

Borderline UK

Catchment area: National organisation, people meet online via internet forums. Also a carers group which meets in London

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What does the project offer?

Online support and advocacy.
Face to face peer to peer support
Involvement: training and consultation.

What kind of support or involvement activity is offered?

On line support, a variety of internet forums, face to face groups and training. Carers group meet once a month for an 1½ hours. Ex-service users provide training and consultation across the UK.

Who does the organisation aim to provide a service for?

Borderline UK (BUK) started by providing online services for people diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) but has grown to encompass services for all personality disorder and now provides face to face service as well as online services for service users, carers and professionals

Who can and who can't access it i.e. inclusion/exclusion criteria?

Who can access?	Who's excluded?
Anyone who identifies with issues of personality disorder. People with alcohol or drug issues can access as long as they identify with the issues of PD. Carers groups are only for carers. Service users only for service user groups.	People who don't identify with personality disorder. No exclusion criteria.

Are there any barriers to new people joining?

Online forums – No
Carers Group – limited by numbers
Service User Consultancy – None

How can people access it?

Online Forums – electronic request
Carers group - Apply by email.
Service User Consultancy – Apply by email

How does the process start?

As above

Are there any conditions to joining?

Online Forums: Each forum has different conditions, e.g. you must be a carer to join the carers' forum or a service user to join the other boards. With the managing BPD forum you need to have been with the main board for at least 1 month. Membership of Borderline UK is required to join the members' board. Membership will be £10 a year after the first year, as the first year is free, at the moment. BUK respectfully asks forum users to abide by forum rules and boundaries which are posted regularly to ensure user safety.

Carers Group: You must be a carer to join this group. There are no timescales

Service User Consultants: You must have attained a certain level of recovery to participate in this type of activity, e.g. completed a treatment programme or therapy. This is because the work can be quite emotionally demanding and may cause distress to those who may not have developed adequate coping mechanisms

Are there any opportunities for service users to have an informal chat/meeting with someone before joining?

Yes but initial contact by email is preferable.

What makes it different from mainstream mental health services?

Borderline UK is a service user led organisation in the voluntary sector. All of BUK's services are not tied to the normal borough restrictions that many mainstream mental health services are held to and as such are widely accessible.

Borderline UK has a track record of working closely with many types of organisations including those in the mainstream and government agencies. The perspective offered by BUK's service user and carer consultants offers a unique perspective to training that has been valued for a number of years.

What do people who use the service like about it?

Twenty four hour, seven days a week accessibility. Quality of training and consultation.

What could I expect if I came along?

Support from fellow users, experts by experience. You would expect information and help to understand the issues around personality disorder.

Who runs the organisation/project?

Voluntary sector organisation run by a Board of Directors and a National Project Development Manager.

Any plans for future development?

Borderline UK plans to run a second carers group in London and explore possibilities to develop face to face groups for service users.

The BUK website will be re-launched in the autumn with the possibility of new services and a wealth of information for users, carers and professionals to access.

BUK will continue to provide training and consultation with a variety of organisations and we are happy to think with anyone requiring this service how best to meet their organisation's needs.

Service User and Carer Involvement

Service User Involvement

- Borderline UK is a Service user led organisation. Service users and carers are members of the board of directors and are responsible for the majority of the organisations activity.
- Borderline UK service users and carers influence policy, strategy and PD service development, locally regionally and nationally.
- Borderline UK actively supports service users to get involved in all its activity. There are opportunities for mentoring and training.

Carer Involvement

- Carers are responsible for running their own internet forum and Borderline UK's carers' lead has influenced many government policies including the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines.
- Carers are encouraged to get involved at all levels
- Borderline UK has a vibrant carers' policy and we actively encourage and educate carers to become involved with the recovery of the person they care for as well as take up opportunities on a local, regional and national level.
- To encourage involvement we offer information, support and advocacy. Through encouragement and a strong ethos on carer and user involvement we offer many opportunities for carers and users to get involved.