Voice and Power for Homeless and Vulnerable People through New and Emerging Technologies

Your Entry

Please do not exceed 1500 words in total.

1. Your contact details

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<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Mayday Trust</th>
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2. Name of the project you are entering for The LankellyChase Digital Empowerment Awards

“ME”

3. Award category you are entering

SUPPORT NEED / SOCIAL NETWORKS / CAPABILITIES /DIALOGUE

If only one allowed then “SUPPORT NEED”

4. Describe your project in one sentence

“ME” is a mobile phone app for homeless and vulnerable people to experience real time access to their own development plans, social networks, local services and opportunities.

5. Specify the setting(s) where your project is delivered (eg homeless agency, housing organisation etc )?

Mayday trust is a registered charity which provides social housing and support to vulnerable people in Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and Bedfordshire. The app takes allows us to take our support out of a specified geographical area to a wider platform.

6. What are the project’s objectives?

- Individuals will have access to real time information on new local opportunities, activities
and events to enable clarity of what’s available and take up opportunities easily/quickly. (We envisage this will be like “Google maps” with arrows to opportunities e.g. “Flatshare available”, “Jobs vacant”, “Volunteers needed”, “Gig tonight” etc)

- Each individual will have control and access to their own bespoke development plan to witness their progression and achievements – it will not be institutional but like “datablogs” i.e. using graphic design to make the journey clear and accessible
- Achievements and “sources of inspiration” will appear as the homepage like the “Happy App” and encourage positive mindsets
- Relationships will be a cornerstone to the App. It will display the client’s ever expanding network of positive relationships in all aspects of their life and will be able to access support from their networks (both social and professional) at the exact time that they need it
- Push notifications will remind them of events in their calendar – job interview; needle exchange appointment; football tournament.
- A Chat function will allow them to support “buddies” who they are supporting through their own development. “Helping others” is a key part of a client’s personal development at Mayday.
- A “back office” function will allow staff to produce reports about client’s development plan, outcomes achieved, extent of positive social and economic activity. This will be useful for central office and commissioners.

7. What are the project’s activities?

Individuals who will use the app have formed a steering group to design, develop and regularly update the functionality of the app to ensure it is relevant and meets all needs. A brief is ready to go to App developers.

We will be conducting research into the best platforms to use eg “Native” mobile apps in the iTunes and Google play stores, or a mobile optimized website that can be accessed on smartphones, tablets, laptops and computers.

The App Steering group will work closely with the App developer.

The app will be offered to all Mayday clients upon referral.

We will pilot its use with 62 clients in our Northampton service over 3-6 months. Half the clients are tenants in our accommodation and half are floating support so we will be able to evaluate the App’s impact with both sets of clients.

Following a full evaluation we aim to roll it out for all Mayday clients as of October 2014.

The functionality is mentioned above but it will become integral to the support provided by Mayday’s “Personal Asset Mentors” (PAM)
Mayday’s innovative support model does not have keyworkers but PAMs. PAMs will use the App as well as clients though they will have a reporting tool bolted onto the App that provides “back office” information that tracks the progress of clients against their goals and the requirements of commissioners.

8. What has been the impact / achievement of the project?

“ME” is currently in its development phase. Individuals are engaged in the development of the app through the steering group and discussions around its functionality was widely welcomed at the recent all staff conference. Staff have researched the App in their free time and connected us to App developer to receive free advice and support. We envisage once it is rolled out the impact of the project will be:

- Clients are in control of their development
- Clients take up more local opportunities
- Clients mental health improves (positive relationships/ positive outlook)
- PAMs have larger volume and more meaningful information regarding social and economic progress of clients

We foresee the APP becoming as much a part of a clients Mayday experience as the accommodation we provide. This will not just be a novelty extra, it will become embedded in the service offered to new and existing clients.

The features and functions of the APP are intended to be instant access tools used by clients on a daily basis which empowers them to achieve. This could be a small goal of connecting with another Mayday client that shares the same interests, or it could be as big as finding employment.

The APP will allow Personal Asset Mentors to work with more clients, as they build their networks and take ownership of their own lives.

Overall, the APP will help us to achieve our big outcomes in line with the new model:

- Clients have engaged in education, training or employment;
- Clients have successfully reduced their offending behaviour to become crime free;
- Clients have refrained from the use of illegal substances;
- Clients have been supported to disengage from mental health services
- Clients will have a direct voice to services/ local businesses to break down barriers
9. How is your project evaluated?

Analytics within the APP will provide us with data on how it is being used and we can use this information to see if it fits with our intended outcomes.

Clients themselves will be able to log within the APP every time they have taken a step towards meeting their goals.

All members of the APP development steering group are “APP Champions” who will ensure that all clients have access, or are supported to access the APP.

We will carry out regular reviews over a 12 month period consisting of staff feedback, steering group forums, client surveys and questionnaires.

10. How would you spend the prize money to develop the project?

The prize money would pay for an App developer to take it through its first testing stage and provide “first brick in the wall” funding to get the project off the ground.