

# **The Navajo Research and Evaluation Project Concise Executive Summary**

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# **The Navajo Research and Evaluation Project**

## **Executive Summary of findings**

### **1. Introduction**

In early 2012, the research team in the School of Education and Social Science were commissioned by Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust (LCFT), to conduct an evaluation of the accredited 'Understanding Sexuality, Training for Trainers' course as run by LCFT to support the multi-agency Navajo Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Health Project for Lancashire.

### **2. Rationale for the research**

The Navajo training courses have been running for some 12 years and LCFT felt this was a good time to "take stock" of the course's successes, and identify areas for development to best meet the changing training needs of organisations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **3. The research framework and methodology**

The design of this research and evaluation project included preliminary desktop evaluation of the content of the training courses over time and two Focus Group discussions (primary research), that were conducted to explore the perceptions of a selection of people who had attended the training courses across the years. This shortened version of the Executive Summary will focus exclusively on the outcomes and impact of Navajo on the organisations attending the courses, as reflected in the research findings.

## Impact and Outcomes of Navajo Training

The impacts of Navajo training courses, over the years, on attendees and their organisations are highlighted below.

### Positive impacts of Navajo training

1. One organisation has reviewed their Mission Statement; making it shorter and more reflective of equality and diversity issues. This respondent said that this was because of the 'way I started thinking' after Navajo training.
2. *'The training opened up so much more than I could have imagined...I began to think about exploring certain areas of sexuality that weren't discussed [in the workplace]...I became open to so much more'.*(Transcript 1 p.1)
3. Navajo had a particularly significant impact on one of the respondents: *'I'm a practising Muslim; does my religion conflict? .....It's a tsunami, but you can change people's attitudes and challenge them to see things differently'* (Transcript 1 p.1). He explained that he considered the Navajo training to be sustainable, because attending the course had enabled him to deliver E&D and sexuality training within his own organisation.
4. *'People who have been on that [Navajo training] course, even the LGBT's; they have all begun to start to think about things more deeply and with greater awareness....think of the other perspectives because you wouldn't always take that on board'* (Transcript 1 p.2).
5. The learning experiences from Navajo, for one respondent, enabled him to talk to the directors (at senior management level), about the importance of training that raised awareness of sexual orientation issues in the workplace.
6. *'I recently attended a Navajo LGBT managers' conference and I have written a sexual awareness half day course for line managers - as a result of attending Navajo'* (Transcript 2 p.2) . This respondent had also set about targeting the managers throughout the organisation to attend this training.
7. One respondent said: *'In our (a local charity) campaign in schools, we are using the Navajo training as a way in; via the Charter Mark...to get it onto the teacher training curriculum.....we are putting together a piece for governors and heads'* (Transcript 2 p.4).

This significant, positive impact of Navajo training was endorsed by another respondent, who was engaged in similar work and said that: *'when we look at the impact of E&D and sexuality issues on adults, schools are still a biggie'* (Transcript 2 p.3). This suggests that there is yet important work that needs to be done to raise awareness of sexuality issues in schools.

## Areas for development

1. One respondent felt that the attendees on Navajo training courses should be for either straight or gay groups; not mixed.
2. Another commented on the possible resistance to Navajo training, saying that in order to use the content of the courses effectively, it needs to be '*drip fed*' back to the workplace. There are implications here for in-house diversity training, and the importance selecting a variety of ways to disseminate the Navajo content within an organisation.
3. Policies and guidelines in charities will be different to those in the public sector. So, perhaps there should be more of a focus on policy and guidance (in Navajo training), to help organisations with the writing and implementation of policies.
4. In answer to the question: '*Did the tools learned on the Navajo course help you to raise awareness of sexual orientation issues in your workplace?*' One respondent commented that they thought this depended on the size and nature of the organisation. They thought that in relatively small organisations, it is easier to implement things; and if the work has an element of diversity/sexuality, it is easier to discuss the more sensitive issues. If the organisation's work is a general service, it is more difficult to do this.
5. Navajo training needs to become more astute in terms of recognising and addressing bigotry and bias. Intelligent people are capable of being bigoted. (*'...the people that are bigoted are smarter.... no one I work with would ever think of using the word 'cripple'. However, it does not mean that they won't be biased or discriminatory in their dealings with people'*, (Transcript 2, p. 5).
6. Navajo training was considered to be very effective by almost all of the respondents. However, one difficulty discussed was that people generally wanted to know more about how to challenge others in the workplace. This related specifically to those in the workplace who don't want to know about/be made aware of sexuality issues.
7. Several respondents said that it was the style of the trainer that was so important to the success of Navajo training. Trainers need to have high level communication skills, in order to put the information across effectively.
8. All respondents questioned the extent of the follow up after Navajo training, by the organisations that pay for the training. They raised the bigger question of what goes on with those individuals (the senior managers) and what they do in their own organisations with regard to maintaining an awareness of sexuality/diversity issues in the workplace.
9. Most respondents agreed that it would be difficult now to get staff to go on five day training courses. There needs to be clear accreditation for Navajo training at different levels that allows for a range of duration (half a day, full day, two hours etc). An electronic/virtual course would facilitate this degree of flexibility.

10. The issue of time allotted for diversity training was discussed. One respondent delivered the Navajo training to managers in house, and said that whilst it did have a positive impact, in a one day course - for example - there was only one and a half hours made available for sexuality issues.
11. The questionnaire for renewing/being eligible for the Navajo Charter Mark is far too long. Some respondents said their managers had thought of not returning it because of this. Others said that perhaps it has grown to be a little bit unmanageable for the smaller organisations.