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2002

Level of Contact and Social Distance from Persons with a Mental Illness: Health Professionals Versus Non-Professionals.

The main aim of this study was to compare mental health professionals and non-professionals on their tendency to socially distance themselves from persons with mental illness (social distance) and their familiarity with mental illness (level of contact). It was hypothesised that professionals would be less likely than non-professionals to socially distance themselves from people with a mental illness. Participants were drawn from notices placed on Internet USENET groups and from people visiting an online psychology laboratory. A total of 55 participants identified themselves as mental health professionals and 121 as non-professionals (but not service users or carers of service users). The outcome measures used were the Social Distance Scale and the Level of Contact Report. As predicted, mental health professionals were less likely to distance themselves from persons with mental health problems than non-professionals. Further, mental health professionals were found to discriminate against service users, although to a lesser extent than non-professionals. The need for further research that examines the emotional and cognitive aspects of discrimination is discussed.

Outcome: Report written by Amanda Hall and Justin Grayer. Paper submitted to Schizophrenia Bulletin.

Suicidal Callers to a National Helpline in the UK: A Comparison of Depressive and Psychotic Sufferers.

An academic paper comparing the profile of and experience with services of a sample of suicidal depressive and suicidal psychotic sufferers in London calling the helpline between 1996 and 1997. The paper also compared suicidal and non-suicidal sufferers of depression and of psychosis.

Outcome: Report written by Walid Fakhoury. Published in Archives of Suicide Research, (Nov Dec 2002), 6(4), 363-371.

Help-Seeking Behaviour in Young People: Calls to a Mental Health Helpline.

The aim of this study was to examine help-seeking behaviour in young people with mental health problems in order to increase understanding of the concerns of young mentally ill people and their carers. Calls made to SANEline, a mental health helpline, between February 1996 and October 2001 were included in this analysis. A total of 21 775 calls were made by service users aged 0 to 24 years, carers aged 0 to 24 years, and other persons calling about a service user aged 0 to 24 years. More calls from service users and carers were made from females than males. Parents were the most common type of carers of 0 to 24 year old service users (64.7% of calls). The most common presenting problem for young people was depression (34.7%) followed by schizophrenia (20.1%). There was a lower than expected proportion of anxious callers. Young callers tended to receive most of their treatment from medical staff. Older callers were more aware of services available to them than younger callers. Twice as many younger callers were offered a follow-up service from the helpline than older callers.

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Young persons tended to rate higher on measures of suicidality and were more likely to discuss self-harm (9.9% compared to 5.8%) during the call. Few studies explore the role of helplines in the health and development of members of the community. The role of gender in service delivery and help-seeking is highlighted. The implications for telephone helplines and mental health professionals are discussed.

Outcome: Report written by Amanda Hall.

2001

Retrospective Views of Psychiatrists Regarding Mental Health Services Over the Past 15 Years

This study reports the results of an analysis of UK Psychiatrists' retrospective views of changes in the delivery of mental health services over the last 15 years. The results revealed interesting trends in Psychiatrist's retrospective perceptions about the quality of community and inpatient care over the last 15 years.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Amanda Hall and Justin Grayer.

Training, Communication, and Information Needs of Mental Health Counsellors in the United Kingdom

Training, Communication, and Information Needs of Mental Health Counsellors in the United Kingdom.

Prevalence and Extent of Distress of Adverse Effects of Antipsychotics Among Callers to a National Mental Health Helpline

A cross-sectional postal survey of people diagnosed with psychosis that called the mental health helpline, SANEline, between July 1998 and February 1999. The authors investigated the prevalence of adverse experiences associated with antipsychotic medication and determined how distressing these were perceived to be.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Walid Fakhoury. Published in the International Clinical Journal of Psychopharmacology, 16: 153-162.

Profile of Callers Who Self-Harm

An analysis of over four thousand calls made to SANEline by people who self-harm. The report focused on describing the profile of callers who self-harm and looked at their `experience with services.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Donna Wright.

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Communication and Information Needs of a Sample of Community Psychiatric Nurses in the UK

A cross-sectional survey of information needs of Community Psychiatric Nurses attached to community mental health teams in the UK. Two hundred teams were surveyed. The survey provided valuable information on problems facing nurses and highlighted the need for training and for easier access to, and increased communication with other professionals.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Walid Fakhoury and Donna Wright. Published in Journal of Advanced Nursing, 2000; 32 (4), 871-880.

A Review of 69 Inquiries of Homicides Committed by Mentally Ill Sufferers

SANE has analysed a sample of 69 Inquiries into homicides involving a person suffering from a mental disorder, reported between January 1996 to March 2001. The aim of the audit was to analyse the summaries, conclusions and recommendations of the Inquiries. SANE has been able to identify key failures leading to the homicides.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Donna Wright.

2000

Profile of Carers

An audit from calls made to the national mental health helpline, SANEline between April 1998 and March 2000. The aim was to describe the profile of carers calling the helpline. The survey found that the majority of carers were under the age of 65 years. Nearly half of all calls related to people suffering from psychosis and over one third were from people caring for those who had depression. The reasons for carers contacting SANEline were for: information about medication, illness and support groups.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Donna Wright.

Main Findings of an Initial Survey on the Development of a Mental Health Information Telephone Helpline for Health Professionals

Cross-sectional postal questionnaires were sent to 200 randomly sampled Community Mental Health Teams in the UK, and to 400 randomly sampled counsellors/ psychotherapists listed in 1998 Counselling and Psychotherapy Resources Directory produced by the British Association of Counsellors. This survey was conducted by SANE to assess the views of mental health professionals on the need for a dedicated telephone helpline for health professionals.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Donna Wright.

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Suicide: Call-Sheet Audit Data from Saneline

An audit of 10359 calls made by people with mental illness or their carers who contacted the telephone helpline SANEline and who reported a history of mental illness and suicidal intentions. The majority of service users who were planning suicide or in the act of suicide at the time of the call was in contact with services.

Progress: Written by Walid Fakhoury. Published in Psychiatric Bulletin, 2000; 24: 98-101.

1999

Suicidal Callers to a National Helpline in the UK: A Comparison of Depressive and Psychotic Sufferers

An academic paper comparing the profile of, and experience with, services of a sample of suicidal depressive and suicidal psychotic sufferers in London calling the helpline between 1996 and 1997. The paper also compared suicidal and non-suicidal sufferers of depression and of psychosis.

Progress: Project completed and written by Walid Fakhoury.

Experience with Services: As Reported by Callers to the Mental Health Telephone Helpline SANEline

The number of calls under analysis in this report is 122,236. This number refers to the total number of Call Report Sheets logged on the SANEline research database between January 1996 and September 1999. This report contains national data and is not specific to any geographical area. It describes information that was extracted from the Call Report Sheets. The aim of this report was to describe the profile of callers and what they thought of the services they were receiving. Written by Walid Fakhoury and Donna Wright.

Audit of Calls: How Drug Users Seeking Help from a Mental Health Telephone Helpline Differed from other Callers

Data from our helpline were used to identify the profile of drug-dependent mentally ill sufferers who were seeking anonymous confidential help. Analysis was conducted on 46813 records kept on the research database. This group of sufferers, compared to non-drug dependent sufferers, were more likely to have been young, male, and to have been suffering from psychosis. Drug users, as compared to other callers, were also more likely to have been suicidal, to have had different treatment modalities, and to have called the helpline seeking information on social support groups. The findings indicate that drug users seeking help from the telephone helpline have a different profile and have different needs than other callers. They also suggest the need to provide drug-dependent mentally ill patients with a comprehensive programme of treatment, care and support which would meet their complex and multiple needs. Written by Walid Fakhoury.

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1998

A Survey of Unmet Needs and Use of Services by People with Mental Disorders

Postal questionnaires assessing unmet needs and use of services were sent to 250 people with mental illnesses that called the SANEline helpline. The findings showed that a high proportion of people with mental illness were accessing and using the various health services and yet most of them reported unmet needs. Report written by Walid Fakhoury.

A Review of 33 Inquiries of Homicides Committed by Mentally Ill Sufferers

SANE has analysed a sample of 33 Inquiries into homicides involving a person suffering from a mental disorder, reported between January 1997 to April 1998. The aim of the audit was to analyse the summaries, conclusions and recommendations of the Inquiries. SANE has been able to identify key failures leading to the homicides.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Donna Wright.

1997

Profile of Sufferers Seeking Help from Depression and their Perceptions of Health and Social Services: Nationwide Data

In this paper, we used data from a national mental health helpline (SANEline) to look at the profile of 4516 callers who reported suffering from depression. Variations across the regions in England in contacting the helpline and in accessing and using the local statutory services are reported. The data pertained to calls made to SANEline between January 1996 and January 1998 in which callers said they suffer primarily from depression. The findings showed the need for targeted interventions at a regional level and also for tackling issues related to stigma and to gender differences in accepting depression and seeking help for it.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Rob Snaith.

Factors Contributing to Suicidal Ideation in Callers

A call sheet Audit of callers to SANEline considered to be "high risk" in terms of suicide attempts revealed an alarming degree of dissatisfaction with treatment and a lack of care and support.

Progress: Project completed and report written by Rob Snaith.

Prevalence of Non-Compliance with Medication

The survey attempts to assess the effectiveness of using the helpline, SANEline, as a source of willing survey participants. It aims to detail and record occurrences of non-compliance and the reasons behind the non-compliance.

Progress: Zeneca Pharma commissioned this survey in 1997. Report written by Rob Snaith.

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Use of Data From A Mental Health Helpline To Study The Effectiveness And Acceptability Of Treatments And Services.

Use of Data From A Mental Health Helpline To Study The Effectiveness And Acceptability Of Treatments And Services. Callers to SANEline who had been diagnosed with a psychotic illness, bipolar disorder, or severe depression completed questionnaires about their treatment, medication, and symptoms. All of the psychotic respondents had been diagnosed for more than one year, and the average time spent on antipsychotic medication was more than 10 years. Most people were taking two or more medications. More than 40% of the sample was receiving antipsychotic depot injections. The majority of the sample experienced more than two side-effects. The group ranked sleep/fatigue as being the most unacceptable side-effect, which was ranked higher than extrapyramidal, antimuscarinic and endocrine effects. The side-effects and concern about them account for 40% of non-compliance, followed by "Don't like taking drugs" (22%) and "Wasn't doing any good" (17%). 77% of the sample admitted that they had been non-compliant with their medication at some point.

Outcome: Report written by Marjorie Wallace and Rob Snaith. Published in European Neuropsychopharmacology, (1997), 7, S289.