

Opportunity and Change Newsletter

June 2020

Project Team Updates

The Year 3 evaluation is near completion and will be available end of June/early July.

June's Audit sample is slightly different. Hayley is carrying out a Hanlon recording audit in replacement of the participant file check for live caseloads and those that have dis-engaged during the lockdown period to ensure the notes are robust and satisfy the MA requirements.

Caseload reviews will be taking place this month and will be held with Shazia until the Performance Manager position has been filled.

Virtual meetings will be held with the Stakeholder Managers and the Navigators to discuss in-depth what the challenges have been during COVID-19 and to discuss the wider support now and once things ease plus an opportunity to re-connect with other Navigators.

We are awaiting guidance from our Funding Officer regarding sign-ups and will inform you once we receive a response. For now please continue to work with participants as per the referral guidance.

From the Project Team we would also like to say a massive thank you to everyone for their sheer hard work over the last couple of months. We appreciate lockdown has come with many challenges, working from home has now become the norm, trying to manage a caseload as well as home schooling the children has been a test in itself so thank you and keep up the hard work!

OAC Marketing Updates

The Opportunity and Change website is now up and running with the introduction of the online referral form.

The website allows for referral forms to be completed and sent directly to the OAC inbox (so if you receive a referral in a slightly different format, this is why). Furthermore, we will be ensuring that the website contains up to date Good News Stories, the latest issues of the bulletin, up to date information about each of the partners and what's happening across D2N2. Additional content that will be regularly updated includes outcomes, results and key learning from the Project.

We are also looking into relaunching the Facebook page and are exploring the possibility of a promo video to be used as part of the participant induction. We will keep you posted on the developments.



If you have any feedback, ideas or contributions regarding the website that you'd like to share, we'd love to hear from you so please drop an email the Project Team on the OAC inbox.

opportunityandchange@frameworkha.org



Good News Stories—Staff stories during Coronavirus

Our next staff story comes from Janet Holland, navigator for Framework:

How has the Coronavirus impacted on you?

Although as a team, we are working from home, the twice weekly FaceTime sessions have been really helpful. Through working in isolation you miss the face to face contact with both participants and colleagues, so interacting online has been good. The lack of access to copiers, scanners etc., has been a barrier but entering information straight on to the system means that documents can be printed out and signed once we return to office working.

How has the Coronavirus impacted your work / Partner services?

I haven't found this to be a barrier. I have managed to make contact with my 3 disengaged participants although this took a bit of time. In one case, I needed to contact a partner worker at Brighter Futures who confirmed that my participant was quite down but okay. A bit later that day she responded by text acknowledging my concern and a desire to stay in remote contact.

In a second case, a homeless contact was not responding to calls. I contacted a partner worker at Moving Forward who also confirmed that she had not had contact for about a week. I followed this up with a call to my JCP contact who ensured an entry was placed on her journal. A bit later I received a call, confirming that she has now moved into a flat share with a friend over the last few days. She had experienced a psychotic episode and had taken a few days to try and recoup. Again, she is keen to retain contact.

What have you personally done in response?

Although it feels as if there is little you can do to help at this time, I am flattered that all participants are keen to stay in touch. They share a lot and are trying to stay positive which gives me a personal boost.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

One of my participants who has recently moved in to work is very keen to become a volunteer delivery driver for Framework while he is on furlough from his job. This is extremely important to him and so I hope that the team in charge of assessing volunteer applications can make use of the service he is willing to provide at this difficult time. It would mean the world to him having come to this country from war-torn Syria as he feels it would be a way for him to repay the support he and his young family have received from so many people in the UK.

If you would like to share your story, please complete the template and return to Ellie via eleanor.fegredo@frameworkha.org



Sustainability

For participants that are interested in sustainability, **Metro** have put together an article with advice on how to make your lockdown more environmentally friendly:

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/04/25/make-lockdown-sustainable-12608979/>

OLIO app not only allows participants to receive and share food, it also is helping communities to reduce food wastage (the app is downloadable on Apple or Android):

<https://olioex.com/>

Greenpeace's 30 Ways to Green Your Home During Lockdown:

<https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/30-ways-to-green-your-home-on-lockdown/>

Virtual and event tutorials on upcycling and recycling:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/upcycling-free/?page=1>



Equality and Diversity

LGBT Foundation The Essential Guide to LGBT Rights and Covid-19:

<https://lgbt.foundation/coronavirus/lgbtrights>

LGBT Foundation 10 Ways to Safely Affirm Your LGBT Identity During Lockdown:

<https://lgbt.foundation/domesticabuse/10ways>

Eventbrite events for virtual **Pride celebrations** (the majority of the events are free):

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/lgbt-pride/?mode=search&page=1&q=pride>

Nottinghamshire **Transhub** Facebook community page for support within the Trans community:

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

Spark and Co, under usual circumstances, run community events for women however, given that COVID-19 has hit BAME groups harder, they have decided to create this resource hub:

<https://sparkandco.co.uk/>



The link below is a round-up of community groups and content platforms that bring you a diverse range of perspectives and support:

<https://sparkandco.co.uk/resources/community-groups-and-content-platforms/>

Mental Health and Well-being

Learn4MentalHealth's How to create a Wellbeing Plan and other advice and information. This site provides a template and ideas participants can copy for inspiration:

<https://learn.4mentalhealth.com/sites/default/files/courses/wb8/index.html#/id/5e7f77d4485e8e466da2f3c4>

Derbyshire collation of support on offer for wellbeing:

<https://derbyandderbyshireemotionalhealthandwellbeing.uk/>



Ask Lion's advice for healthier lifestyles during Covid-19:

<https://www.asklion.co.uk/kb5/nottingham/directory/advice.page?id=7vcTbFP6F-Y>

Money and Finance

Ask Lion have collated support for financial and well-being during Covid-19. Although some of the resources are Nottingham-based, there are still national based resources provided:

<https://www.asklion.co.uk/kb5/nottingham/directory/advice.page?id=jhftdnSt2kU>

VRF—Emergency Fund. The Frontline Network can offer grants for Basic Essential Needs (eg food, hygiene packs, utility bills), Overcoming Barriers to Support (eg mobile phones, alptop, tablet, wifi or data) and securing accommodation (eg deposits and rent arrears):

<http://frontlinenetwork.org.uk/vrf-emergency-fund/>

If you are pregnant or have a child under four years old you could get **Healthy Start** vouchers to help buy some basic foods:

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthy-start-vouchers/>

Citizens Advice:

If you can't pay your bills because of coronavirus:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/if-you-cant-pay-your-bills-because-of-coronavirus/>

If you have problems with your rented home:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/coronavirus-if-you-have-problems-with-your-rented-home/>

Information on mortgage payment holidays:

<https://www.fca.org.uk/consumers/mortgages-coronavirus-consumers>

Money Sorted in D2N2 provides support and personally tailored interventions for people experiencing the greatest financial difficulty

<http://moneysortedind2n2.org/>

Training and Skills

DBC Training a collation of free online learning resources

<https://www.dbc-training.co.uk/online-courses>

Babington Training A selection of programmes and qualifications are available for remote learning and fully available online, supported by our specialist trainers. Use this opportunity to boost your skills in the areas employers are looking for.

<https://babington.co.uk/free-online-learning/>

Princes Trust have pulled together some of the most useful advice, guidance and resources so you can continue to upskill by developing your confidence and abilities during this challenging time, as well as find the answers to your questions on work and self-employment.

<https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about-the-trust/coronavirus-response/resource-centre>

Other support

Juno Women's Aid 24-hour domestic and sexual violence helpline

<https://junowomensaid.org.uk/i-need-help/>

Respect Phonenumber is an anonymous and confidential helpline for men and women who are harming their partners and families. They provide specialist advice and guidance to help people change their behaviors and support for those working with domestic abuse perpetrators:

<https://respectphonenumber.org.uk/frontline-workers/>

Trinity Church Nottingham are also offering free Food Parcels and other support for those who are vulnerable or isolating, below is a link to the form requesting help:

<https://trinitychurchnottingham.org/get-help-form>

Ask Lion's Coronavirus information for Families (including resources for children with Special Education Needs and Mental Health support for children). Some of the resources are Nottinghamshire specific, however the large majority are general and accessible not dependent on the participant's location:

<https://www.asklion.co.uk/kb5/nottingham/directory/advice.page?id=p2HlbetlC8l>

Nottstopping Festival have collated and shared a range of ongoing activities and livestreams for all to join! From cooking, to sustainability to film and music, there's something for everyone to enjoy (although these are Nottingham-based, the livestreams and activities can be enjoyed anywhere):

<https://nottstoppingfestival.com/whats-on/>

Mental Health Foundation—Not only does this website provide great information on supporting ones mental health during Covid-19, it also gives information and advice on nurturing relationship, parenting and a guide for young people (great for participants with children)

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/podcasts-and-videos/podcasts-for-your-wellbeing>

The Skills Toolkit is made up of free online courses, tools and resources to help you improve your digital and numeracy skills:

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/find-a-course/the-skills-toolkit>

Opportunity and Change Counselling Services

My name is Rachel and I am based in Nottingham.

I have been offering face to face sessions, with some telephone sessions for the past three years, receiving referrals from Navigators for participants who want to engage in counselling. I offer up to 26 sessions –myself and the participant review the sessions frequently and sometimes only 2 or 3 are needed, and sometimes up to 26; in a few cases more can be offered, where appropriate, after joint discussion.



My core approach is person centred, I offer a safe and contained space to enable trust and allow the participant to explore whatever issues have brought them to counselling. I work in a trauma informed way, incorporating activities/strategies into our sessions, to help regulate emotions and support the participant to keep 'safe,' to avoid re-traumatising them. The sessions are led by the participant-it is up to them what they need or want to bring. I currently 'see' participants one day in Nottingham and one day in Derby.

I say 'see' as I have been on a steep learning curve for the past few weeks/months, using video calls, as I am sure lots of us have, due to the current 'Lockdown' situation! Initially working in a virtual way was daunting, as my experience has either been face to face, with a few telephone sessions, when distance or transport was a problem. I was concerned that people may also struggle without face to face sessions, but I gave everyone options about what they wanted going forward; to have a break in the sessions, have telephone counselling or video sessions.

Trying or practicing self-regulation activities over the phone/video, can be challenging, and not being able to pick up on body language, which plays a huge part in our communication, has been difficult. Despite not being together in person I have found that mostly people have engaged with the changing ways to communicate, and we have learnt together.

One big barrier for participants is that not everyone has a tablet, PC, or indeed access to Wi-Fi, or enough data to have a choice about how they engage. This has shown the gap in opportunity for some, after all this is what opens up the world to us and has been vital in this Pandemic.

It has been a privilege to hear how people have been managing with the lockdown, such as putting in small routines, learning something new, starting to take a walk, reflecting on what they want and need, getting to grips with zoom training etc. And also how difficult it is for some, missing groups they have begun to make bonds in, or friends and family they have not been able to see for over 2 months, especially if they have been asked to shield.

As I have seen written 'we might all be in the same sea, but we are not in the same boat' We all experience and manage this situation differently and no way is 'wrong' or 'right'.

Be kind to yourself and others and I wish you all keep well and safe and we will be back together again soon.

Rachel Hollands

For more information or to refer a participant, please contact Rachel via email:

rachel@improvinglivesnotts.org.uk

Finally...

If you would like to have something published in the next newsletter or would like to share with the Partnership then please let us know by emailing:

opportunityandchange@frameworkha.org