

SECTION 2:

Liberties College Staff Training Days

- Educators' Training Day 1
- Educators' Training Day 2
- Administration Staff, Porters and General Operatives' Training Day
- Educator's Workshop on the Inclusion Policy (Training Day 3)

Educators Training Day 1

This training took place as the morning of a Staff Day in Liberties College on November 12th 2004.

Background

It was clear from the Teachers' Focus Group results that the Educators were drawn to matters related to crisis situations. In that they echoed a common attitude in society at large that mental illness is a problem and one to be dealt with using what expediency one can. As we worked on the content of a training day, it became apparent that it would be all too easy to fall into a trap of perpetuating stereotypes by focusing on extreme or dramatic scenarios.

Buoyed by the courageous stress put at the EEI Networking Day in October 2004 that EEI2 on seeking "something innovative" that could enter the mainstream on its own value, it was decided to give the training Day a particular flavour. Rather than rushing to answer the obvious questions, the purpose of the day would be to broaden the agenda and look to a deeper reflection on mental health in the educational context.

Key to this new approach would be to bring the Educators in direct contact with a real person who had had self-experience of being mentally unwell in an educational setting. Here Schizophrenia Ireland more than justified its role as Project Promoter by providing a natural channel to one such person. Tim O'Connor had been diagnosed as Schizophrenic while studying at third level. Tim has a degree in Psychology and is now active in the Irish Advocacy Network. He was invited to be the keynote speaker of the training morning.

Research had turned up the Open University's Teaching Toolkit, *Supporting Students with Mental Health Difficulties*. This publication contained several case scenarios with commentary that was mind- and agenda-broadening in regard to mental health attitudes. These stories were re-edited and re-cast in terms of an Irish further education third level college like Liberties College to form the basis of a workshop that would be the second part of the morning. There were six stories in all each with its commentary. All six were distributed to participants as a resource, though only two of them were to be material for the workshops.

Timetable of the morning

Time	Item	Facilitator(s)	Content of Item
9.15 – 9.40 am	“The Mental Health in Education Project” Powerpoint Presentation	Eamon Sweeney	
9.45– 10.15 am	“The experience of student mental health difficulties and current thinking on mental health”	Tim O'Connor BA(Psych.) self-experience, working in mental health area.	

Time	Item	Facilitator(s)	Content of Item
10.15 – 10.30 am	Questions and Answers	Tim O’Connor Susan McFeely Cillian Russell	
10.30 – 11.00 am	Coffee Break		
11.00 – 11.35 am	Teacher Workshops (2 stories for discussion and feedback. Discussion questions will accompany each story. Insightful input will be given by facilitator) 4 other stories with input will also be distributed as a resource	Eamon Sweeney Cillian Russell Susan McFeely Tim O’Connor Richard Hanson Alex Scheele	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 2: Miriam Issues: <u>setting boundaries,</u> <u>avoiding dependence</u> • Story 3: Paul: Issues: <u>flexibility,</u> <u>empathy, not making assumptions</u> • Story 1: Patricia : Issues: maintaining confidentiality, avoiding prejudice • Story 6: Angela: Issues: empathising, not making assumptions, focussing on the student • Story 4: Bill: Issues: Setting boundaries, protecting self while responding to anger or distress • Story 5: Simon : Issues: Assuring personal safety, avoiding misinterpretation of behaviour
11.40 – 12.10 pm	Debriefing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airing (pointing to resolution) of issues raised. Was there anything new, different?
12.10 – 12.30 pm	Action Planning. Personal development	Eamon Sweeney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided by Action Planning Sheet

Time	Item	Facilitator(s)	Content of Item
	aims Project Development suggestions. Evaluation.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Sheets • Project Development Suggestion sheet

Training Pack

The Training Pack supplied to the Educators consisted of

- The timetable of the morning.
- Six Stories, each with 'Pause for Thought' questions and informative commentary.
 - *(The Stories can be found in Section 5 of this Report)*
- Personal Action Planning Sheet
- Project Suggestion Sheet
 - *(The Project Suggestion Sheet and the Educators' responses can be found in Section 4 of this Report)*
- Evaluation Sheet
 - *(The Evaluation sheet and the Educators' responses can be found in Section 3 of this Report)*

Workshops

Educators were divided into six groups. Each group was assigned one of two stories for thought and discussion: Three groups with one story and three with the other.

They were allowed 30 minutes and asked to appoint a note taker to take notes for the project input and a rapporteur for the debriefing.

They were also asked to read the other story and notes before coming back so that they could relate to the reports on the discussion of that story.

Educators Training Day 2

This training took place as Staff 'half-in/half-out' Day in Liberties College on April 19th 2005.

Background

The evaluation of the first Training Day showed that the Educator's first hand interaction with someone with self-experience of mental illness in an educational context had been a valuable learning journey. It was felt that this learning needed the complement of a formal introduction to the notion of Recovery in current mental health thinking. Again Schizophrenia Ireland was able to offer the resource of one of its experienced Regional Development Officers, Susan McFeely. Susan was able to present a module on Recovery and engage in question and answer session with the teachers.

In the course of considering how an Inclusion Policy could become reality, the notion of Reasonable Accommodation presented itself as the obvious interface between student needs and the Colleges response. Particularly the Equality Authority's concept that much of reasonable accommodation is included within the notions of common courtesy and requirements of the profession was a useful starting point for reflection. Material edited from varied sources were supplied to Educators in advance of the Training Afternoon.

Aims of the afternoon

- 1) To further develop the student and teacher mental health awareness of the November Training Day amongst the Educators of the College.
- 2) To introduce the notion of the Recovery Model in Mental Health and its implications for students with self-experience undertaking Further Education
- 3) To allow Educators an opportunity to discuss the relevance of the Recovery Model to their dealing with students.
- 4) To discuss among Staff what Reasonable Accommodation means in the existing culture and practice of the College
- 5) To examine what Reasonable Accommodation in relation to mental health issues might mean in the developing practice and policy of the College (bearing in mind the Equal Status Act 2000 and the proposed College Inclusion Policy)
- 6) To introduce a draft of a proposed College Inclusion Policy for discussion and feedback.

Timetable of the afternoon

Time	Content	Facilitator
3.00 pm	Introduction	Michael King
3.05 pm	Update on Mental Health in Education Project	Eamon Sweeney
3.20 pm	“The Mental Health Recovery Model and Further Education”	Susan McFeely, <i>RDO Schizophrenia Ireland</i>
3.40 pm	Questions and Answers	Susan McFeely
4.00 pm	5 mins. Break	
4.05 pm	Workshops “Aspects of Reasonable Accommodation of Students and College Inclusion Policy Development”	Various
4.50 pm	Evaluation	

Training Pack

The Training Pack supplied to the Educators consisted of

- The timetable of the afternoon
- “Recovery, Frequently Asked Questions”
- “Recovery: Definition and Components”
- “FAQ from Educators on Reasonable Accommodation”.
- “What Accommodations work in School” (abridged)
- “What kind of accommodations are people with a mental health problem likely to need?”
- “Rights and Responsibilities with regard to Reasonable Accommodations”.
 - *(The above six documents can be found in Section 5 of this Report)*
- An Evaluation Sheet
 - *(The Evaluation sheet and the Educators’ responses can be found in Section 3 of this Report)*

Workshops

Educators were divided into six groups. They were asked to discuss the following:

- How comfortable are you with the concepts of Recovery and Reasonable Accommodation?
- Your experience of Reasonable Accommodation in recent and current practice in the College: highs and lows.
- Are you happy with the approach that the emerging College Inclusion Policy is taking?

Administration Staff, Porters and General Operatives' Training Day

This training took place Liberties College Library, Mark's Alley on August 16th 2005.

Background

The Administration Front Office, the Porters and the General Operatives in the College are often the first contact someone in recovery returning to College may meet with. Likewise someone who is beginning to become unwell may often confide their difficulties to someone on the staff other than manager or educator.

From the start of the project it was the intention to provide training for this important section of the College Staff. As it turned out the training was given late in the day of the project. This delay however meant that we could draw on the experience of two Educator training days. The resulting program was a combination of the best of the previous two occasions.

Timetable of the morning

Time	Content	Facilitator
9.30 am	Introduction	Eamon Sweeney
10.00 am	“Experiencing Mental Health Difficulties”	Tim O’ Connor
10.20 am	Questions and Answers	Tim and Susan
10.45 am	Coffee Break	
11.15 am	“The Recovery Model and Further Education”	Susan Mc Feely, Regional Development Officer Schizophrenia Ireland
11.35 am	Questions and Answers	Susan and Tim
11.55 am	5 minute break	
12.00 pm	Workshop “The College Inclusion Policy”	Various
12.45 pm	Evaluation	
1.00 pm	Lunch	

Training Pack

The Training Pack supplied to the participants consists of

- The timetable of the morning
- “Recovery, Frequently Asked Questions”
- Text of Liberties College Inclusive Learning Policy with Indicators
- Equal Status Act 2000 page
- Page on Enrolment and Confidentiality
 - *(the above four documents can be found in Section 5 of this Report)*
- Evaluation Sheet.
 - *(the Evaluation Sheet and the participants’ responses can be found in Section 3 of this Report)*

Workshop

All the participants were involved in a single workshop.

They were invited to discuss Indicators 1 and 2 of the College Inclusion Policy.

Workshop on the College Inclusion Policy (Training Day 3)

This Workshop took place in Liberties College, Mark's Alley on August 31st 2005.

Background

This workshop marked the final public moment of the Project in the College. A year almost to the day when the Educators first heard of the Project, they were now in a position to reflect on the implications of the Inclusion Policy for practice in the Departments.

At the Principal's direction all Departments would include in their yearly plans a section on moving forward inclusion.

This Workshop was conceived as a suitable means to raise Staff awareness about issues related to the inclusion policy at a whole college level before they were faced with the challenge of detail at Departmental meetings.

Based on an approach widely used in business to successfully translate vision and policy into effective action, the Teachers were asked to brainstorm on objectives for the year that could resonate with the Indicators.

Further they were asked to consider if there was not some key metric or measurement that would signal that the objective was being realised or not.

Further they were asked what data would need to be gathered to make that measurement.

Finally, if they had a measurement, what initiatives would support that during the year and so support realising the objective.

The project knew that it was proposing a mission impossible to the teachers in the workshop. The teachers had not been trained in the logic of the process they were being asked to start. Indeed training in such a process would need to be part of a completely new follow-on project. Nevertheless it was felt to be a worthwhile exercise to end the Project by leaving a marker to point the way to further development and future challenge.

Timetable of the morning

Time	Content	Facilitator
9.15 - 9.35 am	Update on Mental Health in Education Project	Eamon Sweeney
9.35 – 9.45 am	Clarification of purpose and direction of Workshop	Michael King and Eamon Sweeney
9.45 am	Workshop Groups	Each Group appoints facilitator and rapporteur
10.30 am	Coffee Break	
11.00 am	Reporting of the Workshops	Eamon Sweeney
11.20 pm	Evaluation	

Training Pack

The Training Pack supplied to the participants is to be found in Appendix 4.

It consists of

- The timetable of the morning
- A proof copy of Liberties College Staff Handbook Inclusion, Equality and Mental Health (previously circulated). The Handbook contains the Inclusion Policy and Indicators and a copy of the Student Guide on Inclusion.
- Sheet with Indicators for discussion highlighted and Workshop Questions.
 - *(The Sheet and notes from the Workshops can be found in Section 4 of this Report)*
- Evaluation Sheet.
 - *(The Evaluation sheet and the Educators' responses can be found in Section 3 of this Report)*

Workshop

The Participants formed 5 groups and each group appointed a facilitator and a rapporteur to discuss highlighted Indicators.

Indicators of inclusiveness

1. Applications to the College from learners with particular needs are welcomed.
2. **A learning environment is fostered in which learners feel they have the opportunity to communicate a particular learning need.**
3. **The support, learning and assessment needs of learners are identified.**
4. **Tutors are informed of specific learner needs e.g. the use of coloured paper for handouts; the use of a tape recorder during class.**
5. Professional development re Inclusive Learning is provided.
6. **The learning needs of individual students are met with reasonable accommodation.**
7. The Examination Secretary is informed of specific assessment needs e.g. a scribe; longer time.
8. Confidentiality and respect are core qualities of practice.
9. Inclusive learning policy and practice continue to be developed and managed.

Workshop Questions

- 1. What objective¹ or objectives are possible in relation to the above emboldened Indicators during the coming year in the College?**
- 2. What would be a key measure or metric of the achievement of the Objective?**
- 3. What data, information, etc, would need to be gathered regularly to calculate the key measurement?**
- 4. What Initiatives could be taken to support the key measurement?**

¹ Objective: ‘A goal intended to be attained (and which is believed to be attainable)’