



Healthy Parent Carers Project - Meeting 11

24th November 2016 South Cloisters, St. Luke's Campus

Family Faculty: Annette, John, Maureen, Maria, Jen, Bel, Mary, Jane, Ruth

PenCRU: Chris, Ola, Katharine

Overview

- In this meeting Chris and Ola updated the group on the progress of the project. They outlined the findings of running the healthy parent carers programme.
- The group discussed the challenges of the healthy parent carers programme and helped interpret some of the findings.

What next?

- Awaiting outcome of PenCLAHRC prioritisation and production of paper and final report due early next year.
- Engage with parent carer groups to enable further evaluation.
- If you have any comments or come across any information or resources relevant to the programme, please email PenCRU@exeter.ac.uk or a.borek@exeter.ac.uk.

The meeting started with a welcome and introductions – each group member gave an example of how they had achieved a CLANGER recently. We noted some real positive health changes amongst the group and that CLANGERS concept had been helpful.

Update of feasibility study

- Chris updated the parents on the feasibility study of the Healthy Parent Carers programme delivered to seven parent carers in six sessions between January and March.
- Overall the programme was feasible to deliver, and acceptable to parent carers who took part. The participants were satisfied with the programme, its delivery and content, and perceived it as relevant to them.

Discussions in the meeting

Challenges of the Healthy Parent Carers Programme

- Some challenges of delivering the programme were highlighted. The facilitators commented that some of the programme activities triggered emotions in some participants (for example, discussing 'Connecting' made some participants realise they lacked connections with important people in their life). The question was raised as to whether this is a problem. Should the programme focus on activities that are as deep and emotional? The group agreed that this is likely to happen, and that parent carers need to have space when they can be honest, but there need to be firm boundaries around what is acceptable to share.
- The group thought it was important to have a good facilitator with skills that could help manage such situations. If the programme was to be taken up and delivered by other groups, each group would need to agree on a robust set of ground rules and would need to know what outcomes they could expect from the programme. A parent suggested there is a need for clear strategies for coping after the course and a clear set of guidelines on how to equip facilitators to manage a group.
- Another challenge in delivering the programme concerned facilitating the group and managing equal participation. There was discussion around whether it was the facilitator's responsibility to talk to overly-dominant participants or the responsibility of the whole group. The parents felt that the whole group needed to be involved but with strong influence from the facilitator (e.g. talking to a dominant participant individually after the group). There was discussion around whether the programme could be delivered with established groups. The parents felt that using existing groups is a good idea, however the programme needs to be run separately to the normal group gatherings as a 'course'.
- Engaging participants in setting goals was also sometimes difficult, and there was some discussion whether it was an important and necessary component of the programme. The group agreed that setting SMART goals could be useful and that perhaps more time should be spent at the beginning of the programme exploring how to set realistic goals that can help incorporate CLANGERS in everyday life.