



PRESS RELEASE

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for immediate use

New psychosis service for Leeds young people

Leeds' new support service for young people with severe mental health problems is to be launched on **Thursday 29 September**.

aspire is Leeds' answer to the government's plans for early help and treatment for young people experiencing psychosis for the first time.

The launch takes place at the Host Media Centre, and includes national speakers and a workshop on "Cannabis – what do I need to know?", as well as music workshops and an evening cabaret.

Rachel Ball, manager of **aspire**, said:

"Young people and adults who develop psychosis for the first time often don't get help until they are suffering really bad feelings, and not able to do the things they used to do: go to school or college, get to work, go out with their friends, talk to their family.

We know that by offering care, support and sometimes treatment right away when things start to go wrong, the illness and distress can be minimised, and people can get back to their lives sooner. Early intervention can reduce the chances of needing to spend time in hospital, and speed up recovery.

Too often young people with severe mental health difficulties have been looked after in mental health services that are designed for adults. **aspire** will offer care to people in a non-medical setting, designed and used only by young people. This way anyone who is struggling with difficult feelings or strange experiences, like hearing voices, can talk to health professionals in a friendly, non-medical environment, work out what help they want, and maybe do things with others experiencing similar difficulties."

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Press are welcome at the launch event, scheduled for 1.30 on Thursday 29 September at Host Media Centre, Saville Mount, Leeds.

Please contact John Anderson, Director of Development and Planning, on **0113 307 0080** to arrange attendance, and to arrange interviews with **aspire** manager Rachel Ball.

aspire takes referrals of people in Leeds aged 14 to 35 with first episode of psychosis. The team is multi-disciplinary, including case co-ordinators, support workers, consultant psychiatrist and psychologist.

aspire is run by Community Links, a Leeds-based charity which has been delivering mental health services since 1981. Please visit www.commlinks.co.uk
aspire can be contacted on 0113 200 9170 or by visiting www.aspireleeds.com

Also enclosed: invitation to the launch event, and aspire leaflets



www.commlinks.co.uk charity no. 514779