Peer Navigators: can patient-led support contribute to clinical and well-being outcomes?

- HIV high prevalence area (8.11/1000 v London average 5.8/1000)
- Approximately 1,100 adults receive HIV care at HUH;
- 75% women and 75% from ethnic minority communities
- Immigration, poverty, housing and food security are common problems, exacerbated by welfare reforms

- 3 patients were appointed through a competitive selection process.
- Trained and accredited, receiving an NVQ Level 2 in Peer Mentoring
- Supervision with Homerton’s Social Care Co-ordinator and Positively UK’s Peer Case Worker Manager
- Peer support provision at all HIV clinics

Evaluation

Outcome star
Exit interviews with patients assessed to what extent needs had been met

Key issues
Isolation
Physical and Mental Health
Benefits and Housing
Results:
40 patients with high level needs were supported through 200 hours of one-to-one support

- 70% increased uptake of services
- 76% increase in disclosure and talking to others about HIV
- 53% better financial position

Adherence high overall
- 50% better understanding
- 23% significant improvement in adherence

One Peer Navigator gained employment as health advisor

Lucella
37 years old
EU Citizenship
Married with 4 year old child
Part-time employment and breadwinner for family
Minimal state benefits, poor housing and hardship
Diagnosed in 2003 in Portugal
Good CD4 and undetectable VL
History of mental health issues
Feels isolated
Concerns re intimacy and sex

Work with Social Care Co-ordinator
Referral to Food Chain
Accessing support groups at Positively UK
Work with health advisor re partner testing
Peer Navigator as guide
Yvonne
Ghanaian, UK National
Mid 40s
Four children; two aged under 16
Full-time employment
Diagnosed 15 years ago during ante-natal screening
Concerns re starting treatment
Underlying stressors
- Combative divorced husband
- Son in prison

One-to-one support
Peer navigator mirrored Yvette’s treatment history
Personal experience of treatments
Stressed importance of relationship with clinic and staff
Role of treatments in managing stressors, alongside prayer, faith and determination
Peer Navigator as role model

Conclusion:
• Embedding peer support within the clinic is an effective way of skilling up patients and providing essential peer support, information and advocacy.
• Collaboration between NHS and Voluntary Sector crucial to the success of the project.
• The Peer Navigator model replicable and could be rolled out to other centres

Future of Peer Navigators:
• Funding secured to March 2016
• Increased cover; service user forum; newsletter
• Ongoing and qualitative evaluation
• Funding beyond 2016 being sought

Project 100:
• Training 1,000 people living with HIV as peer mentors
• Working with HIV clinics, patient groups, voluntary sector agencies
Thank you:

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