

# THE MAYA CENTRE – OUR PURPOSE, AIMS AND PLANS

## 2017-2020

This is the brief development plan for the Maya Centre; written for staff, stake holders, past and future service users. Included is a summary of our vision and the values which underpin the objective and specific aims of the work we do. We also summarise the areas of further development required over the 3 years in order for the Maya Centre to maintain the excellent reputation it has earned over the last 33 years.

**Vision-** to increase the wellbeing and enhance resilience in women who have experienced mental health issues which may stem from trauma and gender based violence including domestic violence, physical abuse or sexual abuse in childhood and experiences of war and conflict as well as harmful traditional practices.

**Mission-** The Maya Centre is a safe space run by women for women who will experience a therapeutic journey leading to empowerment, emotional and psychological awareness and healing.

**Values-** The work we do is underpinned by a set of values which are the compass points that guide our work both individually with women and in the wider organisation, these include:

Empowerment

Containment

Healing

Kindness

Recovery

Resilience

Respecting diversity

Ethical and Safe Practice

Professionalism

## Objectives based on our values-

- In order to act in accordance with our values the Maya Centre has some clear objectives which run through all aspects of the work. The objectives form the basis of funding applications and are evidenced in direct (clinical) and indirect (staff recruitment, training, environment) work. Our objectives are:
  - To improve mental health;
  - To break cyclical patterns of abuse and intergenerational trauma;
    - To reduce social isolation and exclusion;

- To have an increasing number of women accessing and benefiting from our service;
- To work with women who are diverse in terms of ethnicity, social, economic, culture, age and sexual orientation;
- To offer psychodynamic therapy which explicitly focuses on relational patterns and exploring how previous experiences impact on our current way of thinking, feeling and relating to ourselves and others. This is often not available elsewhere;
  - To support women to have greater self-understanding and self-awareness.

## Value Based Practice- How We Work

This will be achieved by providing sustained, good quality psychodynamic counselling to women with limited financial means on benefit or benefit level income who have mental health problems in the context of trauma.

### **Context: Resources**

The Maya Centre is a small charity operating in a financial climate which is very challenging. We do not charge for counselling, though we welcome financial contributions for complementary therapies. Our services are paid for by grants from charitable trusts and contracts with statutory NHS and social care bodies, the ACCEPT partnership, and private donations.

Despite limitations in resources, we are proud to acknowledge the examples of how the Maya Centre puts the above objectives into practice:

**Staff:** Our counsellors are expert in working with women whose mental health has been harmed by gender-based violence or abuse, trauma, neglect and deprivation; often complex, multi-layered experiences. The counsellors are skilled and experienced, and are either accredited or working towards accreditation with the BACP or UKCP. They are well supported through supervision and professional development. We pride ourselves on the quality of the services we offer. We have achieved external accreditation from BACP and APPTS and aim to continually improve what we offer to women and how we offer it.

**Environment:** The Centre is a women-only space, it is a light, welcoming space. The centre delivers both individual sessions and group based interventions, therefore providing a place of healing for the individual in 1-1 work and through relating to other women with shared experiences. We are proud to be renowned for being a multi-cultural and diverse service that is culturally and ethnically sensitive to the needs of our clients and our staff reflect this diversity.

**Detailed Assessment:** Women who approach the Maya Centre for help will have their needs assessed. An initial phone conversation will make sure we are able to offer help and that potential clients meet our criteria. If so, an in-depth assessment of need, client history and risk is carried out by a counsellor. The client, counsellor and Clinical lead are then involved in a collaborative process to determine a treatment plan including the number of sessions.

**Therapeutic interventions:** We are committed to offering psychodynamically informed therapy, which is unlikely to be available elsewhere. Moreover, we work towards enabling a therapeutic relationship to develop between the service and the women. This enhances trust and a sense of safety and healing. The individual therapy may be enhanced by tailored complementary therapies, provided at the Centre by

approved practitioners, and by signposting to outside resources by our community support worker. We also offer therapy in groups in order to further support women in their recovery and become more resilient.

**Community Engagement and Awareness:** We endeavour to engage clients in the development of our services as well as raise awareness and de-stigmatise mental health through psychoeducation and other workshops enabling women to become more confident. The opportunities we offer to volunteers ensure that the Maya Centre is a place of growth for our volunteers.

**Evaluation/ Service improvement:** We are able to be confident that our objectives for women are being met through evaluation and audit. At the Maya Centre we use the CORE (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation) system. As part of this system clients are given an outcome measures questionnaire at the start, middle and end of therapy which measures the client's level of well-being, problems, functioning and risk to self. The results of these questionnaires then show us the level of the client's improvement in those four areas. As part of the CORE system the counsellor also undertakes an end of therapy assessment form. Our annual reporting on CORE data shows that we achieve definite improvements in all aspects of mental wellbeing.

We also monitor the benefits of the service by the use of client feedback forms. Our clients tell us that our approach helps them. Since the addition of community support and improved assessments, our data tells us that attendance has increased and women have shown a greater commitment to counselling. Moreover we can be confident that our approach is enabling us to work with a greater number of women from BAMER communities.

## Future Directions

**In times of financial hardship, we are aware that we must be able to continue to negotiate new contracts and funding, demonstrate the value of the work to all stake-holders and continue to maintain excellent clinical governance. We have some specific goals which will be achieved over the next four years.**

### **Specific goals for 2017-2020**

**Therapeutic Interventions:** Our aim in the coming years is to increase the number of women successfully completing counselling and to maintain a commitment to work with client's on a longer term basis by extending their journey at the Maya Centre by offering a wider range of services. This will require more funding and also innovation in the way we work. We are in the process of setting up four new therapeutic groups. These have the advantage of offering more therapy to a greater number of women and are ideal for working with people who can experience difficulties in relationships with others. It is expected that these groups may form part of the womens' longer term intervention with the service and have not been developed purely as an efficiency saving. The groups include a generic women's group, a group for survivors of sexual abuse in childhood, a black women's group, and an art therapy group. Groups will also be evaluated in terms of CORE client outcomes questionnaires, counsellor end of therapy assessment forms and client feedback forms. This will show us the levels of clinical improvement, data on attendance, completion and attrition rates as well as client satisfaction.

**Funding/ Fundraising:** We will seek to extend our funding sources and increase our efficiency and cost effectiveness. We will develop our collaborative work through the ACCEPT partnership with the

Bereavement Service, Nafsiyat and the Women's Therapy Centre, and will be seeking additional service contracts, and collaborating on more cost efficient ways of working.

We will also enhance our community fundraising with the aim to develop relationships with the private sector who are willing to be our official 'sponsors'.

**Information System:** The Maya Centre will be updating their data system to CORE Net, this is a more advanced version of the CORE outcome measures system and will allow reliable and efficient data management. It will allow the Maya Centre to evaluate interventions in terms of the objectives outlined above. Moreover, CORE Net allows online referral which will increase accessibility and efficiency.

**Service Evaluation:** We will seek to research our clients' experience and the impact of our new ways of working including- the use of complementary therapy as an adjunct to counseling and the impact of group interventions. CORE Net will be valuable in helping us to understand the women who are accessing the services in terms of demographic factors, mental health problems, and pre/post intervention changes in clinical scores.

**Website:** The Maya Centre website will be updated so that it is a helpful resource for all parties including members of the public, potential clients and stake holders. The website development has been started and will be completed by June 2017.

**External Training and Consultation:** The Maya Centre is confident in our ability to offer external training and consultation to organisations who need support in understanding working with gender based violence. As such, we will aim to get specific funding to further enhance this aspect of our work.

**Clinical Governance:** The Maya Centre has a comprehensive supervision structure and frequent training sessions for staff. We will continue to provide expert training on specialist psychodynamic therapeutic interventions that are relevant for the staff working at our service. The clinical work will be overseen by a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees ensuring a high quality service and the mitigation of any risks in our clinical practice including safeguarding.