

## Summary of NSPA members' staff and volunteer well-being discussion 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020

<p>Home-working challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to effectively support staff and volunteers now doing roles remotely that were not designed to be remote, so confronting challenging material in their own homes?</li> <li>• How to effectively support staff and volunteers who are supporting vulnerable groups, but also need support themselves, including young volunteers and peer supporters? There is no division between service user and staff at the moment – we are all in need of support.</li> </ul>	<p>Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCVO has a range of advice and guidance, including staff well-being (<a href="#">here</a>)</li> <li>• Increasing supervision and support calls to check-in</li> <li>• Encouraging staff and volunteers to create a separate space for their work, away from their social space</li> <li>• Encouraging regular breaks, including outside</li> <li>• Video calls are tiring, so if providing support via video, limit other video calls. Try to keep calls to 30 minutes where you can</li> <li>• Creating 'social' time and space for staff and volunteers</li> </ul>
<p>Emotional challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to support residential staff who are working hard but cannot leave it behind at the end of the working day?</li> <li>• Many staff feeling they can't do what's needed, feel guilty for not doing enough, feel overwhelmed by how much they need to do</li> <li>• Some staff with underlying health conditions have therefore had to self-isolate, and feel guilty that they aren't contributing when their colleagues are</li> <li>• Many staff have a strong sense of responsibility for work and service users, and without the usual office environment may not be taking breaks or even holidays</li> <li>• How will we support staff if or when we have a covid-19-related bereavement in our organisation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business in the community has a range of toolkits on supporting employees during this time, including supporting well-being and supporting staff with caring responsibilities (scroll down this page <a href="#">here</a>)</li> <li>• For NHS and other front-line staff, the BMJ article 'Managing mental health challenges faced by healthcare workers during covid-19 pandemic' may be useful (<a href="#">here</a>)</li> <li>• Cruse Bereavement Care have advice for organisations who may suffer a bereavement (<a href="#">here</a>).</li> </ul>
<p>Communications challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to reach large staff and volunteering bodies with messages about the support available?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One organisation is sending out a range of regular communications, including the 'Feelgood Friday' bulletin which</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to support furloughed staff who may be struggling and anxious?</li> </ul>	<p>contains positive news from the organisation, helpful apps for mental health and mindfulness, how to support your own wellbeing, details of the in-house support available, making your home-working space safe, and videos from senior managers thanking staff and sharing their self-care</p>
<p>Support during changes in delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff who have moved into support roles in order to increase capacity are now encountering very intense and difficult content regularly, and may not have the coping strategies or support structures of more experienced staff, nor the coping mechanisms that we all usually rely on</li> <li>• How to ensure the mutual aid organisations can help people who contact them with poor mental health or suicidal thoughts?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training new staff and volunteers needs to be given the time and care it always takes, and many organisations are now doing this online</li> <li>• For mutual aid organisations, the Zero Suicide Alliance suicide awareness training can help with an initial understanding, including where to signpost people</li> </ul>
<p>The future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worries about the future – what will happen after the lockdown ends?</li> <li>• How will we support staff in the medium to long-term, as there may be increases in suicidal thinking and acts among service users?</li> <li>• How will we support staff who may struggle when the peak of the pandemic is over?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NSPA will be holding a discussion about concerns for the future in the next few weeks, to begin these important discussions</li> </ul>