

# The client service centre of de woenselse poort works closely together with ggze's client lobby organisation

## Introduction

The process of recovery is often more difficult for forensic psychiatric clients than for people who are treated within the 'regular' mental healthcare system. Within a secure facility such as De Woenselse Poort ('the Woensel Gateway'), other conditions and rules apply. The Client Service Centre was set up with a view to offering clients more support and opportunities. Very soon after admission, the Client Service Centre can be called upon to help clients to help themselves and develop their skills and acquire general knowledge, separate from their treatment program and hospital ward. In this way, the Client Service Centre tries to assist clients in their recovery process.

## What can the client service centre offer?

The Client Service Centre, located within De Woenselse Poort, can help clients in a variety of ways. The Client Service Centre:

- a. Has clients' interest at heart.
- b. Is a place to meet up with one another.
- c. Provides information.
- d. Organizes training courses, theme meetings and recreational activities.
- e. Coordinates supplementary volunteer work.
- f. Offers practical training.
- g. Is where you can find work groups, client councils and discussion groups.

The Centre provides services and is a meeting place, and is run for and by clients with the help of ex-client coaches and professional care workers. Clients are welcome to drop in for a cup of coffee or a chat. It is a place where clients can get together and talk. Do you have questions, doubts, uncertainties? There is always someone available who can listen and, if called for, give advice. The Client Service Centre is housed in the same building as De Woenselse Poort's library. The two services complement each other and work closely together. There are also computers available for clients to use.

## Who for?

The Client Service Centre offers its services to all the clients in all wards within De Woenselse Poort. Should a client be unable to visit the centre in person, they can always telephone. Alternatively, an aid can visit the client on the ward.

The Client Service Centre also provides information to the hospital's care workers about opportunities for clients with regard to education and volunteer work. Staff can also call on the expertise of

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ex-client coaches through the Client Service Centre. Care workers with projects that need manpower can enlist 'extra hands' through the centre. Likewise, the centre can call upon help from De Woenselse Poort's activity coaches to help organize activities initiated by the centre. It is little wonder then that teamwork and cooperation are very highly valued by all the parties involved.

## Activities

Through the Client Service Centre clients can participate in a wide range of activities. Participation is voluntary too; there's no obligation. One may just want a cup of coffee and a chat. By mutual consent, anyone who is interested in more and sufficiently motivated can choose from a variety of possibilities including:

- a. Courses directed towards recovery.
- b. Health & lifestyle training.
- c. Getting in touch with the client council.
- d. Recreational activities (karaoke, bingo, barbeque).
- e. Attending informative theme meetings (eg. Lifestyle, money matters).
- f. Helping to organize activities.
- g. Volunteer work in collaboration with one's counselor.
- h. Participate in discussion groups.

Look into on-the-job training or education opportunities together with the counselor. Many of these activities help clients to build up their self-confidence and improve their cooperative skills, increasing the chance of a successful follow-up phase after treatment. The courses, discussion groups, training sessions and other activities are arranged in consultation with one's own doctor to coincide with treatment and therapy sessions. The activities are run by ex-clients, some of whom are certified forensic specialist trainers. They are sometimes assisted by other professionals.

## Client satisfaction survey

GGzE (Mental Healthcare Organization Eindhoven) sets great store by a high level of satisfaction among its users of care and related services. We take the view that clients' experience and their ideas are vital to helping us improve care services. Client Service Centre staff regularly conduct client satisfaction surveys using the 'Client Thermometer' survey instrument. The survey measures the quality of treatment or counselling as well as how people feel they are being treated in general within the organization.

## Additional activities

In addition to regular program activities the Client Service Centre helps with other less frequent activities, such as sitting in on house meetings (held on the wards) if and when the presence of an ex-client coach is requested. Talks with individual clients on the ward are also possible. Other activities include special event activities, as in the case of the annual Psychiatry Week.

## Specialized care consultant

Oftentimes it's difficult to see the wood for the trees. Who can you turn to for help? How do you find your way through all the complex procedures? The Client Service Centre has a care consultant with extensive knowledge and experience in the areas of forensic and judicial aftercare. This specialist helps clients, relatives and caregivers with questions about care, welfare, work and finances. The

care consultant will help you find the answers to your questions and can offer assistance with regard to getting the right help and following the correct procedures.

## Collaboration

The Client Service Centre works in close cooperation with GGzE's Client Lobby. Collaboration between the two groups has resulted in more possibilities and opportunities for everyone. The Client Service Centre can also be an important link in the communication chain with the 'regular' mental healthcare organization and other partners, such as:

- a. Probation office.
- b. Drug addiction centre.
- c. Rehabilitation centre.
- d. Temp (work) agencies.
- e. Volunteer work centres.
- f. Self help Network Foundation.
- g. Religious institutions.
- h. Family support groups, such as Ypsilon and Labyrint-In Perspective.