The Annual Professional Support Unit Reference Group meeting was held on the 5 December 2013.

The morning session consisted of an update on the Professional Support Unit from Rosie Lusznat, and Richard Mann presented a complex case. Both of which raised the following topics for discussion:

- The need for further improving the communication between various Stakeholders; a workshop on how to achieve this was suggested.
- The way success and outcomes are recorded and how best to achieve it. It was suggested that there could be national benchmarking and also returning to the referrer for feedback on the trainee’s progress after case closure.
- Should there be an end point to the provision of support by the PSU and how this could be determined.

In the afternoon groups discussed what has worked well over the last year and what needs improvement:

**What is working well?**

- The independence of the Case Managers allows the Trainees to be more open, and the expertise of the VSG is excellent.
- The development of a communication map will help to standardise the process and ensure that all relevant people are kept informed.
- The PSU is able to provide support when it could not be provided elsewhere.
- The quality of referral information following the initial assessment using Form C has improved.
- The PSU Team is approachable and supportive.

**What needs improvement?**

- What does success look like? – If we are going to measure outcomes we need to work out how to assess success.
- Talking vs Action – Sometimes a subject is discussed many times and the action is slow. It was suggested that workshops could be run to discuss and agree on areas to be improved.
- VSG Referral process- At present there are different processes for referral to the different VSG providers. It would be good to have a standard process.
- The Case Managers would like better feedback from the VSG providers on the progress of their cases.

"Thank you for an excellent and thought provoking event. I was particularly struck by the depth and diversity of skills and experience in the room and the clear, common focus on working together to find the right solutions to enable trainees to succeed. Two things which I would encourage the network to do further work on is to think through how we can ensure that case managers are able to take account of all available perspectives when diagnosing the support package which is needed for a trainee and to think through how communication within the network could be enhanced, to ensure that the right combination of talents and expertise is brought together to meet the specific needs of each trainee.”

Paul Holmes—Managing Director, Health Education Wessex

Feature - Language Skills

The PSU can provide support to Trainees who experience difficulty with aspects of the English Language. These can be broadly divided into Speaking and Writing (productive skills), and Listening and Reading (receptive skills). The support is provided by Angela MacTavish, who is a member of the Virtual Support Group (VSG). Trainees are referred by their Case Managers when language difficulties have been identified.

The support provided is tailormade to the Trainee’s needs following a preliminary analysis from evidence drawn from problems in performing hospital or surgery duties. Self diagnosis by the trainee may also form an important part of this analysis.

The areas for development could include speaking to patients or colleagues, dictating letters or summarising case histories on a ward round. Difficulties could also arise when giving presentations or communicating via the telephone.

There might be difficulty with writing, for example in note taking, writing letters (formal & informal) and when creating their portfolios.

Additional support may be needed with skills in listening. Trainees may find it difficult to take case histories or follow instructions accurately.

Some Trainees find reading difficult when English is not their first language. The support provided by the VSG can help the Trainees with reading computer screens in their clinics or surgeries, keeping up to date with developments by reading journals and helping with the reading elements in specialty exams, for example MCQs. These are just a few examples of how support with language can help a Trainee. The PSU has just completed a new process map which guides a Case Manager through the referral to Angela for language support and is now available on the Wessex PSU web pages Link to VSG web page

A notable feature of the process is the development of Form L (for Language) which the Case Manager will ideally receive with the referral; if not, it can be supplied to the referrer for completion and to the trainee for his/her own perspective. This captures important elements in the initial assessment of language in the four areas described above, to help Angela prepare her intervention.

Suggestions for the PSU Update

This is our fourth issue of the newsletter and we would very much welcome your input as to what you would like to see included here.

- Would you like to contribute?
- Do you have a story to share of using our service?
- Are there mysteries about the PSU that you would like to be unravelled?

If you have any ideas or contributions please do get in touch with any of the team.

Changes to the PSU Team

Over the last couple of months we have seen some changes to the Case Management Team. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Steve Rousseau, Simon Newton, Judy Curson and Roger Palmer who for different reasons have decided to leave the PSU Team. We wish them all the best for their future ventures.

We are pleased to announce that we have received a lot of interest from possible future Case Managers and an induction day was held on the 4th February 2014 to prepare them for the role.

If you know of someone who might be interested in becoming a Case Manager please do not hesitate to contact the PSU Team. We are looking specifically for experienced clinicians with educational lead experience and/or expertise in managing trainees who require additional support.
Updates and additions to the PSU web pages include:

- The Process map for Language skills has been published
- The Meet the Team page has been updated

Coming soon....... Asperger’s Syndrome Process maps

As always updates can be accessed via: http://www.wessexdeanery.nhs.uk/professional_support_unit.aspx
If you have any suggestions for the website please do not hesitate to let us know.

Website Updates

In 2013 the PSU received 107 new referrals for doctors in training. These include:

- 6 self referrals
- 12 exam only referrals
- 27% were from GP
- 18% were from Medicine
- 16% were from Foundation
- 12% were from Psychiatry

Statistics

On the Horizon

Work is currently underway on streamlining and standardising the way in which Case Managers and the Virtual Support Group claim their expenses and submit their invoices.

The aim is to improve the monitoring of the PSU budget and enable the Wessex Deanery to project spend more accurately.

The first step towards this has already taken place with the implementation of the new Quarterly Update forms. The additional changes are planned to be implemented in the new financial year and further guidance and information will be published soon.

Upcoming Dates for the Professional Support Unit

- Case Manager Induction - 4 February 2014
- Case Manager Peer Supervision - 4 February 2014
- PSU Operational Panel - 1 April 2014
- Case Manager Peer Supervision - 1 April 2014
- Case Manager /VSG Development Day - 15 May 2014
- Case Manager Peer Supervision - 10 June 2014
- PSU Operational Panel - 30 September 2014
- PSU Reference Group - 11 December 2014

PSU Contact Details

You can contact the Professional Support Unit whenever you have a query relating to our work, or if you’re looking for advice on a referral or active case.

If you have a general query you may find the answer on our web pages: http://www.wessexdeanery.nhs.uk/support/support/professional_support_unit.aspx

Alternatively you can contact us individually as below:

Mrs Julie Worthington, PSU Administrator: julie.worthington@wessex.hee.nhs.uk or 01962 718428

Mrs Anna Parsons, Assistant Programme Manager for Revalidation & PSU anna.parsons@wessex.hee.nhs.uk or 01962 718413

Dr Richard Mann, Consultant for Professional Support: richard.mann@nhs.net

Dr Rosie Lusznat, Associate Dean for Professional Development: rosie.lusznat@wessex.hee.nhs.uk or 01962 718417