

Community Services Mental Health Framework Third Sector Alliance – September 2021

The Third Sector Alliance (a partnership between Bath Mind, Swindon & Gloucestershire Mind, Rethink and Alabaré) have been busy developing our approach to BSW's Community Services Mental Health Framework (CSMHF) as signed partners. Collaboration and partnership working are central to our role and following an initial meeting with Third Sector infrastructure partners, our first formal Third Sector Alliance Partnership Group meeting will take place on Wednesday 6th October. The Partnership will be the formal mechanism through which the Alliance represents the breadth of the Third Sector and will be formed of the Alliance, Bath & North East Somerset Third Sector Group (3SG), Voluntary Action Swindon, and Wessex Community Action.

The vision for the Partnership is to transform the lives of everyone affected by mental ill health, trauma, and adverse experiences. We will do this through partnership working in the design and provision of mental health services. We also build capacity across BSW communities to respond to, tolerate and understand all expressions of human distress. Through our focus of improving Mental Health and Wellbeing, we aim to ensure everyone that we work alongside can exercise hope, opportunity, choice and control in their life, without fear of stigma or discrimination.

The Alliance is actively engaged in the formal governance of BSW's approach to the CSMHF, representing the sector through the BSW Thrive Board, CSMHF Oversight Group, and involvement in all of the Oversight Subgroups. Operationally, the Alliance is engaged locally through Locality Mental Health, Learning Disability & Autism forums (amongst others) ensuring that the work of the CSMHF and the development of new service models align with wider operational activity.

The first phase of Third Sector recruitment is underway, and we hope to have post filled by mid to late-November with all first phase recruitment concluded by end of Q3. We are adopting a phased approach to recruitment and service model development in order to test new approaches and incorporate structured learning into our second phase recruitment which will commence in late Q4 through into early '22/23. A key aspect of our recruitment is flexibility and attracting dynamic individuals to help shape the service model, and ways of working, to achieve maximum impact. The second phase of recruitment will also expand to cover additional roles such as Counsellors, Wellbeing Support Coordinators and Administrators.

This work is now being led by Chris Watts, the Third Sector Mobilisation Lead, who joined the programme in August. Chris is an experienced Programme Manager and has worked across Local Authorities, Health and Commissioning, most recently in Suicide Prevention and Community Development. Chris will be working closely with system partners on operationalising the Third Sector approach to CSMHF. In other recruitment news, Peter O'Connor is now in post as BSW CCG's CSMHF Project Manager – welcome, Peter.

We will be providing monthly updates from the Alliance, as well as engaging with partners, communities, and residents through a range of other events and activities. A key priority for the coming period is building on the work to-date on co-design, co-production, and co-delivery.

Please do contact Chris (chriswatts@sgmind.org.uk) if you have any queries, questions, or would like a spotlight on any particular issues in upcoming communications.