

## Case Study #10

# THE LIVING WELL COLLABORATIVE, LAMBETH (UK) -

Reimagining commissioning in mental health

Formed in response to high levels of referrals and people stuck in secondary care, the Lambeth Living Well Collaborative is a group of service users, GPs, providers and commissioners dedicated to transforming Lambeth's mental health care system.



## APPROACH

By transforming the role of the commissioner to one that promotes collaboration rather than competition, the Collaborative has built a more balanced relationship between professionals and patients. The Collaborative is truly unique as it is trying to radically transform all aspects of its mental healthcare system through the use of co-production - the idea that people's needs are better met when they are involved in an equal and reciprocal relationship with professionals.

A key initial step was the development of Vital Link, a body acting as a representative group of service users, carers and the wider mental health community. Vital Link feeds in patient views at the commissioning level and relays back any changes and questions, ensuring that a consistent dialogue is maintained with those making significant decisions about Lambeth's mental health care system. Additionally, they are seeking to develop long-term alliance contracts on the basis of outcomes across the whole system of primary, social and secondary care, as well as the voluntary sector.

Other new initiatives that have come out of this joined-up working include more empowered Community Mental Health Teams, a structured programme aiming to develop and scale peer support, a Community Options Team, timebanking and networks between GPs, social care and mental health primary care. Beyond specific initiatives, a deeper change has come out of the relationships the Collaborative has made possible - collaborative working is now the norm, which has led to a collective reframing of what the challenges are that now permeates every decision made in Lambeth.



## IMPACT

By reconfiguring the commissioning role, developing structures to involve users in the design of services and incentivising collaboration among providers, the Collaborative is not only formulating policies to instigate co-production in the short-term, but building processes into its mental health care system that ensure it continues to grow in the future as well. Over time, their comprehensive approach is expected to greatly improve outcomes for a wide range of patients, dramatically transforming the quality of life for a large number of Lambeth's inhabitants, and reducing the burden on Lambeth's overstretched healthcare system.

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