

Editors Musings

Welcome to the winter edition of NW Together, this issue has a diverse collection of articles including profiles on two organisations that assist people to access Direct Payments, an update on the Self Advocates Forum, a profile of Martin Routledge and the arrival of our newest team member.



Happy Holidays, Phil

Looking forward to the future



The NWTDT has been working across the region for around twenty years. Over most of that period of time I worked in the Health and Social Service Departments that funded and benefited from the teams contribution to our regions strategic changes. Over this time the team has changed its style, operational delivery and personnel to meet the demands of the day. Always at the forefront of its work have been the values of inclusion into ordinary life and the real life concerns of people with learning disabilities and their families.

Over the past few years the team has put much of its effort into supporting the regional implementation of the aims of Valuing People. The Valuing People initiative is coming to the end of its original phase allotted by government, Rob Greig, the Director of the National Valuing People Implementation Team, has issued a letter that describes the

changes expected to take place by April 2006. Although learning disabilities does not have its own national service framework, its national strategic direction is being financed and recognised along with Mental Health, Children's Services and Services for Older People within the newly formed regional Care Service Improvement Partnership (CSIP).

It is heartening that Rob Greig's letter holds up the North West model of having a jointly funded central resource, the NWTDT, as one of the countries most effective methods of leading change and development.

The continuation of Valuing People funding to regions will be dependent upon social services and PCTs finding match funding, something that already happens here through contribution to the NWTDT. Many other regions are seeking our advice and look with envy at the open willingness with which all social service departments and PCTs in the North West have contributed to this vehicle for development and change and the benefits it has brought over many years.

It is interesting for me to be working with the team at this time when once again it needs to re-examine itself and realign in order to continue to be

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effective within newly emerging local structures.

Anne Williams, Director of Social Services in Salford and Chair of the NWTDT Commissioning Group wrote out to all stakeholders inviting contribution, ideas and comment from those involved in and effected by the teams work.

During the coming weeks we will be looking at these contributions and putting them together with the developing agenda of Valuing People as we look at how the team will develop during this next phase.

I believe that the good reputation of the team is well deserved. Its success has to be based on the fact that it doesn't stand alone but is intimately enmeshed with the work of the region and the lives of people with learning disabilities and their families. As services re-organise we are having to work hard to maintain those relationships and good communication and shared understanding are all important at times of major change. We appreciate your support and look forward to working with you in the future.

Valerie Bracken

Enabling Fulfilling Lives through sports and leisure, libraries and neighbourhood services in Liverpool

In Liverpool they have been looking at moving forward the 'Enabling Fulfilling Lives' agenda across the city and how to involve other stakeholders.

It became apparent that to involve colleagues from other services such as the Leisure, Libraries and Neighbourhood Services that there was a need for everyone involved to understand more about each others priorities and agendas, both at a national and local level when it comes to meeting the needs of vulnerable people. As an organisation they also had to build personal and professional relationships with the people working within the same areas.

To help achieve this a conference was organised which brought together a wide variety of people including sports centre managers, day centre managers and staff, libraries managers, sports development teams, neighbourhood managers and teams and also commissioners.

The conference started with presentations about the local and national agendas affecting areas such as -

- Supported Living
- Neighbourhood Services
- Sports and Recreation
- Libraries

This was followed by group working, organised into 'Neighbourhood' groups. They were asked to look at issues around the duplication of work and resources between different agencies and the perceived barriers to more joint working and solutions to overcoming this. From this, the participants then went on to develop a joint project (jointly funded and facilitated) and will be looking at future opportunities for joint working.

Some 'quick wins' were achieved on the day – one sports centre manager has since purchased a hoist and changing table which better supports local people access his services, we have been invited onto numerous groups to look at developing shared community resources with the people we support being seen as priority key stakeholders in that.

The conference was a starting point, a catalyst hopefully to more integrated planning across the City Council. The key was learning more about everyone's agendas and helping them see the similarities. As is the case with community participation it is necessary to get out there and encourage people to see the real positives for everyone of 'Valuing People'.

For further information contact Lynn James-Jenkinson at Lyn.JamesJenkinson@liverpool.gov.uk

JOB ADVERT – Team Director

Director - North West Training & Development Team
CIRCA: £40,000 a year
2 year fixed term contract

The North West Training and Development Team is looking for an experienced manager to lead it through a period of change over the coming 2 years.

As the national Valuing People agenda changes, in 2006, the constitution of the team must change, as must its approach to the delivery of developmental support to the North West region.

The team has played an integral part in the thinking and model of developing services for people with learning difficulties in the northwest over the past 20 years and is recognised as a model of best practice nationally. It is a small team with a big task.

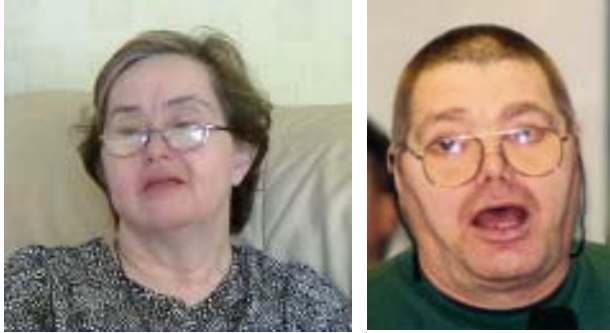
We are looking for someone with a proven track record in the management of change, who understands the issues surrounding large-scale organisational strategic shifts, who can demonstrate a commitment to personalised services and who is familiar with Valuing People.

To find out more about the job or to ask for an application pack telephone Valerie Bracken (temporary Director NWTDT) on 01254 306850 Closing date for applications is 4th January 2005.

Interviews will take place on 2nd February 2005.



Regional Self Advocates Forum update



At a recent meeting of the regional Self Advocates Forum Steering Group, held during November, two new people were voted in on a temporary basis as regional representatives.

Suzanne Marshall and Paddy Burke will take up these positions until a vote can be held at the next regional conference, which will hopefully take place in February 2005. Suzanne and Paddy replace Karen Flood and Andy Docherty who have stepped down to take up their places as national co-chairs.

Welcome to Jason Rhodes

The Regional Self Advocacy Forum has appointed Jason Rhodes as their new conference organiser for 2004-05.



Last year Lizzie Reilly of Southport People First had this job. She arranged a 4 day conference in Blackpool at which 150 people from all over the region attended. The conference delegates discuss hot issues of the day and made recommendations to the National Forum and they also elected their representatives who sit on the National Forum on their behalf.

Jason will be arranging this years conference which hopefully will be held in February 2005. Jason will be using the NWTDT office as a base although much of his work will take him out and about across the region.

Jason says he is looking forward to his job but warns us that he has a wacky sense of humour. He certainly has us laughing when he is in the office.

Next step guides on person centred approaches

The Valuing People Support Team have been asking people to say what is happening with person centred planning in their area.

Here is some of the feedback –

- Around the country lots of people are trying harder to listen to what is important to people and their families and to change supports and services from what they hear.
- Some people with learning disabilities and families are getting more control over their lives.
- In some places though, people and their families are telling us that person centred planning feels like a service thing, not something that they are in charge of. Sometimes it feels like local services are just trying to get lots of plans and not listening enough to what people say or doing enough of the other things that change lives for the better.
- Some people have asked for ideas, help and examples to help them. The VPST have brought out 'next steps' guidance. The people who wrote them have used what they have learnt already to give people ideas that we hope you will find useful.

They acknowledge that these guides are not the final word on person centred planning. "They are for people to try out and see how they help. None of us know all the answers - we are still quite early on in learning how to help people get what is important to them, using person centred approaches."

Some of these new materials and a large number of other documents around Person Centred Planning can be found on the valuing people website at

<http://www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/pcpresources.htm>

Day Service Modernisation

The Valuing People website now has a Day Service Modernisation page.

'Valuing People' said that there should be a 5 year programme to modernise day services, Partnership Boards have had to write plans to say how they would do this. This webpage has the 'Day Services Modernisation Toolkit' we brought out, to help with this plus some documents detailing a few stories of where people are making the changes happen.

For further information look at

<http://www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/GettingALifeDSM.htm>

Remaining Dates for 2004 / 2005 Events and Training

Network Meetings	Dates	Audience	Chargeable?	Contact
NW Acute Hospital & Learning Disability Network	26 th Jan, NWTDT Office 20 th Apr, NWTDT Office	People with an interest in Acute Hospital issues.	No	JC
Day Service Modernisation Network	14 th Mar, Venue to be arranged	People who lead Day Service Modernisation.	No	PC
Regional Trainers Network	10 th Feb, NWTDT Office	Anyone interested in workforce development & training	No	PC
PCP Network	12 th Jan, Glaxo, Liverpool	Those from Partnership Boards leading on PCP, Families and Self Advocates leading PCP	No	SS
Ethnicity & Cultural Diversity Regional Network	8 th Feb, Globe Centre, Accrington	People from local areas leading on improving supports for people from minority ethnic communities	No	SS
Transitions Network	14 th Mar, Globe Centre Accrington	People from PBs leading on Transitions, including families and self advocates	No	SS
NW Learning Disability Taskforce	23 rd Feb, Venue to be arranged	Task Force members	No	JO
NW Family Forum	To be arranged	Family Members influencing Partnership Boards	No	JO
NW Self-Advocates Forum	To be Arranged	Representatives from local advocacy groups	No	VB
Not Consulting	15 th Mar, NWTDT Office	People interested in improving consultation processes	No	PC
Quality Network	21 st Feb, NWTDT Office		No	JE

Events	Dates	Audience	Chargeable?	Contact
Direct Payments Events	18 th Jan 2005, Glaxo, Liverpool	People with an interest in Direct Payments. Audience will vary dependant exact event.	Yes	GN

Training	Dates	Audience	Chargeable?	Contact
Planning with People (All forms of PCP approaches) (7 day course)	First session 17 th January 2005 Haigh Hall, Wigan	Open	Yes	PD
Inclusive positive action for all communities (2 day event)	21 st & 22 nd Mar, Oldham	People with an interest in Ethnicity issues	Yes	NR

For details about the above events / training either contact the relevant consultant, listed below, or phone the NWTDT office on 01254 306850.

VB, Val Bracken, val.bracken@nwttdt.com

JC, Janet Cobb, janet.cobb@nwttdt.com

GN, Gary Nield, gary.nield@nwttdt.com

NR, Nabela Rahim, nabela.rahim@nwttdt.com

PC, Paul Clarke, paul.clarke@nwttdt.com

PD, Pauline Doyle, Pauline.doyle@nwttdt.com

JO, Janet Orrell, janet.orrell@nwttdt.com

SS, Sheila Stirling, sheila@stirling@nwttdt.com

Getting to know you, The 60 seconds challenge – Martin Routledge, VPST



Martin Routledge has been the North West Advisor for the Valuing People Support Team for the past 3 years, prior to that he was a senior member of the NWTDT.

Who has been the biggest influence on your work life?

Owen Cooper – he kept me awake when I was at risk of sleeping!

What is your most treasured possession?

My Arsenal replica shirt.

What is your greatest extravagance?

Two young acquisitive daughters.

Which words or phrases do you most over-use?

At the moment “Exemplar”.

What do you most value in your friends?

The ability to remember large amounts of trivia.

What is your motto or word that mean a lot to you?

Make it happen.

What is your favourite cheese?

Brie.

What is your favourite piece of music?

Nothing compares to you - Sinead O'Connor/ Sunny Side of the Street – Louis Armstrong.

What is your favourite film?

On the Town.

What book are you reading at the moment?

Smiley's People.

Do you have a surprising or unusual hobby or skill?

Elvis impersonation.

Thank you very much!



Learning Disability Task Force concerns about lack of information for planning

The population of people with a learning disability in England is predicted to grow and, although Valuing People has successfully raised the profile of people with a learning disability, barriers still exist to prevent people achieving full citizenship. A report by the Learning Disability Task Force published in November exposes the difficulties in pulling together demographic and financial information that would enable central and local government to plan future services. It highlights the Task Force's concern that plans for improvements in provision of housing and support, day services, fulfilling lives and better healthcare are not being realised because there is a lack of information about what is actually spent and, therefore, what the future investment needs to be.

The report draws together new research into demographics and financial information. It reveals the extent to which levels of demand for services are increasing and where deficits in funding will occur.

For example:

- by 2021 there will be a 37% increase in adults with learning disabilities aged over 60
- there will be an overall 11% increase in the total numbers of adults with learning disabilities.

This highlights the need for adequate funding arrangements to be put in place to ensure consistent and improving services.

The report sets out 8 recommendations to ensure future provisions are made. It calls for central government to take into account specific demographic projections to plan future spending. It also singles out the Supporting People programme as an area of success where funding must be protected and increased.

The Supporting People programme has been an area of particular concern for the National Forum on learning disability. Ian Davies, co-chair of the Learning Disability Task Force Finance sub-group said “The programme has really helped people with a learning disability achieve independence in their lives. It gives practical support to help people to live in houses which are right for them.” Co-chair of the Task Force, Mary Ney, said of the report: “It very clearly demonstrates opportunities to make better use of existing funding for learning disability services from various funding streams, as well as making the case for increased expenditure. We really hope that those commissioning services in local government, the NHS and the partnership boards will take all of these recommendations on board and use them to make the visions set out in Valuing People a reality.



Families Leading Change in Merseyside and Cheshire

Merseyside and Cheshire Health & Social Care, always at the cutting edge, are working with a parents based organisation, Merseyside Partners in Policymaking, to further improve the lives of people with LD and their families. They have agreed that parents will lead on the delivery of person centred planning training and follow-up support. Julia Erskine, Director of Merseyside Partners in Policymaking and member of NWTDT says, "It makes sense. The first mixed group to train in person centred planning in Liverpool included 17 service workers, 11 have since moved on leaving 6 still in post who can use what they have learnt. All the parents who came on the training are still here. Investing training in families is investing in continuity".

Sandy Bering, Service Director, says "I am totally committed to making this work. We have joint training plans with parents, health, social care and the independent sector providers" when asked what he hopes to get from the agreement Sandy said "I want the parents to lead on person centred planning training and I am also asking them to act as an honest banker and hold our joint training money, we just have to iron out the detail." Gerry Flanagan, Head of Service in Wirral is currently negotiating for their Person Centred Planning Coordinator to be based with Merseyside Partners in Policymaking as well. Gerry believes it makes sense to concentrate PCP expertise and knowledge together to the benefit of everyone. The NWTDT, mainly through Lynne Elwell, have played the lead role in development of parents as partners



over the past 8 years. It is great to see this development going from strength to strength and playing such an effective role.

Valerie Bracken

Instream Partnership

Instream Partnership is a not for profit company whose aims are to raise awareness around and promote the use of direct payments as a way of allowing individuals to take control of the services they receive. For many years Gary Neild and Luke Travis, two of the founder members, used to regularly speak at conferences and events, giving personal experiences on how to make Direct Payments happen. In early 2003 they decided to formalise the organisation and Instream Partnership was created. In October 2002, the Secretary of State for Health, Alan Milburn, announced the establishment of the Direct Payments Development Fund. This made available £9 million over

a three year period to invest in ensuring significant numbers of additional people receive direct payments, this money was targeted at national, regional and local voluntary organisations.

In Autumn 2003, Instream along with Oldham Social Services put in a bid to the Direct Payment Development Fund for a two year programme to support and promote direct payments across the borough. A similar joint bid was also successful with Rochdale Social Services in Autumn 2004. These programmes take the form of -

- Empowering individuals to access direct payments.
- Practical support to people who want to use direct payments.
- Advice and support to care managers and social services staff.
- Awareness raising.

In conjunction with the work in Oldham and Rochdale Instream has also been developing an internet based database to aid people to find Personal Assistants that match their needs. This service is free to both people seeking personal assistants and personal assistants themselves.

For more information about the PA match website visit www.pamatch.co.uk To find out more about Instream Partnership visit their website at www.instream.org.uk



West Lancs Peer Support Group – Going from strength to strength



The West Lancs Peer Support Group (WLPSG) have recently been funded by Lancashire County Council to set up a Personal Assistant (PA) register county wide. A website that will allow people to search for a suitable PA and prospective PA's to register their details has been launched and can be accessed at www.lancs-pa.org.

To raise the profile of direct payments across the county we have organised a county wide media campaign that will take place 4 times in the next year and will be carried out in the 8 Lancashire areas one area at a time, in conjunction with the media campaign PA register staff will be visiting the areas to sign up prospective PAs.

Prospective PAs will complete a form that will include 2 referees and have their photo taken. An interview will follow to confirm their suitability for the work of a PA after the references have been checked the PAs profile and photo will be added to the register website.

For people looking for a PA we will supply a one-off password to the web site that will allow access to the register, the client can then contact the PA they feel is suitable for them to arrange an interview. If this does not work out, the process can be repeated until a suitable PA is found.

The Peer Support Group also give a seamless support service for direct payments users in West Lancashire. The support group consists of carers to people with a range of disabilities plus a part time development officer. The carers are all volunteers and experienced in the management of direct payments and can carry out house visits to assist those people who are new to direct payments.

We accept referrals from social workers. Once people have been assessed and given a direct payments package, we then visit the person and assist to prepare an advert if no suitable person can be found on the PA register. We act as a post box for people replying to the advert and send out job application forms, give support at job interviews and inform the successful applicant. (If a prospective PA is unsuccessful we write to them and invite them to join the PA register).

We can also help in drawing up a contract of employment, job description, confidentiality agreement and disciplinary procedures.

We then provide ongoing support to manage the direct payments and complete the weekly financial paperwork for audit by the finance officer at 3 monthly intervals. After 3 months people are usually able to carry on without support, but we are

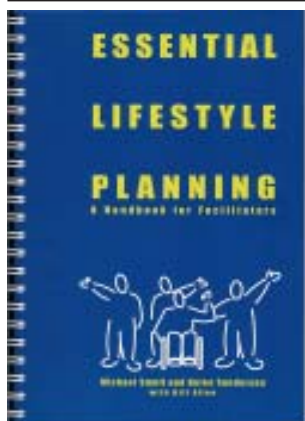
always available if further support is needed.

As the only Peer Support Group in Lancashire, we would like to see similar groups formed in other areas to provide a completely independent support network to cover the county.

If there are any people who wish to set up a Peer Support Group in Lancashire, we will be pleased to visit them to give them the benefit of our experience in setting up such an organisation. The Carer Networks that feed into the 8 Partnership Boards are an ideal breeding ground for Peer Support Work, the work is very rewarding and we found it led to other partnership working with Lancashire County Council.

Les Scaife

West Lancs Peer Support Group
01695 52645
07963 003552
e-mail: les@lancs-pa.org
Web site: www.lancs-pa.org



Essential Lifestyle Planning – A Workbook for Facilitators

The ever popular ELP workbook for facilitators is back in print and available from NWTDT at a price of £29.95 (this includes postage and package).

For further information or to place an order please ring Sue at the office on 01254 306850.

For information about other publications available via NWTDT or to download an order form go to <http://www.nwtdt.com/pdfs/public.pdf>

Pumpkin Soup with Toasted Sweetcorn

Serves 6

This is a very fine combination
Soft velvety texture of pumpkin makes the soup creamy and the toasted sweetcorn provides contrasting flavour and some crunch.

1lb 8oz of pumpkin or butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and chopped into 1-inch dice,
1 lb 4oz sweetcorn off the cob (about 5 or 6 cobs)
1oz butter, plus 1 extra teaspoon, for the sweetcorn,
1 medium onion, peeled and finely chopped
10 fl oz whole milk
1 and a quarter pints of hot stock made with Marigold Swiss vegetable bouillon powder
Salt and freshly milled pepper.

Begin by melting 1oz of the butter in a large saucepan, then add the onion and soften it for about 8 minutes. After that add the chopped pumpkin (or butternut squash) along with half the sweetcorn, then give everything a

good stir and season with salt and pepper. Put the lid on and, keeping the heat low, allow the vegetables to sweat gently and release their juices-this should take about 10 minutes. Next pour in the milk and stock and simmer gently for about 20 minutes. Put the lid on for this but leave a little gap (so it's not quite on, and won't boil over) While that's happening, preheat the grill to its highest setting for 10 minutes. Melt the extra teaspoon of butter, mix the rest of the sweetcorn with it and spread it out on a baking tray, season with salt and pepper and pop it under the hot grill, about 3 inches from the heat-it will take about 8 minutes to become nicely toasted and golden, move it about so won't burn. When the soup is ready, pour it into a blender and blend it to a puree, serve in warmed bowls with the toasted sweetcorn sprinkled over.



Jumping for Joy

A couple of the intrepid "Instream" boys, Luke Travis and John Fielding have recently taken part in a charity tandem parachute jump, in aid of the Paul Taylor trust fund, a fund set up to support people with a learning disability.

The jump was made more exciting for John and his jump partner when they had to release the main chute and use the reserve to land safely.



In all they raised nearly £900 for the fund.

If you have any comments or suggestions for future issues then please let me know.

Phil Palmer
NWTDT
Phase 3
The Globe Centre
St James Square
Accrington
BB5 0RE

01254 306850

phil.palmer@nwttdt.com

A New Team Member

Congratulations to Julie Stansfield and her partner Phil Allsopp on the birth of their daughter Penny Beth Allsopp. Penny was born on 25th August 2004 and weighed in at 4 pound 3 ounces.



Julie, Penny and Phil are all doing well.

Race for Life

During the summer our intrepid admin manager, Sue Canavan, took part in Cancer Research UK's Race for Life, a 5 kilometre race run by women to support cancer research.

Sue is an avid runner and this is the 5th time she has entered this event. On this occasion Sue ran in support of her friend Lynn Caulfield who had just completed a successful course of cancer treatment. She raised nearly £300 for the charity and completed the race in 26 minutes (the winner at the Blackburn event came in at just over 18 minutes).



Thanks to everyone who sponsored Sue in 2004 and look out for sponsor sheets next year !