

Somali Mental Health Network

Aims

1. To improve the mental health and wellbeing of the Somali community in Camden.
2. To reduce mental health inequalities for the Somali community in Camden.
3. To influence development of mental health and wellbeing services, and improve access to services, for the Somali community in Camden.
4. To keep the Somali community informed of and engaged with local policy development around mental health and wellbeing.

Terms of Reference

1. Somali Mental Health Network (SMHN) members will raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues which are relevant to the Somali community, and decide upon SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) targets/goals in order to address these issues. Examples might include:
 - a. organising events;
 - b. informal learning opportunities through workshops and training;
 - c. providing information sharing opportunities;
 - d. inviting mental health professionals, service providers, and stakeholders to speak about issues.
2. The SMHN has a role to advocate on behalf of the local Somali community for the improvement of their mental health and related services, for example by:
 - a. influencing commissioners;
 - b. involvement in local strategic partnerships,
 - c. establishing links with decision making bodies in order to have greater influence on service development;
 - d. involvement in development of mental health services;
 - e. involvement in relevant research/consultations;
 - f. taking steps to ensure the Somali community's concerns regarding mental health services are represented in the statutory sector;
 - g. reporting the SMHN's findings to the Local Implementation Team (LIT) and Camden Council via the Community Development Workers (CDWs) at Voluntary Action Camden (VAC);
 - h. sharing good practice with other Networks, mental health services and professionals in Camden and in London;
 - i. providing an opportunity for cross sector networking and sharing of information
3. In addition to the SMHN meetings, there will be quarterly Mental Health Information & Networking Sessions open to the Camden-wide community, organised by the CDWs at VAC.
 - a. The SMHN will contribute to these Sessions where possible, and will encourage members of the Somali community to attend these Sessions.
 - b. Speakers at the Sessions will include service providers explaining their services, community organisations highlighting their communities' mental health needs and perceptions, and service users speaking about their experiences.

- c. There will be plenty of opportunity for networking at these Sessions.

Meeting Arrangements

1. The SMHN will meet once every three months.
2. SMHN meetings will last for 2 hours and will start on time. The SMHN members are responsible for ensuring that they arrive on time.
3. SMHN members will endeavour to attend meetings wherever possible. This is crucial for the Network to have successful outputs.
4. The SMHN will be chaired by an elected Chair, with an elected Vice-chair supporting the Chair.
5. The SMHN meetings will be minuted by a CDW at VAC. The Action Points from each Network meeting will be anonymised and published on VAC's website following the meeting.
6. An Agenda will be circulated to the SMHN members at least 1 week before each Network meeting, together with the minutes from the previous meeting.
7. The SMHN will arrange meetings in between the quarterly meetings in order to enable them to meet these targets/goals.
8. The SMHN will be supported by a CDW at VAC.

Membership

1. SMHN meetings can be attended by anyone who is concerned with mental health and wellbeing issues in the Somali community.
2. Member organisations can be Somali community organisations and "other interested organisations". These organisations will be invited to be "co-opted members", on the understanding that they will be supporting the SMHN to achieve their goals, which will be centred around the Somali community.
3. Only the Somali organisations will have a 'vote', when deciding upon the outputs of the Network.
4. Anyone wishing to join the SMHN should contact a CDW at VAC in to request membership, as advance approval is required.