

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE AT THE “FRONT DOOR”

*How we ensure our service users and their carers feel
safe in their first point of contact with us*


Consultant Clinical Psychologists

“The first moments of interaction between a service provider and a person seeking care [...] can start a journey to recovery and a satisfying life – or [they] can leave a person unsure or even hopeless about their future and unwilling to go back a second time.”

National Alliance on Mental Illness, July 2016

“I need my first point of contact with any service to be warm, welcoming, respectful, compassionate and friendly”

“I want the service to get to know me as a person; the things I like, the things I need, and the difficulties I’ve had. I deserve to be seen as a whole person.”

“I want someone to sit down with me and get to know me as a person, not my mental health condition.”

What are people who use our services telling us they want? We asked.....

What is important at your first contact?

CONVERSATION THAT
LEAVES ME HOPEFUL

EMPATHY

WORDS not JARGON

LISTENED

TO

I get a
Compassionate
response

WELCOMING

WARMTH
is conveyed

Call back
quickly

Safety

Kindness

Non-judgemental
stance

CLEAR
INFORMATION

Timely
response

The listener is
Understanding

PROFESSIONAL
approach

I'm helped
to access an
interpreter

Carers
matter too

POLITENESS

STAFF are
knowledgeable

Treated like
an equal human

How does taking a trauma-informed approach help us achieve this?

- Traumatic experiences are common in the past and current lives of our service users. They can also be common in mental health staff.
- Trauma-informed approaches create space for us all to learn and think about how trauma affects people and how it might show up in people's behaviour, making behaviour more understandable.
- Understanding behaviour through a trauma-informed lens frees us up to see behaviour as an understandable reaction, to choose different responses, to create environments that minimise the risks of re-traumatisation.
- It also asks organisations to think about staffing needs and care in a trauma-informed way, creating environments that support us to do this trauma-informed thinking and act with compassion and professionalism.

Trauma Informed Care Cultures



Realise the widespread impact of trauma and understand the potential paths to recovery



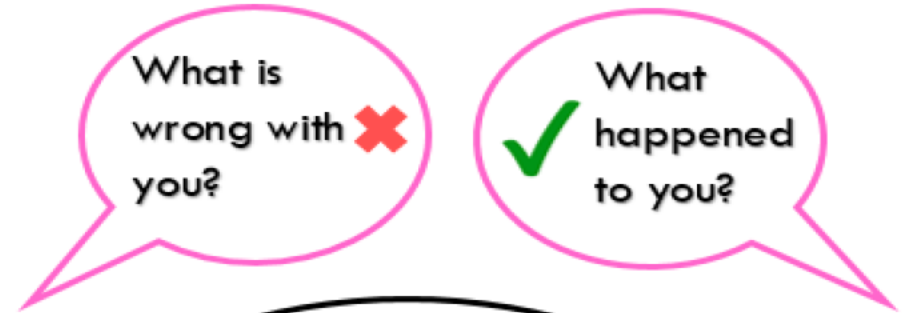
Recognise the signs and symptoms of trauma in service users, families, staff, teams and others involved in the system



Respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and strategies



Resist re-traumatisation of our service users, their families, and the staff who care for them




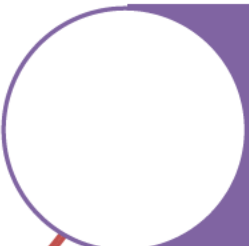


We have been asked to create some space today for you to think about how we use trauma-informed principles to help us achieve the type of “front door”/first point of contact with services that our service users are asking for.

How are we defining the 'front door'?

 **Environment** – *eg reception, entrance, exit, waiting room, furniture, colours*

 **Processes** – *eg first conversation, calls/in-person, words, tone, facial expression, boundaries, stance*

 **People** - *any staff can be 'front door' or have first contact*

How can we help service users feel safe with us and in our environment?

- Questions – Safe Environment
 - 1. What would a completely trauma informed environment look like?
 - 2. With this in mind, what is already trauma informed in your team's 'front door' environment, and what is still to be developed?
 - 3. What can we do to move one step closer to this?
- Questions – Trauma-Informed Process
 - 1. What would a first contact look like if it was completely trauma informed in its delivery?
 - 2. With this in mind, what is already trauma informed in your team's 'front door' first contact, and what is still to be developed? Keep in mind all contact points into the team (person, call, and so on).
 - 3. What can we do to move one step closer to this?

For the last 10 minutes.....identify a suggestion for:

**1 "quick win"
idea**

Which one of the ideas that you have come up might be easiest to implement quickly?

• **1 longer term
project idea**