safe
- Provide equipment to assist an individual's safety
- Develop supportive environments that enable to experience "unsafe" situations and work out strategies for coping.

The Chance to Work

- Improving skills of service users so as to enhance their "employability"
- Develop employment resources across the organisation
- Improve contacts with employers

Staying Healthy

- Develop and introduce systems for monitoring the health of individuals
- Provide opportunities for having health monitored
- Increase health awareness among service users
- Improve understanding of autism among external health professionals.

Each of the identified objectives was then broken down into achievable actions to create the attached plan (Appendix 1).

Conclusion

The action plans from previous years continue to be implemented with some good successes particularly in relation to communication and person centred planning. This year's review has seen a change in the focus of the team; with it being noticeable that the debates and discussions that took place during the process were much more focused on assisting the individual rather than changing the organisation. The action plan clearly demonstrates the team's desire for NORSACA to provide more structured opportunities for individuals to enhance their skills in several areas and this will no doubt prove to be an interesting challenge ahead.

Next year is NORSACA's 40th Anniversary celebration and, as stated in last year's public statement, the Review Team will undertake a review of the last five years, the impact of the action plans on service users and the organisation. Additionally, it will evaluate the Quality Networks process against other models of service evaluation that NORSACA is increasingly being asked to sign up to as part of service specifications and contract agreements with purchasing authorities.

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