**Dates of the event**: May 17th and 18th 2017 **Committee**: Karen, Pat L and Sara

**Costs**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **BUDGET** | **ACTUAL SPENT** |
| Stand | 1004.40 | 1004.40 |
| Literature |  320 | 271.44 |
| Travel and Parking |  200 |  |
| **TOTAL** | **1524.40** |  |

Literature Costs

We have come in almost £50 under budget on literature, thanks to Sara getting us a very good price on the printing, coming in at £40 under budget (£32 less than last year) and the OAGB literature being slightly cheaper than estimated, too.

Volunteer Expenses

We are just waiting for the volunteer expenses to filter through. Most volunteers either came by train or car shared. We were given a total of **five** Car Park passes by the event organisers, rather than the official one, saving us a total of **£60** in parking charges! Thank you Sterling!

**Funding**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **AMOUNT REQUESTED**  | **AMOUNT APPROVED**  | **AMOUNT RECEIVED** |
| WSO  |  $520 (Approx £400 @ £=$1.3) | $520/ £400 |  |
| NSB  |  600 | 600 | 600 |
| HoEIG  |  524.40 | 524.40 |  |
| **TOTAL** | **1524.40** | **1524.40** |  |

We are waiting to hear whether the funding from World Service has come through yet.

**The Event**

The exhibition was very busy and we had a very good location at the back of the hall by the café and near the ‘Wellbeing Theatre’ where the speaker sessions took place. Our stand wasn’t upgraded this year, so at 2m x 1m it was very small but because of the space in front and a handy pillar on one side we were able to spread out.

12 volunteers staffed the stand over the 2 days in ½ day shifts of 3 volunteers at a time which worked really well. 6 of the volunteers spoke in pairs at the three 15 minute ‘Speaker Slots’ we were allocated by the event organisers.

When the doors opened at 8.45 on the first day there were delegates passing the stand straight away. When I mentioned we were speaking later on many delegates already knew. Between us we spoke to GPs, dieticians, podiatrists, midwives, physiotherapists, psychotherapists, psychiatrists, care workers, school nurses, a speech therapist, a cancer nurse, a diabetic nurse, someone running an eating disorders group, those working with youngsters, disabled, teens and bariatric nurses. Some people came to the stand for themselves. It is hard to estimate how many healthcare professionals we spoke to but I would estimate it to be around 300, with 50 – 60 healthcare professionals at a time listening to each of our 3 talks.

**Feedback from Volunteers**

After the event I emailed the volunteers and asked their feedback. Here are some of their comments:-

*What did you personally get from your service at Primary Care?*

Yet again, a rewarding and exhilarating experience.

Rewarding, gaining real satisfaction, buzzing, a sense of getting through to people – seeing the penny drop

Felt uplifted, gained a deeper sense of their own recovery

I gain real satisfaction in having the opportunity of passing the message on to so many people who are not aware of our existence.

Opportunity to see the progress I have made at a time when I've been feeling low.

Working with other members of the fellowship to carry the message.

Humbling and helpful for my recovery. I enjoyed sharing the day with other OAers that I wouldn’t normally see.

Seeing clearly how our being there was benefitting other people

I would recommend this service to anyone

As always a huge amount! Struck again by how many of the people who came to speak to us were asking for themselves or for someone close to them so it was a real opportunity to share experience, strength and hope. I was reminded again of what I was like when I was fully in the disease and just how different my life is now. I was also reminded how much I need the programme to keep me in recovery and how much I don’t want to go back to how I used to live.

For myself I found the event very exciting and rewarding and was delighted to speak to so many Healthcare Professionals who were interested and receptive. I would add I really appreciated and felt moved by the overwhelming dedication from the volunteers; despite the short notice, almost every one of them replied to my email request for feedback within hours so I could include this in my report today. I have learned a lot from all the organising that went into this event and felt very supported.

*Roughly how many people do you think you spoke to?*

Volunteers spoke to a few people in depth or 30 to 70 for a minute or so during the very busy times.

*What was the response from the Healthcare Professionals you spoke to?*

Quite a good proportion had already heard of us … about a third in my contacts

All were receptive, and aware of the mental side of the disease, recognising it was not simply about diet/the food.

A Bariatric nurse mentioned that losing the weight post-surgery didn’t necessarily make their patients happy, recognised the complexity of the disease!).

One GP expressed his admiration for the 3 people who spoke in the theatre slot on Wednesday lunchtime. He was impressed by their willingness to be so open about their experience, and by all the others on the busy stand (immediately after the theatre slot) giving their time to help others by spreading the word.

Very positive, more and more people realising it’s not just a diet sheet which is needed: much more complex

One GP I spoke to had carried out some research and thought it wasn’t just about emotional/comfort eating to cope with life, it can also be genetic.  Another one was aware that it has to be up to the individual to want to recover.  He said that he gives out the contact details for AA when an alcoholic sees him but he explains that it has to be up to him/her.  He told me in future he would do the same for patients with eating disorders.  One GP told me that she gives the contact details of Slimming World to her patients but some keep on coming back.  She said she would give out our details too.

1 GP said she would give out our details, 1 said he gives AA details to alcoholic patients and he will now give OA details to those with Eating disorders

Very positive and interested, bar one ‘Eat Less’

A few were dubious, some giggled.

Even those that giggle and walk on have at least now heard of our name!

Most hadn't heard of us; some knew nothing about 12 Steps at all.

They seemed positive about OA and interested to know how it could benefit the people they worked with.​

One GP’s attitude definitely changed for the better on hearing we're NOT a charity but work entirely voluntarily

1 healthcare professional asked how to broach the subject with patients

Request for info to give patients

Most I spoke to had never heard of OA. Lots had family and friends with overeating problems.

Also, what I noted was that the professionals I spoke to were not necessarily gathering information to give to their patients but rather felt that they were in no position to advise their patients while they had a problem themselves. For some that looked quite painful and shameful.

Overwhelmingly positive. Most hadn’t heard of us and most were receptive to what I was sharing. Most didn’t have eating disorders as their primary area of responsibility but most said that they regularly had patients who they thought could benefit from the signposting.

*What worked well?*

A morning or an afternoon slot is plenty of time to be on duty and giving and sharing, rather than a whole day which was exhausting for me last year.

Good balance of leaflets - people did want a range rather than just the specially made one.

Clear meeting list.

I think it works well having 3 of us there at once, even though it could seem a bit crowded.

Well organised resources - the "take down" was very smooth, and it really helped being able to bring the car to the back door!

Stand very appealing and very good location;

The display was great and the OA banner of the table looked very professional.

I thought the position in the hall was ace and it would be great to have it again.  I thought the stand looked really appealing with the banners and we were all very open, available and attractive.

I thought the whole thing worked like a really well-oiled machine. We seemed to have more of the relevant literature (e.g. Introducing OA to Healthcare Professionals) this year which was great.

The speaker slots were very well attended and bring a great many people to the stand.

*What could be done differently/better next year?*

Stand a bit small. The stand this year was smaller than last year and was a bit crowded with three volunteers staffing it and I felt we were standing in front of the information which made it difficult for people to see.

It might possibly be helpful to have a pre-approved 'spiel' to deliver to people so that volunteers were sure that they are covering the most important points and giving the most useful information in the short time available?

I was asked by a couple of GP’s if they had anything we could hand out to their patients.  One took a small pile of our ‘New Prospect’ cards but we didn’t have many.  These are quite inexpensive and come in little packs of 25.  Perhaps in future we could invest in some of these and hand out a pack to those GP’s etc. who are particularly interested.

The other volunteers may have already thought of this but we put a copy of the ‘flyer’ we have produced on each ‘seat’ on the benches in the speaker section, so they had to pick them up before sitting down.

I think we should have a sheet with headings of the common professions so we can quickly make a mark under that profession.  What they had on the AA stand was a name and address sheet for those who wanted more information sending to their home address or their practices address.

**Expression of Thanks**

A heartfelt ‘Thank you’ to my co-committee members, Pat L and Sara (Shrewsbury) and to the other 9 volunteers who made the whole event such a success: Pat H (Shrewsbury), Julia (Stoke), Jane (Kidsgrove), Cathrine (Hereford), Trish and Pam (Cannock) and Chris, Mike and Rachel (Birmingham).

I am very grateful to those who spoke in the Theatre Sessions; I appreciate public speaking is rather daunting for some of us!

Thank you to those volunteers who also took the time to feed back to me only yesterday. I was delighted to get such an enthusiastic response so quickly. It feels like a real team effort. I really appreciate the constructive comments about what we could improve next time.

**The Future**

Should InterGroup decide to have a stand at Primary Care and Public Health again next year then just to make InterGroup aware that both Pat and myself will be standing down from the committee as our 2 years’ service is up. I think the decision is usually made by September as funding applications to OAGB need to be done in the autumn. The abstinence requirement for Chair is one year and for committee members 3 months. I am very happy to mentor a new chair, just as the previous chair mentored me.

Karen, Chair, PC&PH