

## **Crossing Bridges Training**

Interagency project between Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust and Cardiff County Council, establishing a level 3 training programme designed to bring together practitioners from adult mental health services and children's services.

The Programme was based around a training pack published by the Department of Health, also called Crossing Bridges, which identified the need for better understanding of the needs of children who have a parent/parents with a mental illness.

The Trust put on an initial 2 day training, using an external trainer. Staff from both the County Council and the Trust who were interested in becoming trainers for subsequent courses were invited to attend. A Working Group was set up following this, to develop course materials and design the local training programme. It is delivered on a 'patch' basis around the localities covered by each Community Mental Health Team, once annually for each of five localities.

The aims and outcomes of the project were to bring about better working relationships between staff in adult mental health services and children's services, so as to improve care for both parents with mental illness and for their children.

The project was successful as participant feedback was very positive. Plans to improve practice are made as part of the course. Anecdotally, relationships between the different agencies have improved over the five years since the programme started and practice in individual cases has improved alongside. It has been extended this year to cover the Vale of Glamorgan local authority area, which is also served by Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust.

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