

October
2019

A Slice of PIE

PIE is all about relationships....A Psychologically Informed Environment is a place or service that has been purposefully designed to support the mental, emotional, relational, learning and social needs of both service users and staff.



PIE in action at Heather Lodge



George moved into Heather Lodge 2 years ago. He was an academically high achieving and articulate young man that had been placed in a mental health unit after long periods of severe insomnia began to take its toll and George became increasingly physically and emotionally distressed. This had led to him being unable to continue with his university course and eventually he was unable to manage in his property.

Initially George was very sceptical about the planned move to supported housing and felt he had been treated poorly by mental health services. George explained that he felt that no one had listened to him either in the hospital or in the community and that this had impacted the treatment he received.

On moving into Heather Lodge George felt isolated and 'different' from the other residents here. He felt that

he was unable to relate to them or the staff team and was frustrated with being 'labelled and stuck in services'.

We understand that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to supporting our residents and feel that the way we interact with our residents is key and that developing positive relationships based on individual needs, life experiences and strengths is vital. We incorporate PIE and our knowledge of Trauma Informed Care to guide our practice.

We gave George as much time as he wanted to talk, we listened and provided emotional and practical support. Communication started to become more frequent and moved on from informal chats to deeper discussions around his life experiences, personal issues and life goals.

We were able to support George in arranging a transfer of his care to a different CMHT. George was able to build new and more positive professional relationships within the different CMHT workers which resulted in a review of his mental health diagnoses, many of which were later removed.

George was then able to develop his own personal studies, complete research into his physical health condition and was able to communicate clearly with doctors involved in his treatment as well as those involved in scientific research on the subject of

insomnia and disturbed sleep patterns. George's confidence increased and he began to expand his own social network and was successful in moving out of the accommodation into his own flat in an area that he was able to choose.

It remains rewarding to have George return to visit us at Heather Lodge and updates us on what is going on in his life. He continues to thank us for supporting him to move on past his frustration with services. He says that life feels more positive now.

Clare Mpofu, Contract Manager Heather Lodge

Abdi Wakil, Housing Services Manager talks about his work and its relationship with P.I.E.



How long have you worked at PRHA and what do you enjoy most about your work?

I have worked with PRHA since May 2017. I like the positive, friendly, family feel PRHA has. I enjoy the personal interactions with clients, dealing with tenancy matters and working with the other departments within PRHA. Knowing that the housing team can make immediate improvements in vulnerable people's lives by signing them up to accommodation and properties is a great feeling. I would do this work even if I wasn't paid.

What would you like to do more of in your role?

The Housing Team also helps clients have ways of securing benefits, reducing debt and preventing evictions. If we had more capacity, I would like us to provide more in-depth

support especially for those transitioning to independent living. We do however work with specialist services and we are often in discussions as to how we can continue to support residents into independent living.

What challenges you the most in your work?

Sometimes we have to make decisions where we don't have a choice that I know will impact on individuals. For example, around anti-social behaviour where we might have to start eviction proceedings.

We must balance duty of care to others and I know that if we don't take action the situation won't change.

What helps is that there have been examples where an eviction has led to positive change, sometimes because the move has taken away the triggers for the difficult behaviours and it's a chance to relook at the support is given.

How does PRHA's work developing psychologically informed environments relate to your role?

Having positive relationships with clients is central to our work. Clients have experienced a lot of trauma and it's an emotionally laden environment. The work can be challenging, and we have to be prepared to deal with any eventualities. For example the death of tenant can have a personal impact as we tend to build close relationships with residents.

However we do have support within the organisation where we can access counselling services. I look after the team by encouraging them to talk about their work, to work flexibly, to take time during the day for example to go for a walk, to look for the silver linings.

I have introduced plants into the office not just because they look nice, but something to distract the team, give them something else to talk about and care for and remind them that they are cared about too.

Interviewed by Ché Rosebert, Clinical Psychologist

Dellow Recovery Support Group



The Dellow recovery support group has been running since October 2018. It was started because it was felt that there was a need for a resident based recovery programme at the project.

The group was originally intended to be an educational programme, introducing residents to various different recovery models, i.e. SMART Recovery, Intuitive Recovery, 12 Step Recovery, CBT.

The aim was to explore these different models with residents, their processes, ideologies and structures to give those thinking about, or in early recovery a more informed choice on their route into or continued journey of recovery as often **'One size does not fit all.'**



Also, an awareness of varying recovery models opens up new channels and roads into recovery for the residents to experience and explore, hopefully enabling them to find 'The right fit.'

Over time the group has grown a life of its own. As well as exploring different recovery models we now look at all aspects of recovery. We have group discussions around psychological issues, thought processes and patterns that lead to using and also ways to combat or alleviate these.

We discuss the emotional connotations of addiction, both while actively using and during recovery, again discussing ways to recognise and work with or through both negative and positive emotions.

We also look at the physiological aspects and effects of substance misuse on the body and brain. Physical, mental and emotional wellbeing are all common themes in the group.

We are looking into a roadshow the group, or incorporate other projects into the sessions, inviting residents from across the organisation to attend, which has already begun to happen.

The group meets once a week on a Friday afternoon and also attends a 12 Step meeting every Wednesday.

We now have guest speakers once a month to share their lived experience with the group and also to show an example of positive or continued recovery. Eventually I would like the group to be resident led and merely supported and supervised in its facilitation by a member of staff.

Quotes from Recovery support group attendees:

"I look forward to the Recovery group every week because it is a safe environment for me and others to talk about the struggles we are going through."

"We will go through questions and answers about how we can deal with our recovery and how best we can all move forwards."

"It is great that we are given homework to do because it means we have always got recovery on our minds and not just when the group is on."

Brian Kerr, Peer Mentor Coordinator

Useful Links



Pielink is a practice exchange network for homelessness/resettlement and others wishing to develop Psychologically Informed Environments –PIEs.

PieLink aims to develop a community of knowledge and a community of practice; to provide information, inspiration, and a forum for discussion and exchange.

Search <http://pielink.net/> to view and join.

More information can also be found on the G Drive under PRHA Referencing FolderG:\PRHA Reference.

The PIE strategy team can also be contacted for more information and advice:

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We are always looking for feedback, comments, suggestions, articles and photos for the Bulletin.

Please email Jaydee Anciro, Specialist Services Team Manager with your contributions at: janciro@prha.net

Providence Row Housing Association

Join the PIE (Psychological Informed Environment) Working Group

EXPERT BY EXPERIENCE ROLE

We are seeking Service Users (current or ex) to offer feedback, consultation, advice as well as representing the views of PRHA Service users' perspective on various aspects of PIE within PRHA services.

JOIN OUR TEAM

The meetings take place the first Tuesdays of the month at PRHA Head Office on Bethnal Green Rd from 9.30am-11.00am.

- *We ask for a minimum of 6 months commitment to the role.
- *Appropriate training to perform your role effectively.
- *Reimbursement of travel expenses.

To register your interest and to find out more, contact Jaydee, Specialist Services Team on 020 7920 7328 or email at: janciro@prha.net