

WINTER  
*Edition*

Winter Issue December 2017



## Welcome!

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the ACOMHS newsletter!

It has been a very busy year for the ACOMHS team with the first ACOMHS Annual Forum which was held earlier on in the year. It was a very successful event, please turn to page 6 to read more about it.

This year has seen the ACOMHS membership grow, with more services signing up to our accreditation programme. Thank you to everyone who has helped us promote ACOMHS. The growing membership has of course meant the team have had more peer review opportunities. The enthusiasm from our peer reviewers has been second to none and as always, we are very grateful for everyone's time and efforts during the visits.

We have a wealth of articles in this edition of the ACOMHS newsletter, including: A Day in the Life of a Social Worker in a Community Mental Health Team and we hear from one of our member

services on their experience of the accreditation process. The ACOMHS team has had a change of staff, and we have included a little "get to know us" on page 3 .

If you are a part of a team going through the accreditation process, remember that the ACOMHS team is always here to help. If you have questions, then please do get in touch. You can also ask your peers questions via our ACOMHS-Chat discussion group.

Lastly, the ACOMHS team would like to thank every single one of our members for their hard work throughout the year.

**Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year from  
the ACOMHS team to  
you all!**



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If you would like to feature in our next newsletter or would like to know more about ACOMHS, please contact the ACOMHS team on [acomhs@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:acomhs@rcpsych.ac.uk).

# Dates for the Diary

## ACOMHS 2nd Annual Forum Wednesday 11th April 2018, London

Our 2nd annual Forum is looking to be a day full of interesting and engaging presentations about community mental health services around the country. Each member service gets 2 free spaces.

**Please save the date! Registrations will be open in the new year!**



## PEER REVIEW TRAINING

The next Peer Reviewer training will be **Wednesday May 9th 2018 (London)**

These training days are for staff working in ACOMHS member services. as well for service user and carer representatives who want to become a peer-reviewer. To register for the training day, to find out more about what becoming a reviewer involves please contact [afia.anjoom-zaman@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:afia.anjoom-zaman@rcpsych.ac.uk)

There will be opportunities for peer reviewing in the new year. Please look out for emails from the ACOMHS team and let us know if you are able to be a part of the review team.



## STANDARDS REVISION

We will be looking to revise our standards in time for September 2018. Advertisement for the working group will go out in the new year. If anyone is interested, please email the ACOMHS team to get involved!

To register or find out more about any of the above events, please email the ACOMHS team on [afia.anjoom-zaman@rcpsych.ac.uk/](mailto:afia.anjoom-zaman@rcpsych.ac.uk/) [acomhs@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:acomhs@rcpsych.ac.uk)

# Meet your ACOMHS team!



**Simona Shaygan, Programme Manager**

**Likes:** My job and my team! But Body Combat is the second love of my life and I hit the gym several times a week. I love gardening and growing my own food. I read a lot and ideally in the company of our adopted cat Bebe.

**Dislikes:** Shopping, crowded places and negativity.

I joined the CCQI over a year ago and took over 5 different projects which are equally interesting, stimulating but also with a hint of challenge. My background is public health and I bring experience of service development, clinical governance and effectiveness as well as business management. For that reason, Quality Improvement is a big part of my professional and personal life as I am a very much solution focused person.

My star sign is Gemini and so my interests and hobbies double and grow all the time.

My dream is to empower and promote health and wellbeing to women and young girls who have experienced domestic violence and abuse and I hope this dream will come through in the near future.



**Afia Anjoom-Zaman, Project Worker**

**Likes:** I love travelling and visiting historical places. I love Thai food. I am a huge football fan, I can happily spend my weekends watching the football.

**Dislikes:** The cold weather (get plenty of that in London!) I also dislike mess, clutter and coriander.

I have recently joined the CCQI after completing my postgraduate degree in Mental Health Studies at Kings College, University of London. I most recently worked in Schools' HR, providing safeguarding advice and support for individuals with mental health related absence. I have also volunteered in community drop in sessions for a local mental health charity.

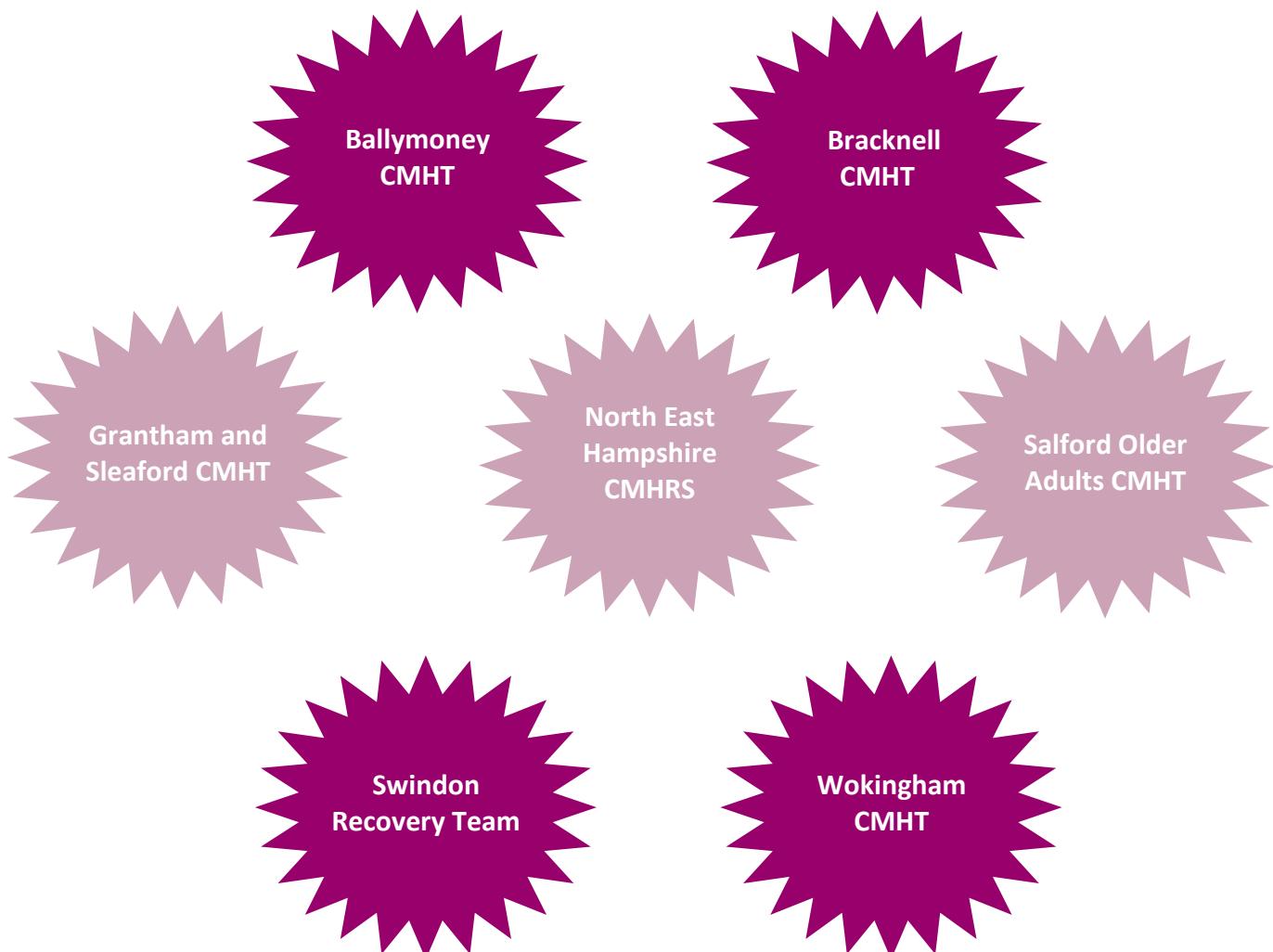
My aim is to promote breaking the stigma of Mental Health in ethnic minority communities and improving their access to services and quality of care. This has always been a huge driving force for me and I hope I am able to bring about change.

In my spare time, I love going to the theatres, reading books and visiting museums.

# A big congratulations to the following member services who have recently been accredited...



**ACOMHS would like to welcome our new member services!**



# Our experience of ACOMHS

Dr Luke Mearns, Declan Ferguson and Cath McElroy  
South Hackney Recovery CMHT

We are lucky at the South Hackney Recovery CMHT to have a very supportive Directorate Management Team, who over the past four years have provided us with training on the recovery model and encouraged us to devise our own strategy around developing into a recovery focused service. We have taken roots and branches approach to change including, for example, supporting our staff in reflecting on their own values and attitudes, promoting co-production of care, establishing psychology led case formulation groups, encouraging staff to use a formulation based approach to drive care.

Prior to ACOMHS there was no external and independent resource to check if we were heading in the right direction, including whether our systems were similar to other teams, what our relative strengths and weaknesses were, whether more could be done to involve service users and carers in developing the service. We were pleased (and a little trepidatious) when our local management team asked that we took place in the first round of ACOMHS review as we saw this as an opportunity to develop our "self-awareness" as a team.

To prepare we made sure we had a good early understanding of the ACOMHS standards. We were keen to learn from the standards we thought we hadn't met and make changes to our systems and processes before the ACOMHS review, for example producing new literature about the team for service users. The review process itself was collaborative, the reviewers friendly and warm. It can often feel like we are submerged in trying to meet targets and respond to incidents, so having external reviewers tell us not just what we needed to improve but also what we are doing well had a positive impact on team morale.

The ACOMHS review meant we were more used to, and more relaxed about, having external reviewers visit the team. This contributed to us being well prepared for the CQC inspection the following month.

The review has meant we are eligible to act as review team members of other services. To date staff from our team have visited services in Cornwall, Manchester, Belfast and Hampshire. The reviews have given us real insights into how other teams work, allowing us to meet and listen to staff and services users from different parts of the country. We've been inspired by the reviews to think what we can do to improve our own team more. This has included how documents are formatted to promote staff formulating cases, to how working patterns could be changed and physical health care systems improved.

Since the review we've enjoyed attending the free ACOMHS forum event, which was an opportunity to hear about research around community services as well as network. Through being members of ACOMHS several staff members from the team attended free training on suicide prevention run by the Royal College, which they have spoken very positively about.

Overall the ACOMHS review has helped us develop as a team not only through the review process and report but also through raising our awareness of good practice in other teams and the training and networking opportunities ACOMHS provide. We would strongly encourage other teams to take the plunge and get reviewed.

**Thank you to the South Hackney team for sharing their experience with everyone!**

# Thank you for helping us to celebrate 1st ACOMHS Annual Forum!

Although the Spring seems to be a distant memory, it is not the case with ACOMHS 1st Annual Forum which took place in April this year. Our memories are still very much fresh with the excitement we had on the day.

It goes without saying, this event would not be possible if it was not for our member services—those who joined ACOMHS during the pilot stage in 2015 and those who saw the value in this exciting new scheme and joined us in 2016 and 2017.

With the speakers who came to share their research, developments and experiences and excellent chairing skills from Neil Young, who is also the Chair of the ACOMHS Advisory Group, we sailed smoothly through the day and closed it with the wine reception.

But when there is a 1st event, there must be a second one—bigger, stronger, louder. And for that reason, the ACOMHS team is already working very hard and actively planning the 2nd Annual Forum which will take place on 11th April, 2018.

We would like to remind our ACOMHS members that the Annual Forum is your platform to showcase your innovative, inspiring, effective practice you introduced to your services. So come along and shout about it on the College's Blue Stage because it's yours!

Your ongoing commitment to Quality Improvement is what drives positive change in mental health!

On that note, we look forward to seeing you all in April!

Simona and Afia



South Hackney Recovery Team and North Belfast Recovery Team were the first member services to be accredited by ACOMHS and were presented with a certificate at the forum for this achievement!

# Feedback from 1st Annual Forum

We asked all of our attendees to complete feedback forms after the event. Here are some of the great comments we received from you all!



"Really well organised event, inspiring ideas to take back to our team."

"Mixed variety and wealth of shared experience. Excellent lived experience stories. Really exciting event!"

"Overall an excellent experience, content was excellent, providing much food for thought. Thank you!"

"Good to hear from the service users!"

"A really interesting day: a pleasant surprise. I was braced for a dry management flavoured day and it couldn't be further from that."

"Excellent for networking today, but perhaps increase time allocated for this"



# **Day in the Life of a Social Worker**

**Sonja Mooney**

**HAFOD Community Mental Health Team**

## **1) How did you become a Social Worker?**

What I can remember is that the first time I had the thought of becoming a social worker was when I observed a social worker within my place of work, and thinking, I can do that I'm sure. When I look back on how I became a social worker it is often with great wonder and how far I have come. The journey prior to becoming a social worker has been progressive and has involved working with people in all aspects of life, which provided me with the confidence in applying to the universities to study the role of social work. The other reason I applied to be a social worker was that I am passionate about justice and human rights. So, what better way to apply that passion and hopefully make a difference to someone's life and that of the community, was for me to become a social worker.

## **2) What is the role of a Social Worker within a CMHT?**

Every day is completely different. While one may try and plan meticulously, you can guarantee that there will be several unexpected challenges for you to deal with each day. Social work in the CMHT constantly keeps you on your toes. The main role is that of a care coordinator and having a case load where you manage care plans, reviews and signposting the person to suitable services to heed recovery. However, the main part is to work therapeutically with your client by establishing a trusting rapport which enables your client to work with you, and that of others within the CMHT. The beauty of working within a CMHT is that you have

all the professionals at hand to the Psychiatrist, Psychologist, CPN's, Occupational Therapy and Support workers. This enables the client to receive a biopsychosocial model of care. Which collectively provides a holistic service for the person receiving the care and treatment

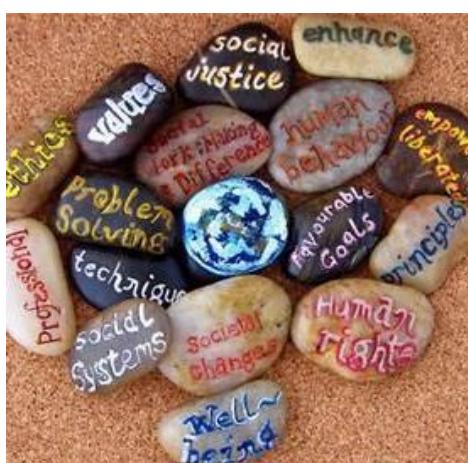


## **3) What is involved in a typical day?**

One day is never the same. One day you could be at your desk trying to complete care plans to updating case notes, when a call could come in from your client thanking you for your support and within the next breath a client wanting to end their life. As an AMHP I would typically receive a referral from a GP, Psychiatrist or Home Treatment Team to say that their patient is expressing harm to having no insight into their illness, therefore requiring MHA assessment. This piece of work could potentially take all day as coordinating other professionals to attend with you needs to be timed to suit everyone. Then conveying the person to a hospital if ones available. This would involve the Ambulance service and maybe at times police assistance if the person is at risk of aggressive behaviour. In all, this piece of work could take all day where I as the AMHP may not get home until late at night. As I would need to ensure conveyance to hospital is adhered to whilst ensuring the person's human rights are at the forefront of the admission.

#### **4) What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

The situations social work puts you in is unique and often extreme. You may learn how you cope when someone tries to commit suicide whilst being under your care. You may learn that you are an expert at dealing with aggressive and challenging behaviour. I have learnt different strengths and weaknesses as I constantly reflect on my practice. My Social work role has shown me some of the darkest and most upsetting sides of humanity and there will be times when it can all seem very depressing. But one notices the good in people that previously you took for granted. You take pleasure and great joy in seeing clients becoming more confident about how to manage their illness. You see clients who were once volatile towards you now trusting your judgement. You become extremely reflective towards your own life and for all that you have and realise that true wealth does not come from material things. I have also become an expert in maintaining my own mental health and well-being to a degree.



#### **5) What is the least rewarding about your job?**

Tiredness, the coming home late and this impacting on your social life and family. It can also be emotionally challenging and draining on your wellbeing. Some cases you will come across will take your breath away and at times make you cry. The highs and the lows are exhausting. It is so easy

to become emotionally involved with some of the people you support and their journey through their recovery, that their failure is your failure. Therefore, learning to manage your own emotional wellbeing is an important aspect of your job.

#### **6) If you could correct one misconception of Social Workers, what could it be?**

I think some attitudes towards social workers stems from popular misconceptions that people have outside the profession, and that the main role of being a social worker is to take children away from their families. Even when a social worker is working in an adult team; it can often be viewed with suspicion when asking people about how their illness may impact on other family members, including children. This is a standard question, and is part of the assessment process. Therefore, if I could correct this misconception, I would say, social workers try their best to advocate for the person and their family and challenge other professionals who may only see the persons problems and difficulties in life. Social workers are creative in a variety of different ways. Social workers promote and encourage empowerment to individuals. This enables the person who uses our service to become more confident in dealing with the challenges of what life brings and helps them to achieve and exercise their human and civil rights. In all, we as a profession do not cosset a person. We support the person to become a citizen within their own right. We work with the person to give them every opportunity to change their situation and lead a life independent of social work involvement.

**Thank you to Sonja for her interesting insight into what it's like to be a Social Worker!**

## ACOMHS Chat discussion forum

ACOMHS chat is an email discussion forum for anyone who works in a member service. It is a group designed for you to ask your peers questions, troubleshoot and problem solve, share ideas and good practice and keep informed about events and publications.

It can also be useful if you wish to discuss the ACOMHS process with your peers—do you want to know how other teams are managing the self review process? Do you have any good ideas to share or questions to ask? Do you need advice on how to meet a standard?

Email 'JOIN' to [ACOMHS-chat@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:ACOMHS-chat@rcpsych.ac.uk)

## Contribute to the next newsletter

One of the benefits of membership is the opportunity to share good practice with other ACOMHS members. We wish to continue to include examples of good practice from members within future newsletters. If you have ideas for future articles you would like to see included in our newsletter please do not hesitate to contact us at [acomhs@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:acomhs@rcpsych.ac.uk)

Contributions could include a written piece or even sending us a photo!

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition of the ACOMHS newsletter!



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