

**Communities of Interest Virtual Session Notes**  
**Thursday 15 October 2020**  
**2-3.30pm | via Zoom**

**Attendees**

- **Ali Kaye** – Leeds Older People’s Forum
- **Ann Crossland** - Voluntary Action Leeds
- **Anna Chippindale** – Healthwatch Leeds
- **Daisy Morgan** – Forum Central
- **Damian Dawtry** – Feel Good Factor
- **Jenn Bravo** – Turning Lives Around
- **Karen Fenton** – Forum Central
- **Karl Witty** – Forum Central
- **Owen Walker** – Leeds Autism AIM
- **Rachel Moore** – Carers Leeds
- **Shak Rafiq** – NHS Leeds CCG
- **Simon Phillips** – Leeds Faiths Forum
- **Sophie Peel** – Hamara
- **Toshal Bhatia** – Health for All
- **Wendy Cork** – Advonet

**Introductions/check ins**

- **Ali (older people):** Neighbourhood Networks were beginning to step back into ‘normal’ looking services, but new guidance has ‘thrown’ them – issues around what provision is the safest; some are delivering in their centres, but others are waiting to see how it goes; no ‘light at the end of the tunnel’ and people starting to feel fed up, issue around low mood, anxiety, and mental health issues.
- **Anna:** Healthwatch has launched a new project looking at end of life care – looking to speak to people who have cared for loved ones who are either at the end of their lives or those who have passed away; survey done with Leeds Older People’s Forum is still ongoing. Please share and get in touch if any service users would be interested in taking part.
- **Damian (men’s health):** activities going on in East Leeds – will be sending details; good to connect with this group, great to raise common issues across communities and what solutions are.
- **Jenn:** trying to deliver as best we can; huge issue about staff morale, wellbeing and concerns about working amongst the second wave so that is being prioritised; also trying to strengthen messages around social distancing, particularly with younger people.
- **Karen:** mental health – [report has now been finalised](#), this is an ongoing piece of work so comments are welcome; long-term conditions – general concern that the longer this goes on, the less cancer screenings, heart conditions etc are getting picked up; PSI – people expecting two week

lockdown and starting to build up provision again to help support the most isolated/vulnerable people; learning disability – feedback around transport and what to do if someone's temperature is high and they can't get back on public transport.

- **Owen (people with a learning disability and/or Autism)**: third sector worker morale particularly low – it's taking its toll and good to encourage people to be resilient, training to help with that would be helpful; provision is returning but in a limited way; relaunched [coronavirus toolkit](#).
- **Rachel (Carers)**: increase in professional contacts made on behalf of carers; but not as many carers contacting us directly as this time last year; capacity within respite services but carers not taking it up – assumption that services are closed perhaps, needs to be reiterated; guidance in care homes inconsistent and challenging.
- **Sam (migrants, Refugees & Asylum Seekers)**: the Migrant Access Project weekly virtual drop in continues, as does the cultural food hub; completed digital access update with Healthwatch; complex issues working through w/ providers re Asylum; continuing to create key messages that work for communities – looking at doing something regionally; supporting with culturally diverse communities messaging and funding targeting that demographic.
- **Simon (Faith groups)**: possibility of 'circuit breaker' lockdown and effect it might have on Places of Worship; working on a week of action with two organisations in London around how faith communities can stand up against domestic abuse.
- **Sophie**: space is main problem as centres are taken over by cultural food hub provision; stopped some groups and reverted to outreach and wellbeing calls; trying to support older members to access Zoom; supporting people w/ access to flu jabs/cancer screenings; trying to source gazebo to do outreach outside.
- **Toshal**: funding from Covid infrastructure grant to support BME elders with getting online; had restarted weekly group at one centre but people have decided not to come and doing food deliveries instead; have been able to offer people space to come back safely if they wanted to – within community centres, or online; funding to set up digital access within centres so going to get 1:1 sessions booked for older people hopefully by Christmas time.
- **Wendy (Advonet)**: continuing with remote support and safe visits when needed; difficulty getting into care homes; people aren't accessing Care Act assessments as they should be doing; increase in people needed to access information around services being open.

Shak provided the following updates from an NHS perspective:

- Services and A&E are getting busier – please support with [these social media messages](#) reminding people to use services wisely, and use 111 where appropriate.
- Also need to manage expectations around access to routine operations or procedures.
- Second Facebook Live information is taking place on 4<sup>th</sup> November – focused on cancer awareness, 6pm-7.30pm.

## **Discussion**

The session broke into two breakout rooms to discuss the following:

***How can organisations strike a balance between adhering to Government guidance, whilst also ensuring they are providing services people need and acknowledging their human rights?***

Discussion points/issues raised included:

- Risk assessments and groups that have been running at Health For All, learning to be shared – but important to acknowledge that all spaces are different
- Huge concern around Human Rights and ensuring people are aware their rights haven't changed much due to the Corona bill
  - Wendy is keen to support Forum Central to get 'myth busters' out to Communities of Interest
- Can we encourage people to make their own decisions and assess risk themselves e.g. carers when accessing respite, both outside of the home and inside?
- Confusion and tension between different parts of delivering services, whilst also managing anxiety of staff; easy to forget the wellbeing impact on staff as well as the people we are supporting
- When working with culturally diverse communities and communities with additional needs, there can be further complexities
- Importance of using assets and the voice of people with lived experience to create messages

## **Key issues**

- **Digital Inclusion:** in the midst of writing the report; lots of people have very kindly given their input; aiming to publish report at end of the month, and everyone who has contributed will be able to approve their contributions; please share any images you would like to be used in the report with Anna.
- **Cases in Leeds:** highest no. of cases remains to be in young people, but also rising numbers of other ages groups; most cases are in White British people; higher positive cases amongst younger females than younger

men; Headingley & Hyde Park and Little London and Woodhouse have the highest number of cases.

- **Shielding:** Leeds is now classed as a High-Risk area which means shielding is not necessary, but those who are extremely clinically vulnerable are advised to follow the guidance closely.
- **Flu:** a huge campaign is underway - the flu vaccine is being given routinely on the NHS to a number of groups, extended this year to people aged 50-64 if supplies allow.
  - Health and social care staff are entitled to a free flu vaccine, please get in touch w/ [hello@forumcentral.org.uk](mailto:hello@forumcentral.org.uk) if you experience issues with this.
- **FACTS:** [Third Sector Leeds](#) is asking for your support to get the following 'Call to Action' message out to the people you are in contact with on a daily basis.
  - Help reduce the spread of Covid in Leeds. Follow the FACTS:
  - **F**ace coverings in enclosed spaces
  - **A**sk friends & neighbours if they need help, or a chat - keeping to your area's rules
  - **C**lean your hands & surfaces you touch
  - **T**wo-metre distancing & avoid crowded places
  - **S**elf-isolate & get a test if you have symptoms

We are asking everyone to remember the FACTS and help share the message widely using the resources below.

[PDF poster to download](#)

[Social media graphic to download](#)

Please do share any themes you'd like us to touch upon at future meetings.