**Dundee Public Social Partnership**

**Tests of change proposal – Improved Access to Recovery Learning**

**Background**

We have a Recovery Library in the Cairn Centre; this is filled with inspiring books, recovery literature as well as easy read books. We would like to develop the library further to include a digital lending facility. (This is dependant on a successful conclusion to a funding bid already submitted).

**Drivers behind this proposal:**

Digital poverty has become increasingly apparent during lockdown with many people being excluded from attending online recovery meetings and support forums which has left them further marginalised as Covid-19 restrictions continue to disrupt the delivery of face to face groups.

**Proposal**

Provide a package of recovery support to people in their own community through a range of methods, workbooks, one-to-one, virtual groups and face-to-face groups. This will be supplemented with link to a recovery mentor to support learning and engagement with recovery groups and activities. Recovery mentors will be people with lived experience of substance use and recovery and will be provided by Hillcrest Futures and RecoverTay, Tayside’s grassroots recovery community.

We plan to create a take home workbook which will be filled with therapeutic activities aimed at motivating people to make and sustain change. We have already developed a family resilience toolkit and would use this format to develop a toolkit learning resource for people struggling with their own substance use. Toolkits will be part of the support package depending on individual circumstances, for example family and carers can use the Resilience Toolkit and individuals with their own substance use will use the Recovery Toolkit.

I have embedded the family toolkit below. The toolkit for individuals will be based on this format; both will be reprinted and will also be available online.



The new toolkit will be aimed at those struggling with their own substance use and will include:

* Cognitive Behaviour Therapy exercises to help change negative thinking patterns
* Mindfulness and other relaxation techniques to reduce stress and anxiety
* Relapse prevention tools – being aware of triggers, avoiding dangerous situations etc
* Coping with anxiety
* Managing thoughts and feelings and behaviours
* Practicing gratitude

This list is not exhaustive and the toolkit will be developed with staff, peer mentors and RecoverTay members with lived experience of recovery from substance use.

We will also encourage use of the Scottish Recovery Consortium Recovery Workbook so that people have choice and access to as much information as possible.

Having digital connectivity will become a lifeline for those trying to establish and sustain recovery from substance use. Although each individual’s journey will be unique, recovery is a social experience and research shows that people have an increased chance of recovery if they have the support of others with a similar lived experience.

If funding is successful we will purchase equipment and data to allow people to virtually access groups. If funding is not successful we will use staff equipment to support people to access groups by attending our many drop-in’s across the West of Dundee.

We have drop-in’s at, Lochee Hub, Kirkton Community Centre, Menziehill Church, Charleston Community Centre and plan to use technology to link these up with recovery meetings. For example a face-to-face meeting can be held at the Cairn Centre (with restricted numbers) but this can be available across MS Teams so that it is also available at the drop-in listed above. Either the worker would use a laptop or tablet to link to the meeting and support people to attend or if we have funding we can lend people the equipment to access the meeting themselves.

Workers across the City would be able to support people to link with these meetings and we could link with other recovery meetings anywhere.

The meetings would be supplemented by working through the toolkit and being supported to do this if necessary.

The groups will form part of a support package along with the toolkit, SRC recovery resources, one-to-one and group support and will be delivered by Hillcrest and ISMS staff initially but we hope that this network will grow to increase the provision over time.

As you can imagine being able to attend regular one-to-one and group meetings is essential for learning and progressing with what is often difficult but rewarding change.

Meetings will be available for individuals and family members. Meetings can be available out with usual service opening times.

Staff from partner organisations will also be encouraged to access the meetings either for their own learning or to support some they are working with to attend.

**Outputs**

* Development of individual toolkit with people who have personal experience of substance use and recovery
* Reprinting of both family and individual toolkit
* Dedicated staff time to host online and face-to-face support including group and one to one support
* Drop-ins in local communities to increase access to virtual recovery meetings

**Outcomes**

* Numbers of people being supported to use the toolkits and SRC resources
* No of virtual meetings available
* No of people attending virtual meetings
* No of people accessing digital lending scheme (dependent on funding)
* Number of people linked with a recovery mentor

**Recommendations**

This model will increase the availability of recovery meetings across the West of Dundee initially however we anticipate that WAWY and other organisations could add to the menu of meetings and/or support the meetings across the East of the City.

This will also link with the Lochee Hub and Spoke TOC as an additional resource that individuals can be made aware of and supported to engage with the recovery package which will be develop by people with lived experience of substance use as outlined above.