

**NIACE/NIMHE  
Partnership Project**

**Access to Adult Education for  
People with Mental Health Difficulties**

**Report of a National Postal Survey of Colleges of  
Further Education and Local Authority Adult  
Education Services in the WEST MIDLANDS  
Region**

**March 2004**

## Contents

Key findings	3
The next stage	4
The partnership project	5
Mental health and adult learning: the survey	5
The 2003 survey	6
The findings	7
1. Current provision	7
2. Plans for new provision	8
3. Responses to policy and legislative changes	9
4. Learner consultation and participation	10
5. Accessing learning opportunities	11
6. Targeting specific groups of learners with mental health difficulties	12
7. Learner support	13
8. Curriculum, outcomes and progression	15
9. Funding of provision	17
10. Staffing	18
11. Partnerships	18
Providers' Views	19
Strengths and achievements	19
Barriers and challenges	20
In conclusion	21
The next stage	21
Acknowledgements	21
References	22
Glossary	22
Further information	22
Mapping inclusive education projects	23
Colleges	23
LEAs	34
Annexe 1 – List of contributors	40
Annexe 2 – The questionnaire	41

## Key findings

In partnership with the National Institute of Mental Health in England (NIMHE), the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) has conducted a national postal survey of all Colleges of Further Education and Local Authority Adult Education Services in England to ascertain the level of provision for adults with mental health difficulties.

In the West Midlands questionnaires were sent to fifty-four Colleges and fourteen Local Education Authorities (LEAs). Responses were received from twenty-three Colleges and six LEAs giving a response rate of just under half.

- Seventeen colleges and three LEAs within the West Midlands are targeting provision specifically to engage adults with mental health difficulties. Follow-up of those providers who did not respond to the questionnaire would help us to get an even clearer picture of the level or provision in the West Midlands.
- It would appear that in the West Midlands the biggest growth in provision will be in discrete provision, with eight providers within the region planning to set up new discrete provision only. Seven providers are planning to set up both new discrete provision and to support learners in general mainstream programmes. Ensuring that learners have a choice of opportunities and progression routes is important.
- As well as a growth in the types of opportunities, the research also shows there is a broad spectrum of curriculum offered. There is increasing use of accreditation as a means of recognising achievement, and though learning providers clearly recognise other outcomes as measures of achievement, it is still unclear how they are doing this and how well learners are achieving and progressing.
- Seventeen of the twenty-three colleges and four of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire are taking steps to meet the requirements of adult learners with mental health difficulties as now required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Part 4) and Code of Practice.
- Thirteen colleges and two LEAs were aware of Standard One of the National Service Framework for Mental Health. Facilitating greater partnership working in the West Midlands would help support local mental health promotion and drive forward the National Service Framework.
- Only six colleges and two LEAs have included the needs of adult learners with mental health difficulties in their strategic plans, though a further eight colleges and two more LEAs are planning to include this group of learners in future plans. Including the needs of this group of learners into the strategic plans of educational organisations would help to embed provision and increase the likelihood of it being part of the providers plan for growth and development.
- Learner consultation and participation within the West Midlands is becoming more widely facilitated, particularly in colleges. Providing feedback on existing provision is the most commonly used form of learner consultation and participation but it is encouraging to see that learners are also involved in planning course content, contributing to leaflets and posters, speaking at conferences, participating in research and helping to run taster sessions.

- Learning providers within the West Midlands work in partnership with Mental Health Trusts, Social Services Departments, Voluntary organisations, user groups, Connexions and IAG networks and Primary Care Teams. There is a lower level of partnerships established with Primary Care Teams, which is perhaps an area for development as many people receive support for their mental health care through primary care services. Fourteen of the twenty-three colleges and three of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire would welcome stronger partnerships.
- Nineteen of the twenty-three colleges and four of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire described their strengths and achievements in this area of work as 'identifying and meeting learners', 'support needs', 'flexible and responsive provision', 'partnerships', 'outcomes and progression', 'curriculum content and delivery', 'inclusion and widening participation' and 'staffing'. Twenty-one of the twenty-three colleges and four of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire described the barriers and challenges to this area of work being 'funding', 'staffing', 'partnerships', 'flexible and responsive provision', 'lack of time and resources' and 'undiagnosed/unidentified learners'. It is interesting that 'flexible and responsive provision', 'partnerships' and 'staffing' appear on both lists. This may reflect the varying degrees of expertise and experience among learning providers, but it may also relate to other factors such as level of commitment and support from senior management or the presence of designated staff posts.
- Within the West Midlands twenty-one of the twenty-three colleges and five of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire want to be kept in touch with the NIACE/NIMHE partnership project, with fifteen colleges and three LEAs wishing to join a regional network.

## **The next stage**

The second stage of the NIACE/NIMHE partnership project has been to set up Regional Networks in each of the eight NIMHE Regional Development Centres. These networks present a wonderful opportunity for us to build on the findings of this research in order to develop more accessible and inclusive educational provision for adults with mental health difficulties.

## **The partnership project**

To encourage and assist adult and further education providers to promote opportunities for learning for adults with mental health difficulties, the National Institute of Mental Health in England (NIMHE) and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) have established a partnership project. The first strand of the project has been a national postal survey of all Colleges of Further Education and Local Authority Adult Education Services in England and this report summarises the findings.

The survey repeats a similar exercise carried out in 1996 in England and Wales by FEDA (the Further Education Development Agency, now the Learning and Skills Development Agency) and NIACE. Some of these findings, together with case studies of 21 providers, were published in *Images of Possibility* (Wertheimer, 1997)

A further national questionnaire survey of voluntary organisations providing education and/or training for work for people with mental health difficulties has been carried out in 2003 and another report summarising its findings will shortly be available, adding to the national picture we are building up.

## **Mental health and adult learning: the survey**

The survey provides an invaluable snapshot of existing provision made by colleges and local education authorities, and provides a satisfactory start to our mapping exercise. However, collating the findings from all the questionnaires has not been without its difficulties. To increase the response rate (see below), questionnaires were re-circulated to non-respondents after the first deadline and many replies were received by and beyond this second deadline. These have now been added to the survey findings, changing the data from the original draft report.

Some providers have not responded. A few contacted us to say that they were unable to complete the questionnaire because of lack of time and their current workload. With others, it is of course impossible to be clear as to why they did not respond. It may be that some providers are not making any targeted provision for adults with mental health difficulties, but it may also be possible that some providers have provision but the questionnaires failed to reach the right person for completion. We still welcome contact from such providers.

Some providers also sent in multiple responses, reflecting the range and diversity of provision across local education authorities and colleges. Where this has happened, we have counted them as individual responses.

Our original intention was to repeat the 1996 FEDA/NIACE survey (see above), so in order to introduce a comparative element we had to use an almost identical questionnaire. It was later found that the 1996 set of data was no longer available, so “then and now” comparisons in this report are limited. Despite this, we have been able to start building a good picture of current provision for adults with mental health difficulties.

Findings from both surveys will help us to identify patterns of provision at a regional level and individual regional reports, including this one, summarising local provision, are being disseminated through NIMHE’s Regional Development Centres. We very much hope that adult learning providers and mental health service providers will use these local

“snapshots” to identify positive practice in their area, add further information about local provision, and take action to fill gaps in provision. This will enable us to obtain a fuller picture of current learning opportunities for adults with mental health difficulties.

This report separates out the findings from colleges and LEAs, but not particularly for comparative purposes. Although there are some interesting differences in the ways providers work, overall there are many similarities.

This partnership project represents a major step forward in building a national picture of current provision and there is enormous potential for further developments. By using these regional reports each region will be able to identify sites of good practice, gaps in provision, build partnerships and develop work around areas of joint concern. We hope that learners, practitioners, managers, funders and policy-makers will use this research to learn more about how adult education can promote greater social inclusion for people with mental health difficulties and widen their participation in learning opportunities.

## **The 2003 survey**

The survey carried out by NIACE and NIMHE aimed to:

- ascertain whether provision for people with mental health difficulties is more widely available and accessible than in 1996;
- identify examples of positive practice; and
- identify gaps in existing provision.

Questionnaires were sent to fifty-four Colleges of Further Education and fourteen Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in the West Midlands. By 30 June 2003, responses had been received from twenty-three colleges and six LEAs, giving an overall response rate of just under half (slightly lower than the national rate). Annexe 1 lists the Colleges and LEAs who returned the questionnaire.

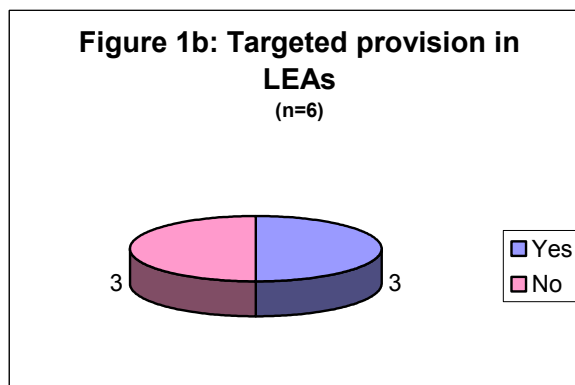
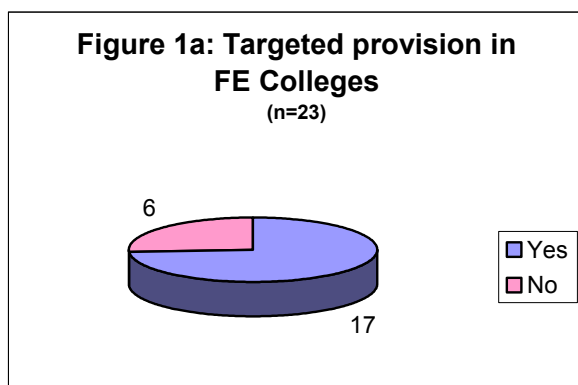
## The findings

This summary report outlines the findings which covered the following areas:

- current provision;
- plans for new provision;
- responses to policy and legislative changes;
- learner consultation and participation;
- accessing learning opportunities;
- targeting specific groups of learners;
- support for learning;
- curriculum, outcomes and progression;
- funding;
- staffing;
- partnership with other agencies;
- providers' views: strengths and achievements; and
- providers' views: barriers and challenges.

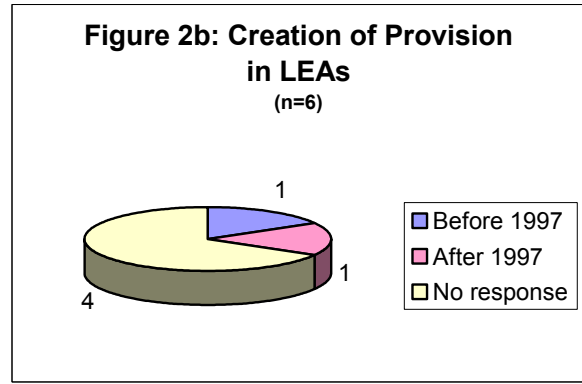
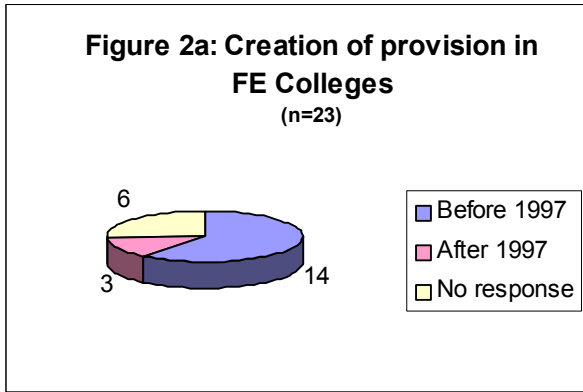
This report also includes comments which survey participants wrote in their questionnaires.

### 1. Current provision



To find out how many providers were seeking to engage with adults with mental health difficulties, we asked whether they made targeted provision for this group of learners. From Figs. 1a and 1b we can see that seventeen of the twenty-three colleges and three of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire were making targeted provision for adult learners with mental health difficulties. Annexe 1 also provides details of the number of adult learners with mental health difficulties enrolled with each provider. Follow up of those providers who are not making targeted provision available for learners with mental health difficulties and those providers who did not respond to the questionnaire would be advisable.

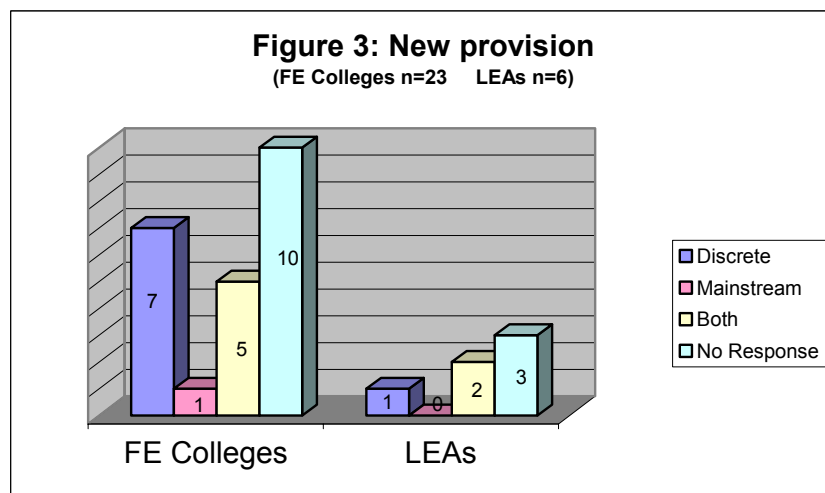
We also wanted to find out when this provision had been set up and whether policy drivers such as the Tomlinson Report (FEFC 1996) and the Kennedy Report (FEFC 1997) have led to increased provision. From Figs. 2a and 2b we can see that three of the colleges and one LEA have set up their provision since 1997.



Given the work currently being undertaken by the Social Exclusion Unit on mental health and social exclusion and the cross-government recommendations arising from this work, there is a need to ensure that learning providers are supported to meet and implement any forthcoming policy recommendations.

## 2. Plans for new provision

Providers were asked whether their plans for new provision would involve supporting learners with mental health difficulties on general/mainstream learning programmes, discrete provision set up specifically for people with mental health difficulties or both. For the purposes of the survey, general/mainstream programmes are defined as being those courses and opportunities that are available to anyone to enrol on. Specific/discrete provision, on the other hand, is defined as being those courses that are set up specifically to meet the needs of adults with mental health needs onto them.



Discrete provision is valuable, because some people with mental health difficulties will not feel able to enrol directly onto mainstream courses and people need to be in an environment that is conducive to their learning. However, it is encouraging that some providers are not only planning to develop discrete provision, but will also support learners to progress from there to mainstream courses.

Most colleges (seven) will be setting up discrete provision, but one will be supporting learners on mainstream courses and five colleges will be doing both; ten indicated they were not planning any new provision or did not reply to the question. One of the LEAs who responded to the questionnaire were planning to set up discrete provision and two LEAs will be supporting learners in discrete and in mainstream provision; 3 LEAs were not planning any new provision or did not reply to the question.

It would appear that in the West Midlands the biggest growth in provision will be in discrete provision. It will be important to ensure that learners accessing discrete provision will be able to progression on to mainstream provision with appropriate support if they so wish. The number of providers seeking to develop both discrete and mainstream provision shows that this is a concern for them.

Providers were asked whether they were currently planning any new provision for adults with mental health difficulties.

Providers' comments:

*Specific groups include "Women" only groups and support for mainstream access. (College)*

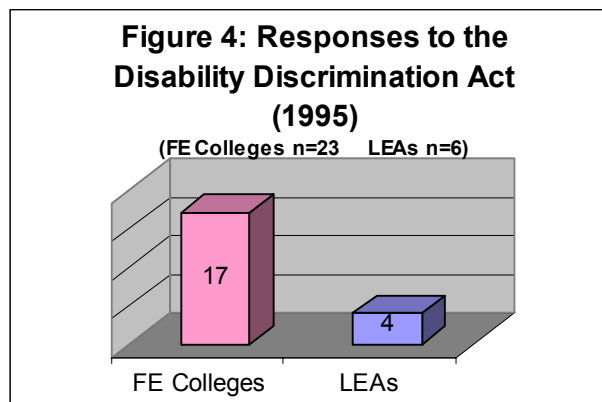
*Discrete provision with Health Authority and MIND. (LEA)*

*Extra 'super discrete' provision for clients of the mental health support team - with hospital staff attending for support. (College)*

*We fund individuals who want to access mainstream courses and for various reasons cannot. We also fund provision which is discrete - through local colleges - outside mainstream funded provision. (LEA)*

### 3. Responses to policy and legislative changes

The survey asked providers to describe what steps they were taking to anticipate and plan for meeting the likely needs of adult learners with mental health needs as required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Part 4) and Code of Practice.



One would hope that learning providers are taking the necessary steps to ensure compliance with the Act as Fig. 4 indicates, an encouraging seventeen of the twenty-three

colleges and four of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire described one or more ways in which they were responding to the requirements of the Act.

Providers were asked what steps they were taking to anticipate and plan for meeting the likely needs of adults learners with mental health difficulties, as required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Part 4) and associated Code of Practice.

Providers' comments:

*Effective links with local Mental Health Trust Partnership Arrangement ensuring effective referral and support for clients. (College)*

*Learner assessment and support arrangement in place. Training of staff will be ongoing – planned. (LEA)*

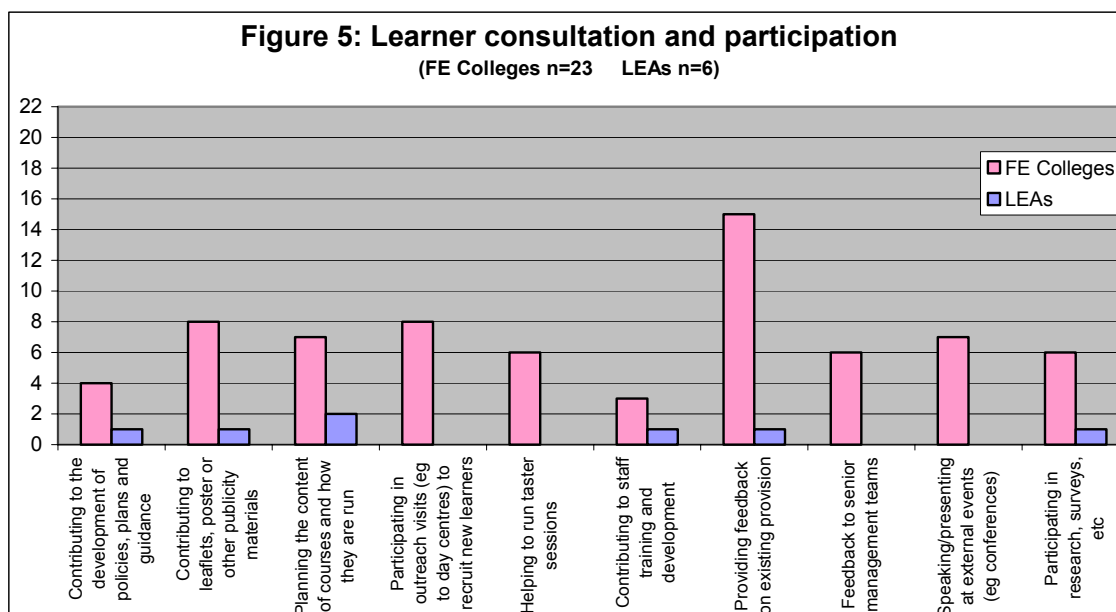
*About to embark on a full curriculum "audit" to consider all disabilities. Staff development to raise awareness. (College)*

The survey also asked if providers were aware of Standard One of the National Service Framework (NSF) for Mental Health which aims to ensure that health and social services “promote mental health and reduce the discrimination and social exclusion associated with mental health problems” (DoH, 1999: 14); thirteen colleges and two LEAs are aware of Standard One. However, the establishment of regional multi-agency networks will provide an opportunity for mental health service providers and education providers to explore ways in which they can contribute to local mental health promotion.

Learning opportunities for adults with mental health difficulties should be addressed in education providers' strategic plans (Wertheimer 1997), but disappointingly, the survey found that only six colleges and two LEAs had done so. Putting this area of work into the organisations strategic plans gives it a greater visibility and increases the likelihood that it becomes part of the providers overall plan for growth. More encouragingly, though, a further eight colleges and two LEAs were planning to include this group of learners in their future plans. Again, the regional networks may provide opportunities to address this issue, perhaps by ensuring that education features in Joint Investment Plans and other community care plans, or by education providers joining NSF Implementation Groups.

#### **4. Learner consultation and participation**

Consultation with learners is crucial to developing inclusive and responsive adult education provision and within the consultation process, the views and voices of particular groups of learners need to be heard and responded to. The survey asked providers how they involved and consulted learners with mental health difficulties. Whereas the 1996 survey found that learners were “rarely involved” in contributing to policies and plans, it appears that learner consultation in general is becoming more widely facilitated, particularly within LEAs.



Although it is the norm for all learners to provide feedback on their courses, the welcome increase in learner consultation and participation outlined here may partly reflect an increasingly articulate network of mental health service users speaking out on a range of issues. We hope that regional networks will provide a forum for providers to discuss and explore additional and different ways of consulting with users.

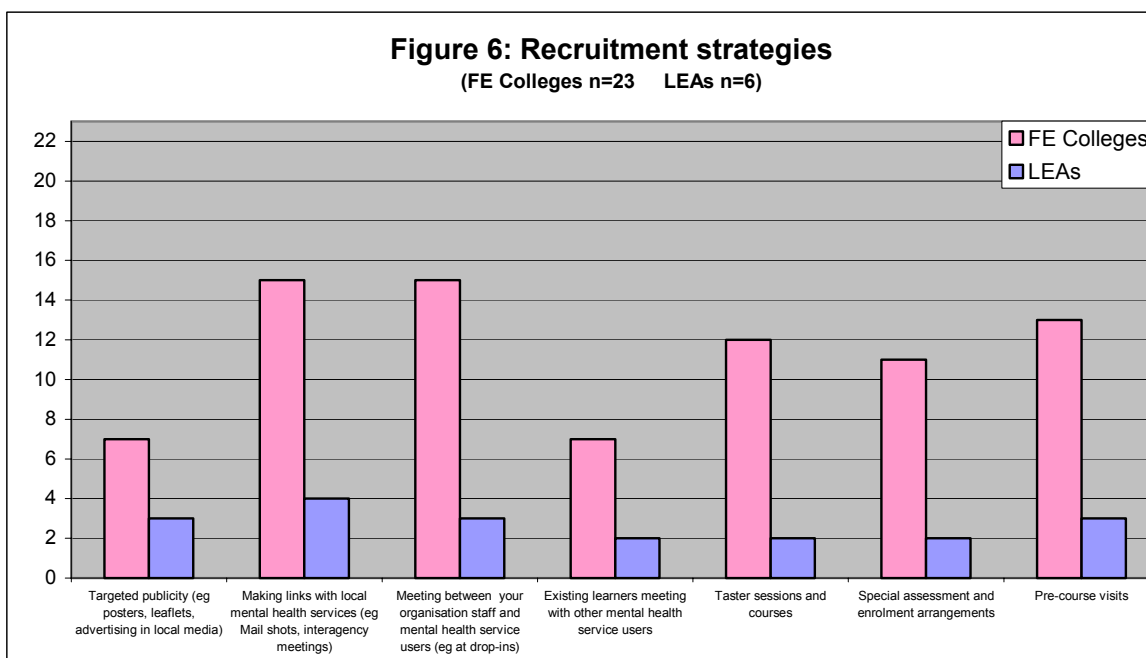
Providers were asked how they involved learners in developing and delivering provision for adults with mental health difficulties.

Provider's comment:

*[Learners] participate in planning and promoting an introduction to college course.*  
(College)

## 5. Accessing learning opportunities

Providers were asked whether they actively sought to recruit learners with mental health needs and if so, how they encouraged them to use their provision: sixteen of the twenty-three colleges and four of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire are actively recruiting this group of learners and described their recruitment strategies.

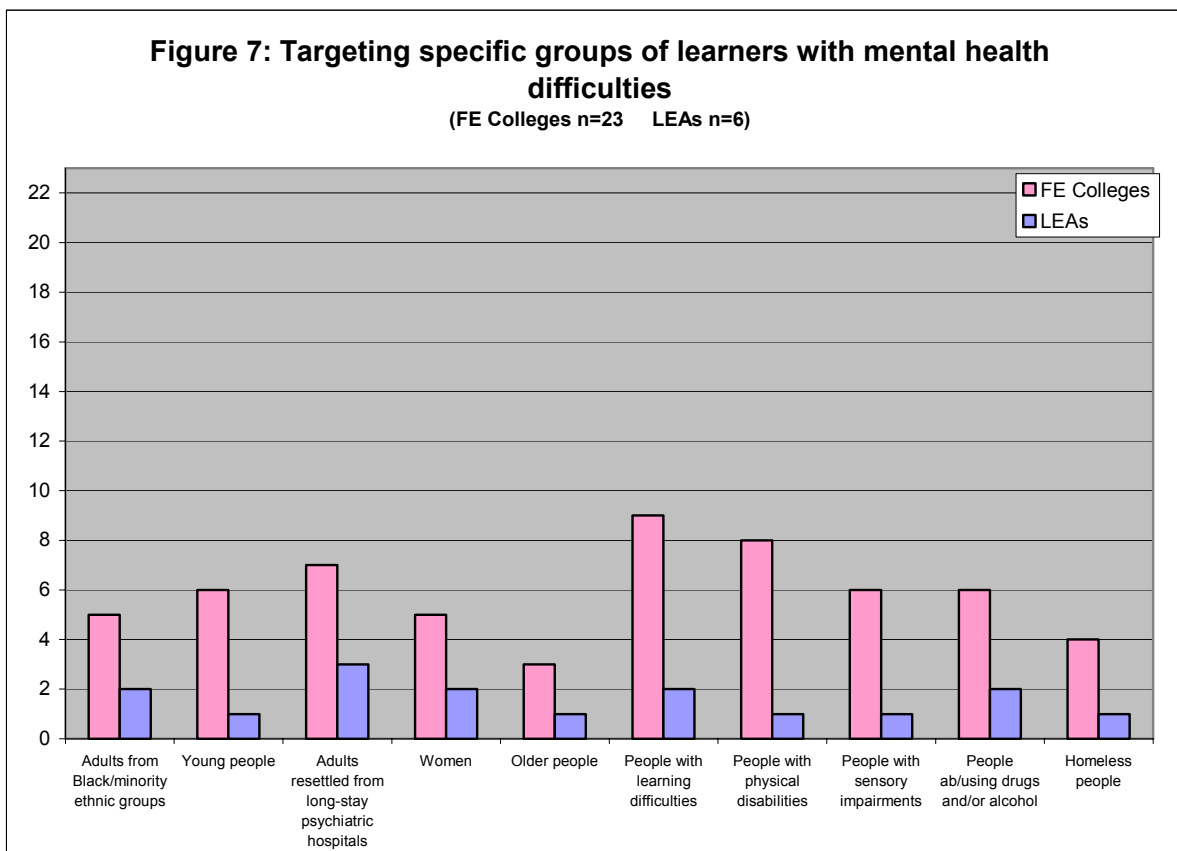


Forging links with local mental health services is one of the most popular recruitment strategies, followed by meetings between the provider’s staff and mental health service users, pre-course visits, taster sessions and courses, and special assessment and enrolment arrangements.

Providers were asked whether they identified learners with mental health needs: by encouraging self-identification before or at enrolment, through referral sources, at guidance interviews, at additional support needs interviews, or by staff referring existing students. For colleges, the most commonly used strategies were encouraging self-identification (eighteen), at the additional support need interview (seventeen), by staff referring existing students (sixteen), and at the guidance interview (sixteen). For LEAs, the most commonly used strategies were via referral sources (three), by staff referring existing students (three), by encouraging self-identification (two), and at the additional support needs interview (two).

## 6. Targeting specific groups of learners with mental health difficulties

Adults with mental health difficulties are a diverse group of learners and we were interested to find out whether education providers were making provision for specific groups such as 14-19-year-olds with mental health difficulties or people with mental health difficulties from Black and minority ethnic groups, and /or targeting their provision at people using particular services.



A note of caution is needed, however. The accuracy of responses (see Fig. 7) is questionable, probably because our question was misunderstood and the results therefore overestimate actual provision. We wanted to find out whether colleges and LEAs were making any targeted provision for *particular* groups with mental health difficulties (e.g. people with sensory impairments and mental health difficulties) rather than people with mental health difficulties in general. Providers may well be running courses for people with hearing impairments (or supporting them to use mainstream provision) but not actually making provision for people who *also* have mental health difficulties. We hope that the regional networks will take the opportunity to check out some of this information as we know there *is* some specialised provision (e.g. for young people or for women) for those who may not choose to use general mental health provision.

In terms of targeting specific mental health services, providers were more likely to be working with community mental health teams (eleven colleges and four LEAs), day centres (eighteen colleges and two LEAs), supported accommodation (nine colleges and two LEAs) and hospitals in-patient services (three LEAs). They were less likely to be working with day hospitals (seven colleges and two LEAs) and regional secure units (two colleges and one LEA). There were, however, some differences here between colleges and LEAs.

## 7. Learner support

Exploring individual learners' support needs and arranging how these will be met can significantly affect whether they have a positive learning experience. The survey asked how they identified the support needs of learners with mental health difficulties, whether

learners had individual support plans in place before their course started, the kinds of support available and who provided this.

Learning support needs were most commonly identified through liaison with referral sources (seven colleges and two LEAs) and initial assessment and guidance (eight colleges and one LEA). Five colleges and two LEAs used two or more ways of identifying learning support needs. No response was received from five colleges and two LEAs.

Providers were asked to describe how they identified the support needs of learners with mental health difficulties before enrolment.

Providers' comments:

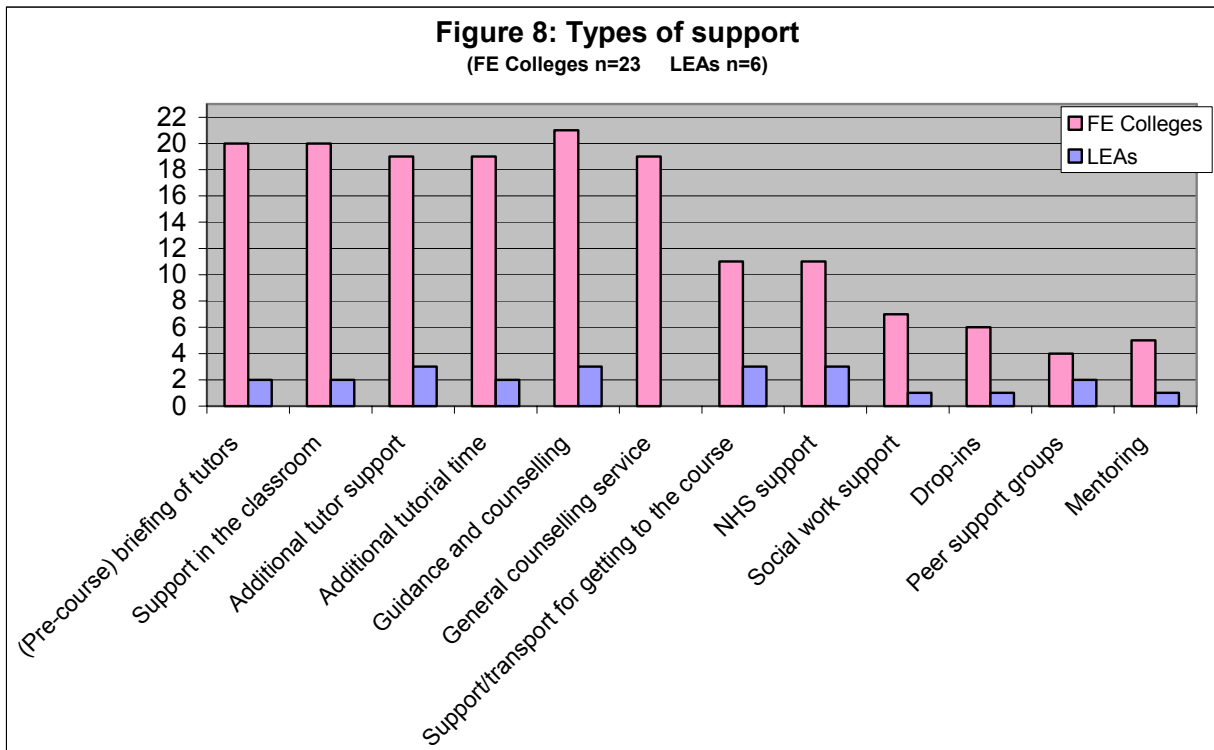
*Disability awareness training meetings with relevant agencies. (LEA)*

*Support needs identified by clinical experts at Health Trust prior to commencing course of study. Support needs identified by college staff and provided as appropriate. (College)*

*Links with mental health agencies in Social Services. (LEA)*

*The referral process from GPs, Social services, etc involves identification of needs. Centre managers of targeted course take part in ascertaining need. Learners start in small groups prior to enrolment into larger classes. (College)*

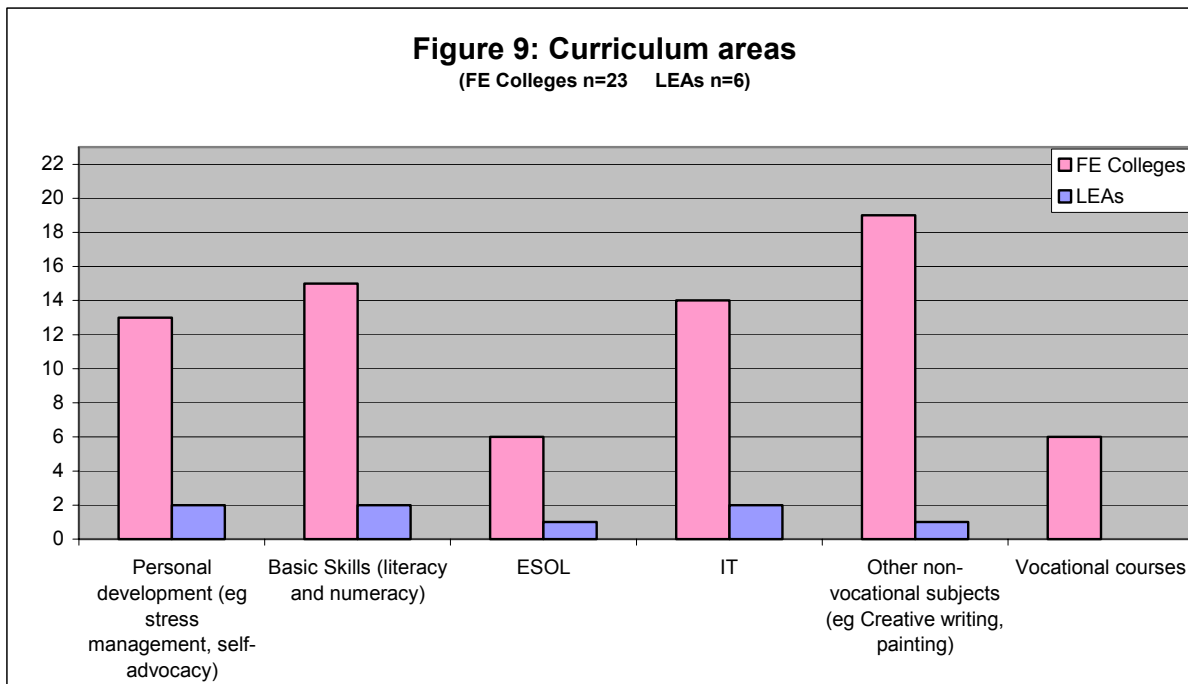
Although some learners may choose to negotiate their support needs after starting a course, the survey found that individual support plans were in place in fourteen colleges and one LEA.



With some variations between colleges and LEAs, the following kinds of support were more likely to be available to learners with mental health difficulties: additional time and support from teaching staff, pre-course briefing of teaching staff, support in the classroom, guidance and counselling, general student counselling service, support/transport to get to the course and health services staff. It would be encouraging to see an increased use of other types of support.

## 8. Curriculum, outcomes and progression

Adults with mental health difficulties should be able to access a curriculum to match their individual needs and interests, in either discrete provision or by being supported on mainstream courses.



The research indicates that, learners with mental health difficulties using targeted provision are most likely to be on non-vocational courses, basic skills, IT, or personal development (fig. 9). Although vocational courses were less common, this may be because learners wanting to access vocational courses are being supported to use mainstream rather than discrete/targeted provision.

There are a number of possible reasons for the prevalence of basic skills courses. Although some people who develop mental health difficulties have university degrees or other qualifications, others will have had disrupted schooling due to their mental health difficulties in childhood and/or adolescence. As a result, they may not have acquired a sufficient grounding in basic skills to enrol on other courses. Experience also suggests that some people with mental health difficulties already have basic skills but lack self-confidence so they choose to enrol on basic skills courses because they find the tutors receptive and welcoming but also appreciate learning in an adult environment. There may however be assumptions made about the level of basic skills needs among adults with mental health difficulties.

Providers were asked which outcomes they used to measure progress. Although we could have included in the questionnaire other outcomes such as “learning a new skill” or “learning more about a particular subject”, we were also interested in finding out about the broader outcomes of learning for people with mental health difficulties which can enable them to make changes in different areas of their lives. Furthermore, outcomes can be interchangeable: learning a new skill, for example, can enhance self-esteem (i.e. improve mental health) and can lead to a more independent lifestyle.

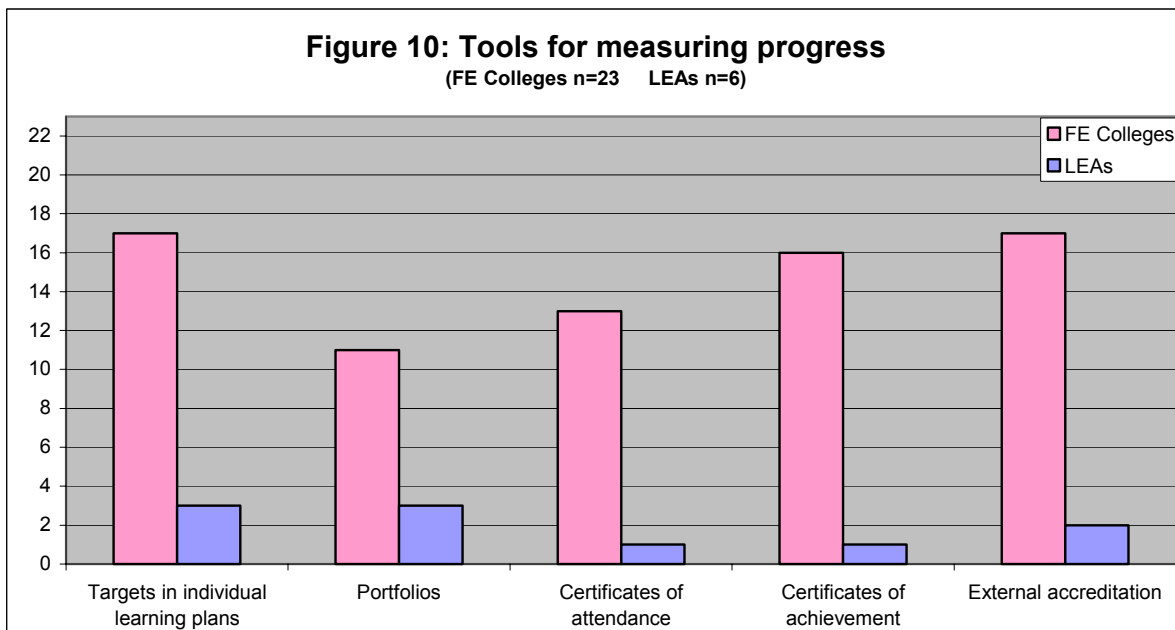
Outcome	FE Colleges (n=23)	LEAs (n=6)
Improved mental health	14	3
Moving from discrete to mainstream further/adult education	14	3
More independent lifestyle	9	3
Moving to higher education	8	4
Starting volunteering or unpaid work experience	8	2
Starting/retaining open employment	6	1
Starting/retaining sheltered employment	5	0

Providers were asked to describe other ways in which they measured progress.

Provider's comment:

*By the completion of course and by the retention. (College)*

Providers were also asked how they formally recognised and recorded learners' progress - i.e. what tools were used to record the kind of outcomes described above. Some, but not all, relate to formal accreditation, and it seems likely that external accreditation (e.g. OCN) has become more widely used since the 1996 survey was undertaken.



These findings are interesting and reflect a recognition of the wider benefits of participation in learning for adults with mental health needs. However, further research into how

providers record outcomes such as improved mental health or a more independent lifestyle would be useful and subsequent findings may have implications for mental health service providers. Furthermore, though providers may be measuring outcomes such as moving into or retaining employment, the findings cannot tell us how many learners do make the transition from education to employment. Again, this is an area that requires further investigation.

Providers were asked to describe ways in which learners progress was recognised and measured.

Providers' comments:

*Some working on college degree and other accreditable courses (engineering, electrical); discrete on own personal goals. (LEA)*

*External accreditation – GCSEs. (College)*

## 9. Funding of provision

Funding mechanisms have undergone considerable changes since the 1996 survey. Providers were asked to identify all their current funding sources but they were also asked to identify their single biggest source of funding: not surprisingly, for eighteen colleges and four LEAs who responded to the questionnaire, this was the LSC. Other sources of funding are identified in table 8 of the Mapping Inclusive Education Projects at the end of the report.

A question was added which did not feature in the 1996 survey. Providers were asked to describe any “support in kind” they received in addition to their financial support. The most frequently cited was support from staff in other agencies (one LEA), use of premises (two colleges) and free staff training (one college). While these resources obviously contribute to existing provision, they can also provide opportunities for partnership working – e.g. accessing other agencies’ training programmes or receiving staff supervision or support.

Providers were asked whether they received any support in kind for their provision for adults with mental health difficulties.

Providers' comments:

*Support workers from Health Authority at site all the time with clients. (College)*

*Free use of premises (NHS Trust) and some equipment and support staff. (LEA)*

*We are trying to set up a synergistic relationship with MIND - whereby they provide support from volunteers free for daytime activities - and they have the opportunity to gain a Practitioner's Credit (to OCN level 3). (College)*

## 10. Staffing

The survey asked providers about designated posts for working with learners with mental health difficulties, overall staff numbers working with these learners, and staff training and development.

There are designated staff posts in seven colleges and two of the LEAs who responded to the questionnaire, although some will have a broader remit than mental health.

Staff had access to a variety of training and development activities:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>FE Colleges</b> (n=23)	<b>LEAs</b> (n=6)
External training events	18	3
External conferences	16	1
Networking	13	4
In-house briefing/information sessions	14	2
In-house Training events	11	2
Supervision	5	3
In-house conferences	5	0
Mentoring	5	0

Nationally relatively few education staff had access to supervision; possibly because this is more prevalent in health and social care services. However, in this region some education providers' staff are already receiving support and/or supervision from staff in mental health services and it may be possible to organise this more widely.

## 11. Partnerships

The survey asked providers about their contact with partner organisations. Those mentioned most frequently were:

<b>Partnership Organisation</b>	<b>FE Colleges</b> (n=23)	<b>LEAs</b> (n=6)
Mental Health Trusts	17	4
Social Services Department	12	4
Voluntary Organisations	11	3
Mental Health service user groups	10	3
Connexions/IAG	9	2
GPs/Primary care teams	7	1

The level of partnership working with Mental Health Trust and Social Services Departments is not surprising. However, there is a need to develop much stronger partnership links with G.P.'s and Primary Care Teams since most people experiencing mental health difficulties will have their mental health care needs met through primary care services. Initiatives such as 'Prescriptions for Learning' (James 2004) could support this.

Providers were asked whether the effectiveness of their provision could be strengthened by closer partnerships and with which agencies they would like to work more closely: fourteen of the twenty-three colleges and three of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire want stronger partnerships.

Providers were asked what kind of partnerships they had and whether the effectiveness of their provision could be strengthened by closer partnership working with other agencies.

Providers' comments:

*Social Services, voluntary sector and health services. (LEA)*

*Community mental health teams and voluntary organisations (already have excellent relationship with ReThink and MIND locally). (College)*

## **Providers' views**

We wanted to know what providers themselves thought were key developments and continuing concerns in their work. This part of the questionnaire asked providers what they thought were their strengths and achievements in this area of work and what were the barriers and challenges still facing them.

### **Strengths and achievements**

Providers were asked to describe what they saw as the strengths and achievements of their provision.

Nineteen colleges and four LEAs described their strengths and achievements, which can be grouped under the following headings:

- identifying and meeting learners' support needs;
- flexible and responsive provision;
- partnerships;
- outcomes and progression;
- curriculum content and delivery;
- inclusion and widening participation; and
- staffing.

Providers' comments:

*Individual assessment and support as necessary, as well as a dedicated support workers in each area. (LEA)*

*Bringing agencies together - good networking and partnership working. (LEA)*

*Wide range of vocational courses and a high achievement rate on OCN courses. (College)*

*Individual programmes that might lead to a progression to work. (LEA)*

*Give advice and guidance to potential support and learning opportunities. (College)*

*Supporting individual learners on mainstream programmes. Focussing on the learning programme rather than the additional learning need (don't look at mental health as negative aspect). (College)*

## **Barriers and challenges**

Providers were asked to describe what they saw as the problems, barriers and challenges that they face in this area of work.

Twenty-one colleges and four LEAs described barriers and challenges they encountered which can be grouped under the following headings:

- funding;
- staffing;
- partnerships;
- flexible and responsive provision;
- lack of time and resources; and
- 'undiagnosed'/identified learners.

Providers' comments:

*Losing freedom through funding changes and compartmentalisation of everything we do into easily definable categories! (LEA)*

*We need full-time support for vulnerable students and those with special learning difficulties. (College)*

*Difficult to support learners with a sporadic attendance pattern due to ill health whilst trying to maintain academic standards. (LEA)*

*Staff don't like to ask about details - without need-to-know information, mistakes are often made due to lack of understanding. (College)*

In the West Midlands most providers described 'identifying and meeting learners' support needs' and 'flexible and responsive provision' as a strength and achievement followed by 'partnerships' and 'outcomes and progression'. 'Funding' was felt to be the main barrier and challenge to developing this area of work followed by 'lack of time and resources' and 'staffing'.

In describing their 'strengths and achievements' and their 'barriers and challenges' different providers sometimes raised similar issues under one or other of these headings (eg 'flexible and responsive provision', 'partnerships', and 'staffing'). What one provider may see as an achievement, is a challenge or barrier to another. This may reflect the varying degrees of expertise and experience among learning providers, but it may also relate to other factors such as the level of commitment and support from senior management or the presence of designated staff posts. Further research would help us to understand why some providers seem to succeed in some areas of development while others do not. However, the similarities in the two lists would also suggest that there are shared agendas for adult learning providers which could be addressed by sharing positive

practice, providing mutual support and problem-solving. This could be the legitimate basis for development within the regions.

## **In conclusion ...**

Some very encouraging findings have emerged from this survey. Since the 1996 mapping exercise, new provision continues to be developed for adults with mental health difficulties in a variety of settings, enabling learners to access a curriculum which meets their individual needs and aspirations and supports them in a flexible and responsive manner. A decade or so ago, it was seen as a major achievement when providers set up discrete provision for adults with mental health difficulties. Now we can celebrate when learners move on to use mainstream provision. As many survey participants pointed out, the challenge now is to develop ways of supporting more learners on mainstream courses, while ensuring their success and achievement.

The survey will help each region to identify key issues for future agendas, shape future good practice and provide valuable guidance for providers starting to develop their provision for adults with mental health difficulties. And as the final part of the survey suggests – there is much to celebrate but still much to be done in the future if learning opportunities are to promote real social inclusion and individual well being.

This report sets out the main findings from the survey, but many colleges and LEAs also wrote further about their experiences, providing us with a wealth of qualitative evidence which we have drawn on to illustrate certain points. However, there is more we can learn from which needs to be disseminated further.

Providers were asked whether they wanted any future involvement with the NIACE/NIMHE partnership project and it was very encouraging that in the West Midlands region, twenty-one of the twenty-three colleges and five of the six LEAs who responded to the questionnaire want to be kept in touch. Furthermore, fifteen colleges and three LEAs would like to join a regional network, and when this report is circulated, we hope they will become actively involved with their partners in mental health services.

## **The next stage**

The second stage of the NIACE/NIMHE partnership project has been to set up Regional Networks in each of the eight NIMHE Regional Development Centres. These networks present a wonderful opportunity for us to build on the findings of this research in order to develop more accessible and inclusive educational provision for adults with mental health difficulties.

## **Acknowledgments**

We would like to thank Alison Wertheimer (NIACE Consultant), Susan Rees (NIACE) and Cinthya Beaman (NIACE) for their help with analysing the data and preparing the report.

## References

- Department of Health (1999) *National Service Framework for Mental Health. Modern Standards and Service Models*. Stationery Office.
- Further Education Funding Council (1996) *Inclusive Learning: Report of the Learning Difficulties/Disabilities Committee*, chaired by Professor John Tomlinson, FEFC.
- Further Education Funding Council (1997) *Learning Works: Report of the Committee on Widening Participation*. FEFC.
- James, k. (2004) *Winning Hearts and Minds*. NIACE
- Wertheimer, A. (1997) *Images of Possibility*. NIACE/FEDA.

## Glossary

This includes terms used in this report and by those working in education, health and social care services. We have included them here because people working in those individual services don't always speak the same language!

- ACLF: Adult and Community Learning Fund
- DDA: Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages
- FE: Further Education
- GNVQ: General National Vocational Qualification
- IAG: Information, Advice and Guidance (Network of Providers)
- IT: Information Technology
- LEA: Local Education Authority
- LSA: Learning Support Assistant
- LSC: Learning and Skills Council
- NSF: National Service Framework
- NVQ: National Vocational Qualification
- OCN: Open College Network
- PCT: Primary Care Trust
- SSD: Social Services Department

## Further information:

Kathryn James  
Project Manager  
NIACE  
21 De Montfort Street  
Leicester  
LE1 7GE  
Tel. 0116 2044 281  
[kathryn.james@niace.org.uk](mailto:kathryn.james@niace.org.uk)

## Mapping Inclusive Education Projects West Midlands Colleges

### 1. What kind of current or planned provision is it?

Name of College	Mainstream (current)	Discrete (current)	Not Specified (current)	Mainstream (planned)	Discrete (planned)	Not Specified (current)
Bournville College of FE			•		•	
Cadbury College Learning Centre						
City College Coventry			•	•	•	
City of Wolverhampton College			•	•	•	
College of Continuing Education, Walsall			•		•	
Fircroft College			•		•	
Halesowen College			•		•	
Henley College Coventry	•					
Joseph Chamberlain SF College			•			
Kidderminster College			•			
Ludlow College			•		•	
North East Worcestershire College			•	•	•	
North Warwickshire and Hinckley			•			
Pershore Group of Colleges	•	•				
Rugby College			•			
Sandwell College			•	•	•	
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology	•			•		
Solihull Sixth Form College			•			
Stoke on Trent College	•	•				
Stourbridge College	•		•			
Telford College of Arts & Technology			•		•	
Warwickshire College			•		•	
Worcester College of Technology			•	•	•	

**2. Is there provision which targets specific groups of adults with mental health difficulties?**

Name of College	Black / minority ethnic people	14-19 year-olds	Former long-stay hospital patients	Women	Older People	People with learning difficulties	People with physical / sensory / other disabilities	People ab/using drugs/alcohol	Homeless people
Bournville College of FE									
Cadbury College Learning Centre									
City College Coventry		•		•		•	•		
City of Wolverhampton College	•					•	•	•	
College of Continuing Education, Walsall	•	•		•	•	•	•		•
Fircroft College			•	•	•			•	•
Halesowen College									
Henley College Coventry						•	•		•
Joseph Chamberlain SF College	•	•							
Kidderminster College			•			•	•		
Ludlow College									
North East Worcestershire College			•						
North Warwickshire and Hinckley			•						
Pershore Group of Colleges									
Rugby College									
Sandwell College		•	•	•				•	
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology		•	•					•	
Solihull Sixth Form College		•							
Stoke on Trent College							•	•	•
Stourbridge College	•					•			
Telford College of Arts & Technology	•			•	•	•	•		
Warwickshire College			•			•	•		
Worcester College of Technology						•		•	

### 3. How are learners with mental health difficulties contributing to provision?

	Policies/plans/etc	Publicity materials	Planning courses	Visits to recruit new learners	Helping to run taster sessions and courses	Staff training and development	Feedback on current provision	Speaking at conferences etc	Research and surveys etc
Name of College									
Bournville College of FE				•	•		•		•
Cadbury College Learning Centre									
City College Coventry	•		•		•		•		
City of Wolverhampton College							•		
College of Continuing Education, Walsall									
Fircroft College	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Halesowen College		•						•	
Henley College Coventry				•			•		
Joseph Chamberlain SF College									
Kidderminster College		•	•	•					
Ludlow College							•		
North East Worcestershire College		•	•			•	•	•	•
North Warwickshire and Hinckley							•		
Pershore Group of Colleges							•		•
Rugby College		•		•	•				
Sandwell College		•	•		•		•	•	
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology	•	•	•			•	•	•	•
Solihull Sixth Form College									
Stoke on Trent College				•	•		•	•	
Stourbridge College		•					•		•
Telford College of Arts & Technology									
Warwickshire College	•	•	•	•			•		
Worcester College of Technology				•			•	•	

**4. How do providers encourage people with mental health difficulties to access learning opportunities?**

	Targeted publicity	Linking with mental health services	Meeting service users	Taster sessions and courses	Special enrolment arrangements	Pre-course visits
Name of College						
Bournville College of FE	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cadbury College Learning Centre						
City College Coventry		•	•	•	•	•
City of Wolverhampton College	•	•	•	•	•	•
College of Continuing Education, Walsall		•	•			•
Fircroft College		•	•	•		•
Halesowen College		•	•	•		•
Henley College Coventry					•	•
Joseph Chamberlain SF College						
Kidderminster College						
Ludlow College						
North East Worcestershire College	•	•	•	•	•	•
North Warwickshire and Hinckley			•	•	•	
Pershore Group of Colleges		•				
Rugby College		•	•			
Sandwell College	•	•	•	•	•	•
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology	•	•	•	•	•	•
Solihull Sixth Form College						
Stoke on Trent College		•	•			
Stourbridge College		•	•	•	•	•
Telford College of Arts & Technology						
Warwickshire College	•	•	•	•	•	•
Worcester College of Technology	•	•	•	•	•	•

## 5. Who supports learners with mental health difficulties?

Name of College	Teaching staff	Learning support staff	Staff from health and/or social care services	Mentors, volunteers, buddies, other learners	Other mental health service users
Bournville College of FE	•	•	•		•
Cadbury College Learning Centre					
City College Coventry	•	•	•		•
City of Wolverhampton College	•	•	•	•	
College of Continuing Education, Walsall	•	•	•		
Fircroft College	•	•	•	•	
Halesowen College	•	•			
Henley College Coventry		•	•		•
Joseph Chamberlain SF College	•	•	•		
Kidderminster College	•	•			
Ludlow College	•	•			
North East Worcestershire College	•	•	•		
North Warwickshire and Hinckley	•	•	•		
Persore Group of Colleges	•	•	•		
Rugby College	•	•	•		
Sandwell College	•	•		•	•
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology	•	•			
Solihull Sixth Form College	•	•	•		
Stoke on Trent College	•	•	•	•	
Stourbridge College	•	•	•		•
Telford College of Arts & Technology	•	•	•		
Warwickshire College	•	•			•
Worcester College of Technology	•	•	•		•

## 6. How are learners with mental health difficulties supported?

	Pre-course briefing of tutors	Support in the classroom (e.g. from LSAs)	Additional time/support from tutors	Guidance and counselling	Student counselling service	Support/transport for getting to the course	Off-course support (e.g. drop-ins)	Peer support groups
Name of College								
Bournville College of FE	•	•	•	•	•			
Cadbury College Learning Centre								
City College Coventry	•	•	•	•	•			
City of Wolverhampton College	•	•	•	•	•	•		
College of Continuing Education, Walsall		•	•	•		•		
Fircroft College	•	•		•				
Halesowen College	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Henley College Coventry	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Joseph Chamberlain SF College	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Kidderminster College	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Ludlow College	•	•	•					
North East Worcestershire College	•	•	•	•	•			
North Warwickshire and Hinckley	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Pershore Group of Colleges	•	•	•	•	•		•	
Rugby College	•	•	•	•	•			
Sandwell College	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology	•		•	•	•			
Solihull Sixth Form College	•		•	•	•	•		
Stoke on Trent College	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Stourbridge College	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Telford College of Arts & Technology		•	•	•	•	•		
Warwickshire College	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Worcester College of Technology	•	•	•	•	•	•		•

## 7. What outcomes are used to measure learners' achievements?

	Discrete to mainstream	To higher education	Open paid employment	Unpaid work experience/ Volunteering	More independent living	Improved mental health
Name of College						
Bournville College of FE	•					•
Cadbury College Learning Centre						
City College Coventry						•
City of Wolverhampton College	•			•	•	•
College of Continuing Education, Walsall						•
Fircroft College	•	•				•
Halesowen College						
Henley College Coventry	•				•	
Joseph Chamberlain SF College		•				
Kidderminster College	•					
Ludlow College	•					•
North East Worcestershire College	•	•	•	•	•	•
North Warwickshire and Hinckley	•	•	•	•	•	•
Pershore Group of Colleges	•					•
Rugby College	•		•		•	•
Sandwell College	•			•	•	
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology	•	•	•	•	•	•
Solihull Sixth Form College		•				
Stoke on Trent College				•		•
Stourbridge College						
Telford College of Arts & Technology						
Warwickshire College	•	•	•	•	•	•
Worcester College of Technology	•	•	•	•	•	•

## 8. Who funds the provision?

	Learning and Skills Council	LEA	ACLF	Social Services	Health services	Joint funding (NHS/Social Services)	Charitable Trust	National Lottery Fund	European funding	Other
Name of College										
Bournville College of FE	•									
Cadbury College Learning Centre										
City College Coventry	•	•								
City of Wolverhampton College	•				•					
College of Continuing Education, Walsall	•									
Fircroft College	•		•							
Halesowen College	•									
Henley College Coventry	•	•						•		
Joseph Chamberlain SF College	•									
Kidderminster College	•									•
Ludlow College	•									
North East Worcestershire College	•	•								
North Warwickshire and Hinckley	•		•							
Pershore Group of Colleges	•									
Rugby College	•									
Sandwell College	•									
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology		•		•	•					
Solihull Sixth Form College	•									
Stoke on Trent College				•						
Stourbridge College	•									
Telford College of Arts & Technology	•									
Warwickshire College	•	•	•		•					
Worcester College of Technology	•									

**9. What kinds of training, development and support are available to staff working with learners with mental health difficulties?**

	Supervision	Training (workshops etc.)	Conferences	Briefing/information sessions	Mentoring	Networking
Name of College						
Bournville College of FE	•			•	•	
Cadbury College Learning Centre		•	•			•
City College Coventry		•	•	•		•
City of Wolverhampton College	•	•	•	•	•	•
College of Continuing Education, Walsall			•			
Fircroft College		•	•			
Halesowen College		•		•		
Henley College Coventry		•	•	•		•
Joseph Chamberlain SF College		•	•			
Kidderminster College		•	•			
Ludlow College		•	•			•
North East Worcestershire College		•	•	•	•	•
North Warwickshire and Hinckley		•	•			
Pershore Group of Colleges		•		•		
Rugby College						
Sandwell College	•	•	•	•		
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology			•	•		•
Solihull Sixth Form College		•		•		•
Stoke on Trent College		•	•			•
Stourbridge College	•	•	•	•	•	•
Telford College of Arts & Technology	•	•	•			•
Warwickshire College		•	•	•		•
Worcester College of Technology		•	•	•	•	•

### 10. What other organisations does the provider work in partnership with?

	Other colleges	LEA	Connexions / IAGs	Social Services	Mental health services	Primary Care	Voluntary organisation	Mental health user group
Name of College								
Bournville College of FE					•	•		
Cadbury College Learning Centre	•		•	•	•	•	•	
City College Coventry	•	•						•
City of Wolverhampton College	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
College of Continuing Education, Walsall				•	•			•
Fircroft College	•				•		•	•
Halesowen College	•				•			
Henley College Coventry	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Joseph Chamberlain SF College			•					
Kidderminster College		•			•	•	•	•
Ludlow College				•	•			
North East Worcestershire College	•	•		•	•			
North Warwickshire and Hinckley	•		•	•	•		•	
Pershore Group of Colleges					•			
Rugby College	•			•				•
Sandwell College	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology						•	•	•
Solihull Sixth Form College	•	•			•		•	
Stoke on Trent College				•				
Stourbridge College	•		•	•	•			
Telford College of Arts & Technology			•	•		•		
Warwickshire College		•	•		•		•	•
Worcester College of Technology	•				•		•	

### 11. What kinds of contact does the provider have with other organisations?

	Regular meetings	Telephone contact	Shared staff training/development	Liaison re referrals/support	Co-tutoring or co-working	Giving or receiving supervision	Contributing to care planning meetings or reviews
Name of College							
Bournville College of FE	•	•	•	•			
Cadbury College Learning Centre		•					
City College Coventry			•	•			
City of Wolverhampton College	•		•	•	•	•	
College of Continuing Education, Walsall	•	•		•			
Fircroft College	•		•	•			
Halesowen College	•	•					
Henley College Coventry		•	•	•			•
Joseph Chamberlain SF College							
Kidderminster College				•			
Ludlow College				•			
North East Worcestershire College	•	•	•	•			
North Warwickshire and Hinckley	•	•	•	•	•		•
Pershore Group of Colleges				•			
Rugby College	•	•					
Sandwell College	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology	•	•		•	•	•	•
Solihull Sixth Form College	•	•	•	•		•	
Stoke on Trent College	•	•	•	•	•		
Stourbridge College	•	•	•	•			
Telford College of Arts & Technology		•	•	•			•
Warwickshire College	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Worcester College of Technology	•	•	•	•			

## Mapping Inclusive Education Projects West Midlands LEAs

### 1. What kind of current or planned provision is it?

Name of LEA	Mainstream (current)	Discrete (current)	Not Specified (current)	Mainstream (planned)	Discrete (planned)	Not Specified (planned)
	Birmingham	•				
Coventry			•		•	
Stoke-on-Trent						
Warwickshire			•	•	•	
Wolverhampton	•					
Worcestershire			•	•	•	

### 2. Is there provision which targets specific groups of adults with mental health difficulties?

Name of LEA	Black / minority ethnic people	14-19 year-olds	Former long-stay hospital patients	Women	Older People	People with learning difficulties	People with physical / sensory / other disabilities	People ab/using drugs/alcohol	Homeless people
Birmingham						•			
Coventry	•		•	•					
Stoke-on-Trent									
Warwickshire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Wolverhampton			•					•	
Worcestershire									

### 3. How are learners with mental health difficulties contributing to provision?

	Policies/plans/etc	Publicity materials	Planning courses	Visits to recruit new learners	Helping to run taster sessions or courses	Staff training and development	Feedback on current provision	Speaking at conferences etc	Research and surveys etc
Name of LEA									
Birmingham		•							•
Coventry			•			•			
Stoke-on-Trent									
Warwickshire	•		•				•		
Wolverhampton									
Worcestershire									

### 4. How do providers encourage people with mental health difficulties to access learning opportunities?

	Targeted publicity	Linking with mental health services	Meeting service users	Taster sessions and courses	Special enrolment arrangements	Pre-course visits
Name of LEA						
Birmingham			•			
Coventry	•	•	•	•		•
Stoke-on-Trent						
Warwickshire	•	•	•			•
Wolverhampton		•	•		•	•
Worcestershire	•	•	•	•		

### 5. Who supports learners with mental health difficulties?

Name of LEA	Teaching staff	Learning support staff	Staff from health and/or social care services	Mentors, volunteers, buddies, other learners	Other mental health service users
Birmingham	•	•		•	
Coventry	•	•		•	
Stoke-on-Trent					
Warwickshire	•		•	•	•
Wolverhampton	•		•		
Worcestershire	•		•		

### 6. How are learners with mental health difficulties supported?

Name of LEA	Pre-course briefing of tutors	Support in the classroom (e.g. from LSAs)	Additional time/support from tutors	Guidance and counselling	Student counselling service	Support/transport for getting to the course	Off-course support (e.g. drop-ins)	Peer support groups
Birmingham								
Coventry		•	•			•		
Stoke-on-Trent								
Warwickshire	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Wolverhampton				•				
Worcestershire	•		•	•		•		•

**7. What outcomes are used to measure learners' achievements?**

	Discrete to mainstream	To higher education	Open paid employment	Unpaid work experience/ Volunteering	More independent living	Improved mental health
Name of LEA						
Birmingham						
Coventry	•	•		•		•
Stoke-on-Trent						
Warwickshire	•	•			•	
Wolverhampton		•	•	•	•	•
Worcestershire	•	•			•	•

**8. Who funds the provision?**

	Learning and Skills Council	LEA	ACLF	Social Services	Health services	Joint funding (NHS/Social Services)	Charitable Trust	National Lottery Fund	European funding	Other
Name of LEA										
Birmingham	•									
Coventry	•	•								
Stoke-on-Trent										
Warwickshire	•			•						
Wolverhampton				•	•					
Worcestershire	•	•								

**9. What kinds of training, development and support are available to staff working with learners with mental health difficulties?**

	Supervision	Training (workshops etc.)	Conferences	Briefing/information sessions	Mentoring	Networking
Name of LEA						
Birmingham		•	•			•
Coventry	•	•	•	•		•
Stoke-on-Trent						
Warwickshire	•			•		
Wolverhampton	•		•			•
Worcestershire						•

**10. What other organisations does the provider work in partnership with?**

	FE Colleges	Connexions / IAGs	Social Services	Mental health services	Primary Care	Voluntary organisation	Mental health user group
Name of LEA							
Birmingham							
Coventry	•		•	•		•	•
Stoke-on-Trent							
Warwickshire	•		•	•		•	•
Wolverhampton	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Worcestershire	•	•	•	•			

**11. What kinds of contact does the provider have with other organisations?**

	Regular meetings	Telephone contact	Shared staff training/ development	Liaison re referrals/support	Co-tutoring or co- working	Giving or receiving supervision	Contributing to care planning meetings or reviews
Name of LEA							
Birmingham	•			•			
Coventry	•	•	•	•			
Stoke-on-Trent							
Warwickshire	•			•	•		
Wolverhampton		•	•	•		•	•
Worcestershire	•	•		•			•

## ANNEXE 1 – WEST MIDLANDS

FE Colleges	Number of learners enrolled	LEAs	Number of learners enrolled
Bournville College	180	Birmingham	0
Cadbury College Learning Centre	0	Coventry	129
City College Coventry	25	Stoke-on-Trent	0
City of Wolverhampton College	75	Warwickshire	0
College of Continuing Education (Walsall)	5	Wolverhampton	60
Fircroft College	20	Worcestershire	24
Halesowen	25		
Henley College	25		
Joseph Chamberlain SF College	1		
Kidderminster	50		
Ludlow	0		
North East Worcestershire College	350		
North Warwickshire and Hinckley College	56		
Pershore Group	28		
Rugby College	25		
Sandwell College	400		
Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology	70		
Solihull College	0		
Stoke on Trent College	10		
Stourbridge College	50		
Telford College of Arts & Technology	0		
Warwickshire College	60		
Worcester College of Technology	400		

**Note:** 0 (number of learners enrolled) indicates that the provider stated that they had no learners with mental health difficulties, did not know or did not reply to the question.

**ANNEXE 2: THE QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**NIMHE/NIACE Mental Health Project**  
**Questionnaire for LEAs/Colleges**

**Name of LEA/College:**

**Name of contact person:**

**Job / Title:**

**Address:**

**Tel. No:**

**Fax No:**

**E-mail:**

**Please return this form by 28 February 2003 to: Kathryn James, Project Manager, NIACE, 21 De Montfort Street, Leicester, LE1 7GE**

- ***Mental health affects us all but the aim of this survey is to map provision that targets people who are or have been users of mental health services, or who may have mental health difficulties and be receiving support from primary care services.***
- We have sent you this two-part questionnaire as we are very interested in learning about your LEA's experiences of making provision for learners with mental health difficulties.
- Information from Part 1 will help us to build a national picture of existing provision.
- We hope you will also complete Part 2 so that we can learn at first hand about the issues arising in your work with this group of learners.
- Please complete as much of the questionnaire as you can, even if you can't complete every question.
- If there is insufficient space for any of your answers, please attach additional pages.
- Even if you're not currently making any targeted provision for learners with mental health difficulties, we would still like to hear from you, so please return the questionnaire anyway.

**PART 1**

**POLICIES, PLANS AND CURRENT PROVISION**

**Q1a Does your LEA/College make targeted provision for learners with mental health difficulties? (Please circle)**

Yes / No

**Q1b If 'Yes', when did you start making this provision?**

**Q1c Approximately how many adults with mental health difficulties are currently enrolled on your courses or are being supported to use mainstream provision?**

**Q2a What steps are your LEA/College taking to anticipate and plan for meeting the likely needs of adult learners with mental health difficulties, as required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Part 4) and associated Code of Practice? Please describe:**

**Q2b Are you aware of Standard 1 of the National Service Framework for Mental Health which addresses mental health promotion and combats the discrimination and social exclusion associated with mental health problems, with educational establishments seen as key partners? (Please circle)**

Yes/No

**Q3a Does your LEA's/College's strategic plan refer specifically to people with mental health difficulties? (Please circle)**

Yes / No

**Q3b If 'No', will your future plans refer to this group of learners? (Please circle)**

Yes / No

**Q4 Do you have other written policies or guidance relating to learners with mental health difficulties? (Please circle)**

Yes (*please enclose copies*) / No

**Q5a Are you currently planning any new provision for adults with mental health difficulties? (Please circle)**

Yes / No

**Q5b If 'Yes', will this involve discrete provision or do you also plan to make provision across the curriculum? Please describe:**

**LEARNER CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION**

**Q6a Are learners involved in developing and delivering provision for adults with mental health difficulties in any of the following ways?**

- a Contributing to the development of policies, plans and guidance
- b Contributing to leaflets, posters or other publicity materials
- c Planning the content of courses and how they are run
- d Participating in outreach visits (e.g. to day centres) to recruit new learners
- e Helping to run taster sessions
- f Contributing to staff training and development

- g Providing feedback on existing provision
- h Feedback to senior management teams
- i Speaking/presenting at external events (e.g. conferences)
- j Participating in research, surveys etc.
- k Other (please describe below)

**Q6b Do learners with mental health difficulties participate in one or more of the above activities by?**

- a Taking part in groups
- b Having one to one sessions
- c Completing questionnaires
- d Other (please describe below)

<b>RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND ASSESSMENT</b>
---

**Q7a Does your LEA/College actively seek to recruit learners with mental health difficulties? (Please circle)**

Yes / No

**Q7b If 'Yes', does your LEA/College encourage adults with mental health difficulties to access your provision through?**

- a Targeted publicity (e.g. posters, leaflets, advertising in local media)
- b Making links with local mental health services (e.g. mail shots, inter-agency meetings)
- c Meetings between LEA/College staff and mental health service users (e.g. at drop-ins)
- d Existing learners meeting with other mental health service users
- e Taster sessions and courses
- f Special assessment and enrolment arrangements
- g Pre-course visits
- h Other (please describe)

**Q8 Does your LEA/ also seek to identify learners with mental health difficulties?**

- a By encouraging self-identification before/at enrolment
- b Through referral sources (e.g. day centres)
- c At the guidance interview
- d At an additional support needs interview
- e By tutors or other LEA/College staff referring existing students
- f Other (please describe below)

**Q9a Do you make provision which targets any of the following groups of people with mental health difficulties:**

- a Adults from Black and minority ethnic groups
- b Young people (aged 14-19)
- c Adults resettled from long-stay psychiatric hospitals
- d Women
- e Older people
- f People with learning disabilities
- g People with physical disabilities
- h People with sensory impairments
- i People ab/using drugs and/or alcohol
- j Homeless people
- k Other (please describe below)

**Q9b Do you make provision which targets individuals who have or are recovering from severe mental health difficulties, through the following services:**

- a Day hospitals
- b Hospital in-patient services
- c Day centres
- d Supported accommodation
- e Community mental health teams
- f Regional secure units
- g Other (please describe below)

<b>SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS</b>
-----------------------------

**Q10a How do you identify the support needs of learners with mental health difficulties before enrolment? Please describe below:**

**Q10b Do learners with mental health difficulties have individual support plans before their course starts? (Please circle)**

Yes / No

**Q11 Which of the following kinds of support are available to your learners with mental health difficulties:**

- a (Pre-course) briefing of tutors
- b Support in the classroom (e.g. from an LSA)
- c Additional tutor support
- d Additional tutorial time
- e Guidance and counselling
- f General student counselling service
- g Support/transport for getting to the course
- h NHS support (e.g. keyworker, community psychiatric nurse)
- i Social work support
- j Drop-ins (off-course support)
- k Peer support groups
- l Mentoring
- m Other (please specify below)

**Q12 Which of the following people and/or agencies currently provides this support:**

- a LEA teaching staff
- b LEA learning support staff
- c LEA guidance staff
- d LEA's designated mental health support staff
- e Volunteers / befrienders / buddies
- f Social Services
- g Voluntary organisation
- h Mental health service users group
- i Telephone helplines
- j NHS Trusts, including Mental Health Trusts and Primary Care Trusts
- k Private mental health service providers
- l Other (please specify below)

## CURRICULUM, ACCREDITATION AND PROGRESSION

**Q13 Does your targeted provision for adults with mental health difficulties include any of the following courses?**

- a Personal development (e.g. stress management, self-advocacy)
- b Basic skills (literacy and numeracy)
- c ESOL
- d IT
- e Other non-vocational subjects (e.g. creative writing)
- f Vocational courses (e.g. NVQ, GNVQ)
- g Other (please describe below)

**Q14 Do you use any of the following outcomes to measure progress?**

- a Moving from discrete to mainstream adult/community learning provision
- b Moving from adult/community learning provision to higher education
- c Starting or retaining full- or part-time sheltered employment
- d Starting or retaining full- or part-time paid open employment
- e Starting unpaid employment (volunteering or work experience)
- f Achieving a more independent lifestyle (e.g. moving to own house/flat)
- g Improved mental health (e.g. social skills, confidence, self-esteem)
- h Other (please specify below)

**Q15 Is learners' progress recognised and measured in any of the following ways?**

- a Targets in individual learning plans
- b Portfolios
- c Certificates of attendance
- d Certificates of achievement
- e External accreditation (e.g. OCN)
- f Other (please describe below)

## FUNDING

**Q16a Are you currently funded for your provision for learners with mental health difficulties from any of these sources?**

- a Learning and Skills Council
- b Local Education Authority
- c Adult and Community Learning Fund (ACLF)
- d Social Services
- e Mental Illness Specific Grant
- f Mental Health, Primary Care (or other) NHS Trust
- g Health and Social Services pooled funding (Health Act 2000)
- h Voluntary organisation
- i Charitable trust
- j National Lottery Fund
- k European Community
- l City Challenge
- m Joint Funding
- n Other (please describe below)

**Q16b Which of the above is your single biggest funder? Please describe below.**

**Q16c Do you receive any support in kind for your provision for adults with mental health difficulties (e.g. free use of premises, support or supervision from mental health staff, free training)? Please describe:**

<b>STAFFING, STAFF SUPPORT AND TRAINING</b>
---

**Q17 Is there a designated member of the LEA's/College's staff responsible for learners with mental health difficulties? (Please circle)**

Yes / No

**Q18 Approximately how many staff in your LEA/College are currently working with adults with mental health difficulties:**

- a teaching staff:
- b guidance staff:
- c support staff:
- d other (please specify below)

**Q19 Which of the following support, training and development opportunities focusing on work with learners with mental health difficulties are available to your staff:**

- a Supervision
- b In-house training events (e.g. workshops)
- c In-house conferences
- d External training events
- e External conferences
- f In-house briefing/information sessions
- g Mentoring
- h Networking (e.g. for mutual support / information exchange)
- i Other (please describe below)

<b>PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES</b>
--

**Q20a Are LEA/College staff in contact with any of the following agencies regarding learners with mental health difficulties?**

- a FE colleges
- b Connexions / IAGs
- c Social Services Department
- d Mental Health and Primary Care Trusts
- e Primary care teams/GP practices
- f Voluntary organisations
- g Mental health user groups
- h Private mental health service providers
- i Other (please specify below)

**Q20b Does your contact with other agencies include any of the following?**

- a Multi-agency networks/networking
- b Regular meetings
- c Telephone contact
- d Shared staff training/development
- e Liaison about referrals
- f Liaison about support
- g Co-tutoring or other co-working

- h Supervision for specialist staff
- i Contributing to learners' care planning meetings and reviews
- j Other (please describe below)

**Q21 Have LEA/College staff been involved with drawing up any of the following strategic plans:**

- a Joint Investment Plans
- b Community Plans
- c Health Improvement Plans
- d Other (please specify below)

**Q22a Could the effectiveness of your provision be strengthened by closer partnership working with other agencies? (Please circle)**

Yes / No

**Q22b If Yes, please specify which agencies:**

<b>Part 2</b>
---------------

We would like to hear from you about what you consider to be the strengths and achievements of your provision for learners with mental health difficulties as well as the challenges and barriers you face. Your experience can help us to identify key issues for future agendas and will provide valuable guidance to providers who are planning to develop their learning opportunities for adults with mental health difficulties.

**Q23 Please describe what you see as the strengths and achievements of your provision.**

**Q24 Please describe what you see as the problems, challenges and barriers you are currently facing.**

**Would you like to be kept in touch with the project? (Please circle)**

Yes/No

**Would you be interested in joining a Regional Network? (Please circle)**

Yes/No

**We may want to explore in more detail some of the issues raised in this survey by visiting your provision and talking to staff and learners. Would you be willing for one of the project staff to visit you? (Please circle)**

Yes/No

**Are you aware of any other learning opportunities in your area, for adults with mental health difficulties? Can you give us contact details?**

<b>Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!</b>
--