

Bryan Lynch Sussex Partnership NHS FT

Speakers

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We're really beginning to see with things such as trauma informed care and approaches, the social determinants, factor or someone's life is perhaps more important than any other part, and I think this paper is a starting point, the same or social workers are ideally placed out of all professions, to to speak to social determinants and start championing looking at that as a preventative way of approaching mental health rather than the kind of diagnostic way. So when we got the guidance and shared it with our staff in Sussex partnership, we then thought quite long and hard about how we might use it, and how it might be useful for us. We felt that is a good starting point, but we didn't feel like it went far enough. We felt like it was welcoming, identifying where we're at in social work, but it didn't go further enough to say, well, what should social work look like? So in Sussex partnership, we consulted all our 140-150 social workers as to what they thought social work should be like and what it meant, what the key skills and responsibilities are. And over a period of several months and a few meetings, we've now got a piece of paper, which is only two sides of A4, but it describes what their sort of professional and personal approach and commitment should be for social workers mental health, and importantly, what their key skills and experience and knowledge should be as well. Having this two page document, which describes what we think social work is for our organisation means we then have something that we can go to in terms of job descriptions, recruitment, and thinking about planning for training and CPD going forward., so it's become a real catalyst for something quite valuable for us here. It's given us and we've been able to share with colleagues what it is to be a social worker, SPF team, that's been really helpful in terms of recruitment, and understanding what skills we expect social workers to bring., and increasingly, job descriptions have this our description of what social work is within them in our trust. I think another one of the challenges we in this trust we're grappling with, which I'm sure is similar nationally in NHS, but they'll trust is there are opportunities in terms of monies coming in looking specifically in terms of community mental health transformation, as a real opportunity. But I think there's also a real rush to try and fill what are huge vacancies for us and all NHS Trusts across the country. And whilst that's exciting as also risks that people might want to just employ a role anyone into a role, and actually, I think for leads, for social work across England, it's really important we help our colleagues to understand what a social worker can bring, and what any profession can bring, and think carefully about and strategically about how to employ people where employment is kind of, I know we really need to fill spaces quickly, there's something about doing this mindfully and carefully for the longer term rather than the short term. Certainly something we've engaged in here., and I'd encourage others to do. I think the guidance has been a real catalyst for me in our organisation in terms of social

work and got us thinking about social work identity more than anything. So I've got colleagues in similar roles to mine, nationally, I'd encourage you to go and speak to your workforce and use it as an opportunity to say, what does social work mean to you in the first instance? And how best do you think we can work as a profession in this organisation and just get those lines opening? Because once you begin to start defining that and have a coherent message, I think you're more powerful in your organisation and you can do better for your for what you want to do, which is for the service users and carers and families.