

FOCUS GROUPS – CLIENT FEEDBACK WAYS TO WORK PROGRAMME

23rd APRIL 2019

Selection of clients

1. 10 Clients registered on the Ways to Work Programme were attending a Customer Service course at the S@W building in Bootle. During the course the opportunity to ask questions on how they rated various aspects of S@Ws service offer was taken. The Focus group was held on Tuesday 23rd April 2019 at 2.00pm

Clients were all active on the Ways to Work Programme and had been coming into Sefton@Work for varying amounts of time.

Clients were asked to focus on different aspects of Sefton@Work and their experiences of the Ways to Work programme, reflecting different stages of the client journey. Particular emphasis was placed on 'did we do what we said we would do', timeliness and how they rated the quality of service.

These areas were: how they found out about/were referred to Sefton@Work and their initial experiences of the Ways to Work Programme, their advisor, groupwork or training courses undertaken, the Good or not so good aspects of the Ways to Work Programme and 'any future improvements'.

It was explained to the clients at the outset that the only way we can really be sure that we are providing the best possible service is to gain feedback from the clients who used the service. Although we were very happy to have positive feedback we also needed to hear about any aspects of the service that clients were not entirely happy with or that they thought could be improved. This would enable us to put steps in place to remedy any concerns and therefore continue to improve the quality of our delivery.

The Clients attending were from a mixed age range from early twenties up to clients in their fifties.

They all came from varied backgrounds.

10 clients attended the focus group.

1. Please tell us about your initial experiences of the Ways to Work programme and how you came to Sefton@Work and Did they get an appt within 10 working days of initial contact. Did you wait less than 5 minutes to speak to someone at reception?

Clients responded that they were referred or signposted from a variety of organisations including their work coaches at the Jobcentre, Social Care, Antrec (a local training provider), the Sefton@Work website via applying for vacancies and other opportunities. All gave a positive response about their initial experiences of the Ways to Work programme. All of the respondents were seen within 10 days and 4 had their appointments within 3 days. All clients reported that they were dealt with within 5 minutes. 2 clients said that their appointment started a little later than scheduled but they understood their advisor had informed them that they would be 5 minutes late.

2. What did you know about Sefton@Work before you started on the Ways to Work programme?

Responses included

- Not much at all.
- Heard it was about extra help with finding work.
- Thought Sefton@Work looked like a job agency or the Jobcentre from the outside.
- The person who referred me said we would help them with debt advice and to get information about college.
- I thought you did cvs I didn't know you had a website

3. Do you think your advisor understood your needs?

- The group felt their S@W advisors were helpful and were proactive with them helping them by sending them vacancies or helping them to send for vacancies via email. All clients responded with a positive. It was mentioned that they felt advisors in Sefton@Work were not like those in the jobcentre. Discussion was held around the '35 hour' a week jobsearch and the pressure they felt under from the jobcentre.
- On first appt I was asked questions about loads of things my money worries , my family situation etc. I felt that I could tell her most things
- I would have liked more privacy but it was fine.
- I was given an appt the next day with CAB

4. Where you aware that you could change your advisor?

- The group either didn't know they could change their advisor or assumed it was possible. 2 said they were not told about this but were okay with their advisor The focus group leader reiterated that as part of their 'Welcome Appointment' all clients should be made aware of this.

5. Please tell us about any training courses/opportunities you have attended in your time with us and have you found them to be useful?

- 3 members of the Focus Group had attended courses over the years via Sefton@Work which included a Level 2 Playworker course, manual handling and interview skills. All were satisfied with the courses and had fed this back to their advisor.
- No other group members had attended any S@W courses and a discussion was led by the focus group leader on the types of courses potentially available to the group via our partners at Sefton Community Learning Service and other local providers. The group leader also informed the group about Think Differently, Cope Differently, a course run by Sefton@Work 4 times a year to help those suffering from mild to moderate mental health.

6. Please tell us what you have found to be good about the Ways to Work Programme and what you consider to be negative about the Ways to Work Programme?

Positives.

- One client felt it had given them a bit of sanity back coming to Sefton@Work.
- Others felt they were given hope and confidence back along with the comment they 'could see the light at the end of the tunnel.'

Negatives

- One client felt that weekly meetings were a bit too much as she had childcare responsibilities. The client was reminded the Ways to Work programme is voluntary and she could speak with her advisor to rearrange the frequency of her appointments.
- It was also mentioned that there was no funding for Creches/childcare which hampered parents looking for work.

7. If you could have a wish list what would you do to improve the Ways to Work Programme for people in the future?

- One client felt it would be nice to be paid to come to appointments
- Childcare funding was another favourite as was paid travel to appointments.

8. Sefton@Work states on all of their literature and on their website that we can help you back to work. Has your experience so far given you confidence that you can secure employment?

- The group struggled with this question and were then asked to tell us what they felt their barriers were. One client said she was lacking in confidence and confidence building training would be of interest.
- Comments included:-
 - a) My advisor completed application with me and I have had interviews
 - b) I haven't worked for many years and still feel I won't get a job but my advisor has been positive and puts me forward for S@W jobs and I'm getting more confidence.
 - c) I think I need more training but there is no money for it. My advisor told me this early on so we have had to do other things
- Money again was mentioned as a main barrier and having travel to training paid for would help immensely.

Overall

Overall, extremely positive feedback from clients with a few issues to be taken to the quality group/ advisor team/marketing team for further discussion: They all seemed to feel that S@W provided the service they say they will and none had any issues with time delays or the time it took to register

- **Advisors to explain to clients that they can indeed switch advisors if they feel the need.**
- **Advisors should always tell clients if appt running a little late**

- **All Advisors should inform clients that a private interview room is available**
- **The feedback from a client with children was discussed with the Advisor in question . The client had never indicated there was a problem but going forward we need to ask the question about frequency.**

All clients who attended the sessions appreciated the help and support they have received from their advisors, reception staff and other Sefton@Work staff. This reflects well on the person centred approach, the commitment of staff and the attitude and respect shown to clients.