

We are

disability
positive

Staff & Volunteer's Newsletter November 2023



CEO's Update

In November I attended the Cheshire East Safeguarding and Dignity Awards, as a member of the safeguarding panel and helped determine the very well-deserved award winners. I was really pleased that two of the service users received an award for their voluntary contribution to the service user group.

It was a lovely afternoon and great to hear stories from the attendees. In a very unexpected twist and to my surprise, I received an Outstanding Achievement Award from the Cheshire East Safeguarding and Community Safety Awards 2023, for work chairing the Service User Group - a committee to the Adult Safeguarding Board. It recognised the work that has been carried out over the last decade and the positive feedback received by the Board about the work of the Service User group from the recent peer review in preparation for CQC assessment changes. The commendation from the director of Adult Social Care was very heart-warming and emotional.

Cheshire West Service User group met this month to redesign the safeguarding booklet to make sure people are informed and recognise different forms of abuse.

We have continued our work with the coproduction group on the redesign of day services. The public consultation will go live in January 2024 and we will provide a link to this when it is available. We would like to encourage as many people with lived experience that may have previously or may consider using a community activity (the new name for day services) to contribute to the consultation.

All of our committee meetings took place this month, reviewing policies, strategies and workplans. We have presented a business case on research carried out on salary sacrifice schemes and presented the findings from the condensed working hours pilot. We will update you once a decision has been made by Board.

Business Development

I'm delighted that Lisa Cormack has joined us on 27th November as our Business Development Manager.

Lisa has a wealth of experience in fundraising and communications with both regional and national charities. I'm sure you will join me in giving Lisa a very warm welcome.



No Limits – Save the Date!

Our next No Limits event will be taking place at the Memorial Court in Northwich (Brio Leisure) on Saturday 2nd March 2024.

We've taken on board the feedback from previous events and this year's No Limits will showcase opportunities and support for people living with disability. As well as information stands, there will also be the hugely popular makers market where disabled entrepreneurs can promote their products and businesses.


If you would like to get involved in planning the event, please do let us know – the more, the merrier!



Cate and Mel sent out an email recently to all staff with a short questionnaire to assist us to develop our volunteering service but sadly we have had no response. We will continue to develop the service within the CE team and highlight any new initiatives in future newsletters and Managers Meetings.

Volunteers

Cate has continued to attend community networking events to promote our volunteer opportunities and is currently in talks with Petty Pool college to arrange some work placements and volunteer opportunities for their students.

The  volunteer video is being used for recruitment and is proving to be a good tool to show interested people exactly what the organisation does and how volunteers are crucial to our service delivery.

NWCC

As at our last pay day (24th November) we provided 7546 hours (up from 6462 last month), to 42 Principal Members (up 3 from last month) and 65 Personal Assistants (up 2 from last month). We also retain a healthy list of new applicants looking to join us.



The design and delivery (on a pilot basis) of our 'After We Are Gone' service, is making good progress and this will be an item that will attract much more attention in the future. We are gearing up for our long term development with more capacity in our infrastructure, and thoughts on how to grow what we do outside Cheshire.

On Saturday 18th November we held a coffee morning at LIVE in Chester to raise funds for our Christmas 'Do' on Friday 1st December. This will be at the Port and Anchor In Ellesmere Port and will involve a three course meal, Robbie Williams tribute and disco. Standby! 48 members will be attending.

I can't wait to see the pictures on Facebook! You can see more of what our members get up to on our Facebook page at:

 <https://www.facebook.com/carecooperatives/>

That will kick off our Christmas season – I hope that you all have a good one too!

And you can keep up to date with our weekly You Tube update posted every Friday on the website at: <https://nwcarecoop.co.uk/>



North West Care Co-Operatives

24 November at 19:54 · 🌐

The 'Live Well' bus, Kaleidoscope Nights, Peter Pan and the Lost Boy Band, our Xmas Do and Robbie Williams ! All in the weekly update:



YOUTUBE.COM

Weekly Update 24 Nov 23

The 'Live Well' Bus, Kaleidoscope Club Nights, Peter Pan and the Lost Boy Band, t...



Activity Groups (Buzz, Good Company, Sensory Hive, Duke of Edinburgh)

The team have continued to deliver weekly activity groups and are just about to deliver lots of exciting Christmas activities.

The team are continuing to develop the Good Company Group for adults based in Chester and are looking to open the service up to more adults in Jan 2024.

Mel is still working with an external fundraising team and Kate to submit grant applications to expand activities and re-establish a weekly accessible youth group in Cheshire West. There have been over 20 applications submitted for the youth group and several for the adult group.

The team are carrying out a number of reflective practice exercises which we hope will support our ongoing learning and ensure we continue to deliver services that are appropriate and fit for purpose.

Community Connections (funding, 1-1 support and information/signposting)

The service continues to provide funding to enable young people to purchase activities of their choice within their local and wider community and to enable parents to have a short break. Young people are attending lots of different community-based activities, and we are currently working with 390 families.

The team are continuing to support a number of young people on an individual basis to attend activities of their choice within the community. This work continues to be challenging but we carry on with a positive attitude and ensure the voice of children and families is being heard.

Mel is continuing to work with the local authority Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) Commissioning Team to ensure their offer is accessible for all and will be delivering a workshop about the Equality Act in December, for their full staff team.

The Information and Signposting service continues to support families to research what activities may be available in their local area.

The team recently delivered a residential for young people aged 12-18 funded by Happy Days Charity – the end of grant report was submitted and we received feedback from the charity to say how much they liked what we had delivered and inviting us to re-apply.

Mel has now completed a further application for adventure activity days during school holidays in 2024 – fingers crossed for a positive result. 🍀



Christmas Meal

It is great to see so many are able to attend the Christmas meal on the 15th December. Thank you to all who also put forward nominations for the Staff Awards. The results are in and we will present these on the day!

Recruitment

It has been a very busy month recruitment wise, and we have successfully welcomed new starters into many of our departments:

- Mary Cooper joined the Reception team at the beginning of the month working on a Monday and Tuesday.
- Caitlin Pollard has joined ACSS working as Care & Support Advisor on our Bolton Contract.
- We welcomed Lisa Cormack as Business Development Manager, Organisation Wide.
- Santa Makuza has joined the Supported Banking Team, part time as a Supported Banking Clerk.
- In the Payroll department we welcomed Ewa Wyrozumska-Riahi as Payroll Clerk, along with Ketaki Ranade and Raja Kunaretnam who have now joined us permanently after transferring across from an agency.

We give them all a very warm welcome and wish them every success in their new roles.



Recruitment is also ongoing for our Bolton contract, with shortlisting taking place for a further full time Care & Support Advisor.

Staff Survey

Thank you to all so far who have completed the annual staff survey. The deadline for completing is Friday 8th December, we really appreciate everyone's feedback so you still have time if not had a chance to complete yet! The results will be collated and results fed back in the New Year

Please follow the link below;

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3S2DWPK>

1 Data breaches
ZERO HSE incidents or near misses
ZERO Formal complaints
2700 External calls

**Operations
Admin**

Please note that all reports for data breaches should be sent only to dpo@disabilitypositive.org

Always considering our carbon footprint and looking at costs could we please ensure that all printing is selected as black and white rather than colour where you can, and especially for internal printing. The cost of printing just one full stop in colour on a page costs 10 times more than a full page printed in black and white! 🤔

Please help us reduce costs by considering this when you are printing and always use email where possible as an alternative to printing.

Wishing everyone a safe and happy festive season.



We have continued to support the Disabled People's Organisations Forum England. The Forum has recently published our Disabled People's Manifesto for the General Election, which was launched at a DPO conference in Manchester that we attended. The Manchester Mayor, Andy Burnham attended as a speaker.



The manifesto presents our demands to the next UK Government, urging them to institute a radical reform programme, tackling systemic oppression and injustice, to create a society where everyone has equal life chances and is valued and treated equally.

The 4 key areas of the manifesto are:




- 1 Increase representation of and increased voice for disabled people in order to promote participation in public life.
- 2 Equal rights for disabled people in line with the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Disabled People and to end discrimination.
- 3 The right for disabled people to live independently and to have choice and control over any support they may receive.
- 4 Inclusion of disabled people from the outset when aspects of life are being planned.

As a representative organisation, we would urge everyone to read the manifesto, pledge support and contact any of the local candidates where they live to find out whether all the UK political parties intend to implement the points covered in the manifesto. You can read more about the disabled people's manifesto here.

We have also submitted a written response to the public services committee inquiry regarding the transition from education to employment, we have been asked to present oral evidence to the inquiry in December.

Communications

Social Media wise, Diane has noted the top three posts in order of interest (reach and engagement) for this month (November):

-  Learning Service Video
-  Residential for our Live Skills group - funded by Happy Days Children's Charity
-  Safeguarding training - in house.

Christmas

Christmas holidays will be published on the website shortly along with a pop up. We will also be adding the Payroll and Supported Banking cut off dates.

During the festive period, Disability Positive will be taking a social media break, but we wish you a very safe and peaceful Christmas.

During November Supported Banking have:

- Completed 71 Audits.
- Processed 1930 payments to PA's and agencies.
- Completed 529 bank reconciliations.
- Opened 12 new accounts.

Supported Banking

Supported banking require all payslips and invoices to be sent by the latest 20.12.2023 to enable payment before Christmas.

We have welcomed Santa Makuza to the team this week, sure you will offer her a warm welcome. 🙌



The Bolton Direct Payment contract started on the 2nd October 2023 and is in full flow. To date we have had 131 referrals which have been broken down as follows

8 – Original Salvere Transfers
84 – New social work referrals
9 – Self referrals
2 – ICB clients
28 – Worked & Closed

We have recruited two members of staff, these are Caitlin Pollard who is working as the advisor for Bolton and Ewa who will be working in payroll. Ellie is supporting with the administration tasks whilst the service gets set up. We are interviewing shortly for the second advisor role, so hopefully we will be back to a full team. 🙌😊

This project has been quite challenging, with the shortened lead in time scales. The Brokerage service was previously run by Salvere and we were only given 2/3 weeks' notice before we went live and started on the 2nd October. With no time to recruit staff before going live, the AC&SS team stepped in to pick up the work.

If you also consider the sheer number of referrals we have received in such a short space of time, it has been an exciting (if not sometimes daunting) project to work on.

The staff within payroll and supported banking have been very supportive and we have worked well as a collective to solve some complicated cases and arrive at the best outcome for our service users.

The social work and finance teams at Bolton Council have made us feel very welcome and so far, appear very pleased with having us on board.

Staff changes

Christopher Scholes Lawrence will be leaving the team on the 4th January, I hope you will join us in wishing him the very best in his new role as Engineering Skills Coach at Reaseheath College. We will be very sad to see him leave.

Other News

We received a donation from one of our clients, Frank Martin, who sadly died. Frank was supported by Clare and Christine and his family sent the donation to show their appreciation of their support.

To all our Colleagues, the AC&SS Team would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year. You're all amazing!!

and
finally...

You may have seen this guy walking round the office with various colours in his hair and moustache.

Chris Morris wanted to do something for Movember to raise awareness of men's Mental Health issues.

'Movember' is the leading charity changing the face of men's health on a global scale, focusing on mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer.

Movember is when you see many men with 'new' moustaches, but as Chris already has a moustache, he decided to shave off his beard (and most of his hair it seems) and colour what was left! He would use the colour scheme of people's chosen charities in order to raise their profile and to potentially help any man who needs mental health support for what ever reason.

All Chris wants to do is 'start that conversation' even if it helps one man...



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communications@disabilitypositive.org

