

Chapter 6: Leading and Managing Change in Practice Settings

Improving recovery in mental health through use of peer support workers (PSW) programme in mental health care

The Council of Deans of Health and the University of Nottingham

The Council of Deans of Health (2014) publication *Care Transformed: The Impact of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professional Research* for example cites a range of instances of outcomes for patient care being transformed by the work of nurses, midwives and allied health professionals in higher education. A number of case studies were submitted as part of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 that constitute clear evidence that their research has had a major impact on the quality of life and wellbeing of patients who are dealing with their individual health problems. The chairperson of the Council of Deans of Health stated that: ‘In the case of academic research undertaken by nurses, midwives and AHPs, these case studies give us a unique window on how outcomes for people experiencing health and social care are being transformed by their work’ (p.1). One of the case studies related to ‘peer support workers’ (PSW) programmes in mental health care in the UK illustrates the benefit of research-based novel clinical interventions.

A University of Nottingham research in the field of recovery [from mental health problems] (the process through which people find ways of living meaningful lives with or without the symptoms of their condition) has had a major influence on changes in mental health policy. It has led to a new model of service provision both in the UK (including through NICE guidance and the NHS’s outcomes framework) and internationally (including in Western Europe, Scandinavia, Canada, Australia and Asia).

The work has contributed to a reduction in the use of mainstream services and has enhanced the quality of life enjoyed by people with mental health problems. The research has also been central to the Department of Health’s Implementing Recovery through Organisational Change programme, which has pioneered the use of Recovery Colleges and peer support workers (PSW) in mental health care in the UK. The University created the UK’s first accredited PSW training programme which has trained more than 550 people. “In the UK alone the guidance is estimated to have contributed to a saving of almost £2bn over 10 years. (Council of Deans of Health, 2014: 5)

Council of Deans of Health (2014) *Care Transformed: The Impact of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professional Research* (18 December 2014). Available at:

www.councilofdeans.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Care-Transformed-web-version-1.pdf (accessed 18 September 2015).