

SUN (Service User Network) Project

Catchment area: Kingston, Wandsworth, Merton, Sutton and Richmond

Project Contact details:

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The address above is the administrative office, no groups are run here. Groups are run in each of the boroughs (Kingston, Wandsworth, Merton, Sutton and Richmond).

Project Opening times:

Groups are run 10a.m. to 12.30p.m. and 2p.m. to 4.30p.m

Accessibility:

Physically accessible? No

Language interpreter available? A language interpreter can be provided as well as someone for British sign language.

What does the project offer?

Group peer support

What kind of support or involvement activity is offered?

A network of peers providing support within groups and through a telephone liaison service. There is no drop in service or crisis line. Groups are run for 2½ hours three days a week.

Who does the organisation aim to provide a service for?

Anyone above the age of 18, there is no upper age limit.
Men and women, open to all ethnic communities.

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

Who can access?	Who's excluded?
Anyone living in catchment areas.	Individuals whose primary difficulty is alcohol or drug addiction. People must be able to abide by group boundaries.

Are there any barriers to new people joining?

It depends on how busy the groups are.

How can people access it?

Self referral.

How does the process start?

Phone for a leaflet to be sent to you, after reading that you can phone for an appointment.

Are there any conditions to joining?

A Crisis plan is mandatory but there are no commitments, nor are there any contracts. There are however guidelines and conditions and basic ground rules. (Information about these can be sent out in the post).

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

The person would have to ring up and speak to a clinician first. There is no opportunity to speak to a service user.

What makes it different from mainstream mental health services?

It is a unique project as it offers peer support groups via self referral. Also there is no risk assessment.

What do people who use the service like about it?

People benefit from the feedback of their peers. There is a project newsletter and service users have the opportunity to comment on the services provided.

What could I expect if I came along?

There is a welcome group for new members as well as existing members and there is total peer support.

Who runs the organisation/project?

It is completely funded by the Department of Health at present but in 2009 it will probably change to the South-West London and St. George's Trust.

Any plans for future development?

The Trust will put the Sun Project into their mainstream services in 2009.

Service User and Carer Involvement

Service User Involvement

- Service users support each other and there is a structured group with facilitators, led by service users paid by the project.
- There is national involvement: evaluations, annual conferences, PD Network, National organisations, speakers, training and consultations.

Carer Involvement

- No carer involvement as the groups are not open to carers.