



# miscellany

## New Guide

Involving users and carers in mental health services is something that service providers are increasingly expected to do. In order to set up successful user and carer involvement projects, there are a number of stages to consider. These include deciding on the main aim of the project, as well as identifying potential hindrances and thinking of ways these can be overcome. It is important to evaluate projects, so that user and carer involvement can be made effective. Researchers at the University of Leeds have produced a guidebook for service providers that covers the stages involved in developing user and carer involvement projects. This guidebook can be downloaded from <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/medicine/divisions/psychiatry/research/guidebook.htm>. Alternatively, print copies can be ordered by contacting the authors at the Academic Unit of Psychiatry, University of Leeds, 15 Hyde Terrace, Leeds LS2 9LT (Simpson, E. L., House, A. O. & Barham, M. (2002) *A Guide to Involving users, Ex-users and Carers in Mental Health Service Planning, Delivery and Research: A Health Technology Approach*. Leeds, University of Leeds, Academic Unit of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences).

## Royal Medical Benevolent Fund

The Royal Medical Benevolent Fund is a registered charity that provides support to doctors in need and their families. Whether as a result of health problems, an unexpected family tragedy, or other reasons, there are many doctors who

today are in great need. Never is that need more evident than at Christmas time. The 2001 appeal raised £74 000 and the Fund would like to exceed that sum in 2002. Please consider making a donation, preferably using gift aid, and brighten Christmas 2002 for many needy colleagues and their dependants. Contributions marked 'Christmas Appeal' may be sent to the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund, 24 King's Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 8QN or to the Treasurer of your local guild of this Fund. For further information please e-mail [info@rmbf.org](mailto:info@rmbf.org) or visit the website: <http://www.rmbf.org>.

## Flexible working for doctors

The flexible careers scheme was developed as part of the Improving Working Lives for Doctors initiative. The scheme helps doctors maintain their careers by providing more centrally funded opportunities to work part-time and have temporary career breaks. The Flexible Careers Scheme funds doctors who are able to work up to 49% of full-time. In each case the scheme is adapted to individual circumstances and provides sufficient medical/clinical practice for revalidation purposes. The scheme helps doctors in the training grades, career grade doctors, returners and doctors nearing retirement. Some of the benefits of the scheme include: a fixed annual amount paid to the doctor to contribute towards professional expenses; access to the NHS pension scheme and to the same employment rights as other colleagues; and an exit strategy for moving on after

being on the Flexible Career Scheme. For further information or to apply to join, please contact NHS Professionals (Tel: 0845 6060 345).

## Commission for Health Improvement

The Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) was set up in 1999 to improve the quality of patient care in the NHS across England and Wales. CHI has completed clinical governance reviews in the majority of acute trusts across the country and is now reviewing mental health, primary care and ambulance trusts. There are 95 trusts in England and Wales that provide mental health services. These include trusts that provide integrated acute and mental health services and primary care trusts, which provide secondary mental health services. CHI aims to complete up to 30 reviews of mental health services each year. To achieve this, they require the skills and knowledge of consultants on their review teams. CHI review teams are multi-disciplinary and mental health reviews usually comprise a consultant psychiatrist, nurse, clinical psychologist, occupational therapist, manager, social care member, lay person and mental health service user. All consultants are encouraged to apply and become CHI reviewers. Your experience is vital to CHI's work, but you would also return to work equipped with even greater skills to improve patient care in your organisation. For more information on becoming a CHI reviewer please contact the reviewer team on tel: 020 7448 9467; or e-mail: [reviewer@chi.nhs.uk](mailto:reviewer@chi.nhs.uk).

## Educational qualification for new psychiatrists

The Postgraduate Certificate in Medical Education (Psych) provides a qualification in education for psychiatrists by distance learning, and is jointly validated by the University of Wales College of Medicine and the Royal College of Psychiatrists. The course is designed to assist specialist registrars and new consultants with teaching, training, supervision, assessment and course development in psychiatric education.

### Course outcomes

The PCME (Psych) aims to produce competent, reflective and self-managing educators. Participants may expect to:

- Achieve a sound knowledge and understanding of how adults learn
- Relate this understanding to the educational needs and context of those training to be psychiatrists
- Develop their professional skills in applying educational knowledge to practice.

### Course structure

The course is designed so that it can be tackled in two stages:

1. Follow a basic module on teaching, learning and assessment (passing the module assessment gives you accreditation as a Royal College of Psychiatrists' trainer)
2. Add two further modules and a project (passing these further assessments qualifies you for the full Postgraduate Certificate of the University of Wales).

**Course fee:** The fee for the basic module is £630; the fee for the full PCME is £1890.

**Induction course:** 14–15 January, 2003.

### For further information contact:

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