



n|compass
towards a **brighter** future

Annual Plan 2023-2024

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Chair's Foreword

With the launch of our new strategic plan covering the period of 2023 through to 2026, here at n-compass we are entering into our next big and exciting chapter. The ultimate aim of the plan is to support even more people to stay well.

Our focus on staff wellbeing remains paramount. Our staff engagement work last year told us that 86% of colleagues agreed that n-compass was a great place to work and subsequently n-compass was announced as the 3rd Best Charity to Work for in the 2023 Best Companies Awards.

Looking forward, it is very gratifying that our reputation as a 'dynamic' and 'can do' organisation has led to a substantial vote of confidence by Commissioners and other funders alike. We are bold and ambitious and we are keen to continue to grow and innovate.

As part of that growth, we are delighted to be delivering a new service in Warrington – the Carers service from March 2023.

This annual plan has been developed by both the staff, service users and the Board to clearly articulate our ambitions for 2023 to 2024.

We look forward to, what will no doubt, be a year filled with both opportunities and further challenges, which with energy and commitment we will rise to meet and overcome.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our wonderful staff - their dedication, passion and commitment makes n-compass the exceptional charity that it is!

I am very proud of the progress we have made together and know that with the continued support of our fantastic Board, Senior Management and Staffing Team, we will drive forward with purpose and passion in supporting more people to stay well.

Cathy Scivier

A message from our Chief Executive



I am honoured to be undertaking the role on Interim CEO of n-compass as our charity enters into the first year of our new three year strategic plan.

This annual plan marks the first year of the strategic plan (2023-2024) where we set out our commitment to supporting even more people to stay well through five pillars of activity which include:

1. Delivering high quality services
2. Growing and Innovating
3. Investing in our staff and remaining a great place to work
4. Remaining financially secure
5. Ensuring strong governance and leadership and continuing to build our profile and relationships in the health and social care sector.

We have a strong foundation from which to achieve our aspirations. For example, in 2022/2023:

- ✓ 96% of individuals supported stated they were happy with the service they received and 93% of professionals surveyed said that n-compass was a good quality provider of health and social care services.
- ✓ We grew our reach by securing the Warrington Carers Services which we have been delivering since the 1st March 2023 and in 2022/2023 we supported 28,000 individuals across all of our services.
- ✓ 86% of colleagues agreed that n-compass was a great place to work meaning that we have 'outstanding' levels of staff engagement and n-compass was announced as the 3rd Best Charity to work for in the UK, 9th best mid-sized place to work in the UK and 11th best place to work in the Northwest in the Q1 Best Companies to Work for league tables.

I am immensely proud of these achievements, reached by our dedicated, passionate team of staff, volunteers and social work students.

Despite this strong footing, 2023/2024 will not be without its challenges. The cost of living crisis comes hot on the heels of the global pandemic putting further pressures on those we support, with some unable to afford essentials to maintain their health and wellbeing and this bringing about increased stress and pressure. This means that our services are required now more than ever.

I am confident that our 152 strong staff team will continue to support those we exist to serve with compassion and determination, through the delivery of £5.6m worth of health and care services across the North of England, delivering excellence and keeping service users at the heart of everything we do.

Joanna Solanki, Interim CEO

Our Operational Plans for 2023-2024

n-compass provides a range of services that support vulnerable adults and young people.



We are organised into five main service areas:

<p>Carers' Services</p> <p>We deliver in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bury Lancashire Rochdale Staffordshire Warrington 	<p>Advocacy Services</p> <p>We deliver in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blackburn with Darwen Bury Cumbria Liverpool Wirral 	<p>Counselling Services</p> <p>We deliver in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lancashire 	<p>Wellbeing Services</p> <p>Deaf Support delivered in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lancashire <p>Connect 5 delivered in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fylde and Wyre 	<p>Volunteering Services</p> <p>We have a vibrant and active volunteer community that supports all our services and includes social work students as part of their university placement programme</p>
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Carers' Services

Our carers service exists to ensure that carers of all ages have access to information, advice and a wide range of support services to help carers continue in their caring role as long as they choose, reducing the impact the caring role can have on their own health & wellbeing.



“

Thank you so much for the call earlier. It felt so good to talk and just get some stuff off my chest. I really appreciate all the help, advice and support and I'm so glad I self-referred! Once again, thank you so much. Already I feel that bit better just knowing that the support is there. Many thanks.”

CARER

The Lancashire Carers Service works across the county providing support and information to adult carers (18+). Our service is delivered in partnership – n-compass delivering in North and Central Lancashire and Carers Link delivering in East Lancashire. Our service supports carers to reduce the impact caring has on their own health and wellbeing. We work directly with individual carers to assess their needs and design a tailored personalised support package.



Support can include:

- Carers assessments and reviews
- Specialist 1-2-1 and group support
- Information, advice and guidance on a range of carer related matters
- 1-2-1 and group Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Person-Centred Counselling
- Magazines twice a year detailing local groups, activities, courses and much more
- Support with contingency planning, including Peace of Mind 4 Carers Plan
- Support to access community, health and wellbeing services
- A 24/7 Volunteer Carers Help and Talk (CHAT) Line
- Pen Pal Scheme
- Support to access a wide range of digital resources to support health and wellbeing
- Digital Carers Community Network
- Support for former carers
- Volunteering opportunities for carers, including volunteering for the CHAT Line, Pen Pal Scheme, Befriending and Sitting-In services
- Carers Awareness Briefings and Carer Champion Training to other professionals aiming to increase the number of hidden carers identified and supported in Lancashire

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

- Identify 5,860 new carers
- Contact 100% of carers within 7 working days of receipt of referral
- Offer 100% of carers a carers assessment within 6 weeks of referral
- Complete 4,300 new carers assessments
- Contact 100% of carers to undertake an initial review within 8-12 weeks of their carers assessment
- Contact 100% of carers to undertake an annual review of their carers assessment during the period it is due
- Complete 90% of carers assessment reviews during the period it is due
- Carer satisfaction rates of at least 85%

“

Working alongside the Carers Hub and its staff makes referring carers to the services uncomplicated and gives me confidence knowing the experiences they will have are of a positive nature. The whole Carers Hub team work together well and are instrumental in making the carers feel comfortable and treated in a people-centred way. Carers have voiced to me on several occasions that the Carers Hub has changed their lives in so many different ways. Some even see the Hub as extended family – which has to be a good indicator of its dedicated staff and how successful this service is. The link I have with the Carers Hub is precious and effortless – they are always upbeat and forward thinking. There is always someone at the end of a phone for professionals and carers alike, which is priceless.”

PROFESSIONAL



Bury Carers' Hub provides a single point of access for all adult carers (18+) supporting another adult living in Bury.

The Hub exists to ensure that carers of all ages have access to information, advice and a wide range of support services designed to help carers continue in their caring role for as long as they choose and reduce the impact the caring role can have on their own health and wellbeing.

Support can include:

- Specialist 1-2-1 and group support
- Information, advice and guidance on a range of carer related matters
- Support to access community and health and wellbeing services
- Support with contingency planning
- Newsletters twice a year detailing local Carers Coffee and Chat groups, activities, courses and much more
- Information and support to take a break from the caring role
- A 24/7 Volunteer Carers Help and Talk (CHAT) Line
- Digital Carers Community Network
- Volunteering opportunities for carers, including volunteering for the CHAT Line
- Support for former carers
- Carers Awareness Briefings to other professionals aiming to increase the number of hidden carers identified and supported in Bury

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

- Identify and support 368 adult carers
- Demonstrate 85% improved outcomes for carers who access the Hub
- Provide 2 student placement opportunities
- Recruit and engage 6 new volunteers
- Provide 850 hours of volunteering support
- Deliver 10 training courses for carers
- Support a minimum of 10 carers to access and or maintain employment or education



Carers' Hub Rochdale provides a single point of access for all carers including young and adult carers in the borough of Rochdale.

Support can include:

- Specialist 1-2-1 and group support
- Information, advice and guidance on a range of carer related matters
- Support to access community and health and wellbeing services
- Support with contingency planning, including an Emergency Card Scheme
- Newsletters three times per year detailing local Carers Coffee and Chat groups, activities, courses and much more
- Information and support to take a break from the caring role including a volunteer-led Sitting-In service and My Time Voucher Scheme
- A 24/7 Volunteer Carers Help and Talk (CHAT) Line
- Support for former carers
- Volunteering opportunities for carers, including volunteering for the CHAT Line, Befriending and Sitting-In services
- Carers Awareness Briefings to other professionals aiming to increase the number of hidden carers identified and supported in Rochdale

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

- Identify and support 760 adult carers
- Support 33% of adult carer referrals to achieve improved outcomes
- Identify and support 158 young carers
- Support 18% of young carer referrals to achieve improved outcomes
- Recruit 10 volunteers by offering opportunities for residents to get involved
- Support 24 adult carers to access/maintain employment
- Deliver 124 adult and young carers activities, including non-term time



Staffordshire Together for Carers Service provides information, advice and a wide range of specialist support services designed to help adult and young carers continue in their caring role for as long as they choose and reduce the impact the caring role can have on their own health and wellbeing.

Support can include:

- Specialist 1-2-1 and group support
- Information, advice and guidance on a range of carer related matters
- Support to access community resources, networks, and services
- Support to take a break from caring, including Befriending and peer support opportunities
- Support to develop emergency and contingency plans and support with future planning
- Training and skills development opportunities
- Newsletters four times per year detailing local groups, activities, and training
- Digital Carers Community Network
- A 24/7 Volunteer Carers Help and Talk (CHAT) Line
- Volunteering opportunities as 'Friends of Staffordshire Carers'

For young carers, we also offer:

- Support to identify what could make a difference to them and their family's lives
- Support to help communicate their wishes and feelings
- Help to access support in school and college

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

- 100% of carers referred are contacted within three working days
- 95% of young carers who express a preference, are offered access to peer support and a break from their caring role
- 90% of carers who express a preference gain employment or are supported to do so through the provision of training, volunteering, or work placement opportunities
- 95% of carers are offered support to develop contingency/emergency plans
- 100% of carers have the opportunity to take part in the development of the service



Warrington Carers Hub provides a single point of access for all carers including young and adult carers in the borough of Warrington.

The Hub exists to ensure that carers of all ages have access to information, advice and a wide range of support services designed to help carers continue in their caring role for as long as they choose, reducing the impact the caring role can have on their own health and wellbeing.

Support can include:

- Specialist 1-2-1 and group support including during transition and hospital discharge
- Information, advice and guidance on a range of carer related matters
- Support to access community and health and wellbeing services
- Support with contingency planning, including Carers Emergency Card
- Regular newsletters detailing local Carers Coffee and Chat groups, activities, training courses and much more
- Information and support to take a break from the caring role
- A 24/7 Volunteer Carers Help and Talk (CHAT) Line
- Digital Carers Community Network
- Volunteering opportunities for carers, including volunteering for the CHAT Line and Pen Pals
- Support for former carers
- Carers Awareness Briefings to other professionals aiming to increase the number of hidden carers identified and supported in Warrington



The life of a carer can be isolating, emotional and upsetting, and today you made me feel pampered, listened to and important. Thank you."

CARER



Jean's Story

Jean is 70 years old and is a full-time carer for her partner John who has Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. These conditions have impacted John's mobility, spatial awareness, ability to reason and comprehend and perform practical tasks independently. Jean is unable to leave John on his own.

Jean supports John with personal care, such as showering, dressing and getting around, and Jean has noticed the tasks have become progressively more difficult as John's mobility has deteriorated. Jean finds that she has no time for herself and is starting to struggle with some aspects of the caring role. Jean also worries about what would happen to John if she became unwell and could not provide care, as she has no nearby family members to offer support in an emergency.

An n-compass Carers Hub completed a statutory Carers Assessment and Peace of Mind for Carers plan. Jean was also referred to local services that could support her in managing John's health conditions. John was also referred for a needs assessment, which resulted in him receiving funding for daycare provision. He is currently attending Age UK daytime support which has given Jean time for herself.

Jean also received a Carers personal budget to enable her to look after herself; she now attends pamper days and visits to the hairdresser on the days that John attends daycare. Jean now has more time to reconnect with friends and engage in leisure activities.

The Peace of Mind for Carers plan has reassured Jean that John would be cared for in the event of an emergency.

Nicolas' Story

Nicolas was referred to an n-compass Young Carers Hub following a statutory carers assessment conducted by the local authority. Nicolas cares for his younger sister but finds it difficult to see her being poorly, which affects him emotionally. Nicolas also struggles to make friends because of the situation at home. The referral stated that Nicolas would benefit from information about his sister's condition and support around his wellbeing.

Staff at the Young Carers Hub invited Nicolas to a respite break with other young carers, which enabled him to relax and mix with other young people, helping him feel less alone. Nicolas also attends young carer groups and activities, which gives him a regular break from his caring role and allows him to make new friends with others in a similar situation.

Nicolas also engaged well with one-to-one support, which has helped him manage his emotions. He now understands that strategies are in place to keep his sister safe and can talk to his mum and other young carers if he is worried. Nicolas has also started to make friends in school as he is less concerned about other children visiting his home. Nicolas' mum fed back how much he enjoyed attending the activities and now really looks forward to them.

“

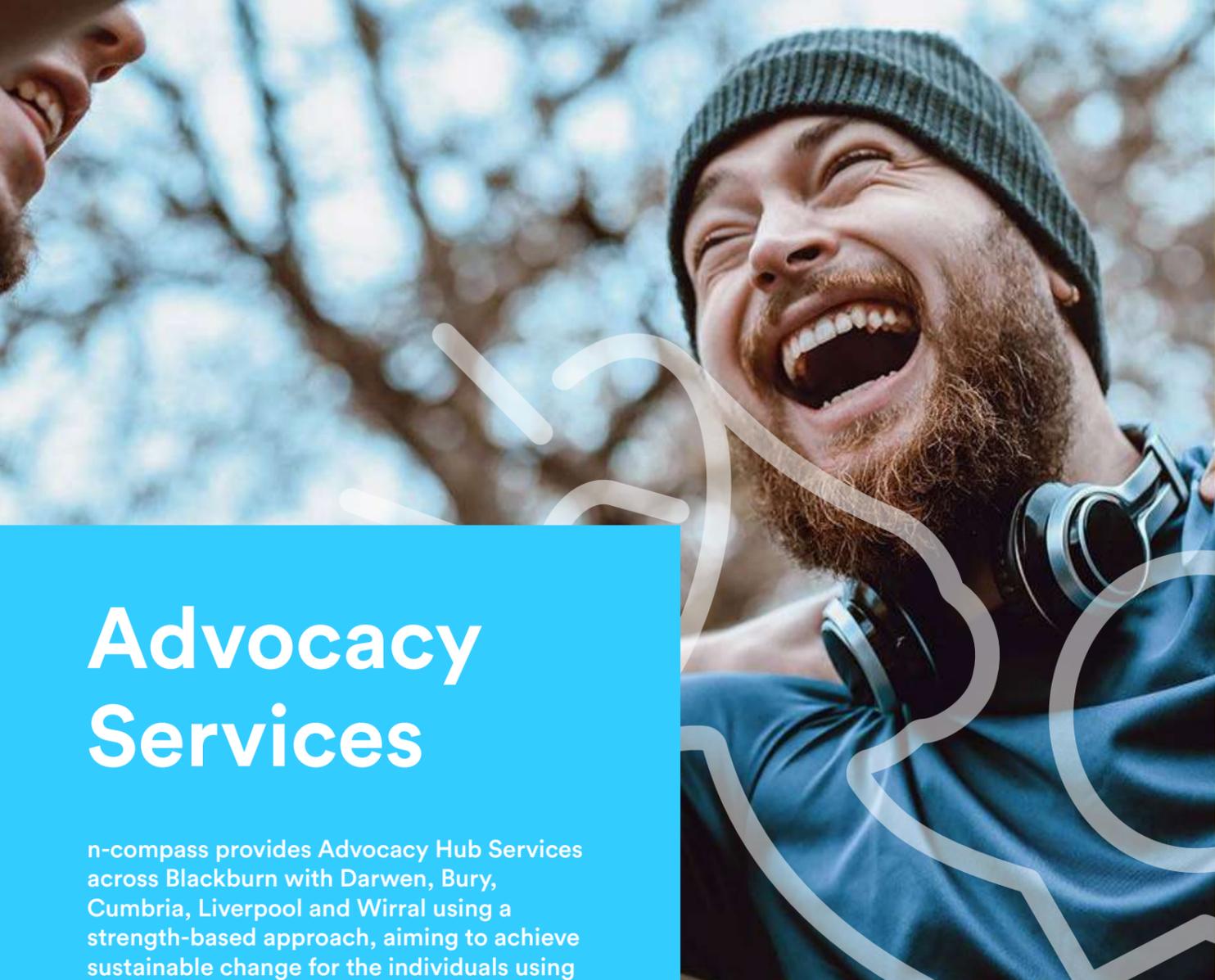
You have really changed our lives, not just the children's but mine as well, I cannot thank you all enough, the support has come at the perfect time for me and the children.”

PARENT OF YOUNG CARER

“

I will never be able to repay the kindness and support you gave me when I needed you the most.”

CARER



Advocacy Services

n-compass provides Advocacy Hub Services across Blackburn with Darwen, Bury, Cumbria, Liverpool and Wirral using a strength-based approach, aiming to achieve sustainable change for the individuals using our services.

Our advocacy services are free, confidential and independent, safeguarding and upholding the rights of individuals, including their human rights and rights under the Mental Health Act, Mental Capacity Act, Care Act and other legislation affecting their lives.



This is achieved via a single point of contact into strength-based, specialist or legislative advocacy, listening to, educating, and empowering the individual. The primary outcome is the effective communication of individuals' views, wishes, feelings and decisions to professionals, delivered through a process that safeguards vulnerable people, builds resilience, and develops their ability to 'self-advocate' in the future.

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

- **Blackburn with Darwen** – five-day allocation timeframe/no extended waiting times
- **Wirral** – no extended allocation timeframes. Deliver 36 hours of training to 50 professionals
- **Bury** – high priority cases allocated within 48 hours, all other cases within five days/no extended wait time
- **Cumbria IMHA** – 90% of clients are satisfied with the level of support received; 90% of clients are satisfied that their communication, language, cultural, mobility or sensory requirements were met; 100% of clients are seen within specified timescales; 90% of clients are satisfied with provision of accurate information and options to make choice; 90% of decision makers are satisfied with information provided and found role and report useful
- **Liverpool** –
 - **Statutory Advocacy** – 95% of referrals triaged in 1 working day and acknowledged within 2 working days; 95% of all inappropriate referrals provided with full explanation and guidance to redirect within 2 working days
 - **Generic Advocacy** – 95% of advocacy referrals triaged within 2 working days and acknowledged within 3 working days; 95% of all eligible referrals accepted; 95% of referrals not accepted receive notification within 3 working days
 - **Statutory and Generic Advocacy** – 6 activities promoting the availability of the service delivered per quarter; 75% of clients complete survey; 85% of those completing survey rate good or above



“

You really helped me to understand what all these papers are saying. It was all just words before.”
SERVICE USER

“

You have been amazing, there should be more advocates like you, you have listened and supported me and as far as I am concerned you've been the best advocate.”

SERVICE USER

“

It feels like everyone is against you sometimes when you're in here, so having one person that you know is definitely on your side, it takes away a lot of that fear.”

SERVICE USER



“

Advocates and managers demonstrated a wealth of knowledge and experience, with multi-skilled advocates in all hubs. All advocates we spoke to showed that they were passionate, reflective, and embodied the positive values and culture of the organisation. There is a strong ethos of being person-centred within the organisation.”

QPM AUDITOR

“

Thank you for being so informative and taking the time to explain what your service provides, and the legal aspect needed to make best interest decisions for the client who has not got capacity. It is reassuring to know that the people who can't voice their opinion has someone impartial to make sure they are cared about.”

PROFESSIONAL

David's Story

David is a 35-year-old man who has learning difficulties. He was admitted to hospital after experiencing psychosis and detained under Section 3 of the Mental Health Act. It was David's first time in a mental health ward, and staff stated that they felt David was wrongly placed. David communicates using words but finds it difficult to express himself and needs things explained clearly in a language he understands. The referral stated that David did not have the capacity to instruct an advocate.

An n-compass advocate visited David on the ward and used 'easy-read' materials to explain what advocacy is and how she could help. She used short, simple sentences supported by descriptive images. She asked if David was 'happy' or 'sad' on the ward, using smiley and sad emojis. David indicated that he was unhappy.

David was clear that he wanted to leave the ward and wished to return to his hometown. A supported living placement had been identified in his hometown, but it was suggested that David go to a rehabilitation unit beforehand to ease the transition. However, this rehabilitation unit was a long way from home, and the advocate argued that it would breach David's legal right to a family life, as it would impact his mum's ability to visit. The Clinical Commissioning Group argued that the risks of the placement breaking down were greater, meaning David would have to return to hospital, so the rehabilitation unit was in David's long-term best interests.

David had been on the ward for three weeks when his presentation changed; he started displaying negative behaviours towards staff and patients. As such, it became more critical that the move happened quickly. However, it was equally vital that David's wishes still be considered, so using a mixture of simple communication skills to ascertain David's stated wishes and non-instructed advocacy, the advocate ensured David remained involved in the decision-making.

David moved to the rehabilitation placement as planned, but as part of the process, the advocate secured an agreement that David could visit the place that would eventually become his 'forever home' as part of the process and helped him understand that the rehabilitation unit was only temporary.

Judy's Story

An n-compass Advocacy Hub received a referral for a profoundly deaf female called Judy, who had been admitted to a mental health ward. A mental health ward is stressful at the best of times but would be particularly difficult for Judy, who would be unable to understand what was happening or express her wishes. As such, Judy was allocated an advocate proficient in British Sign Language (BSL) to ensure language was not a barrier. When the advocate met Judy, it was evident that she felt isolated and frustrated. Judy presented as very unwell. From her first presenting at A&E to eventually being admitted to the ward, communication had been difficult as the hospital had no interpreter service on site.

The advocate immediately built a rapport with Judy and reassured her that her preferences would be listened to. At the advocate's suggestion and with Judy's consent, the hospital negotiated with Judy's care providers and allowed support workers from her accommodation to assist her. This went some way to alleviate the daily frustrations, but the advocate became aware that the hospital was using the support workers to facilitate communication in more formal interventions, such as ward review meetings, which was inappropriate. BSL/English interpreters are highly skilled and trained individuals that must be registered with a professional regulatory body. As a result of the advocate's intervention, the hospital agreed to provide professional, qualified interpreters for all important future appointments, such as ward review meetings. Judy could finally express her views and wishes and discuss her mental health in a meaningful and helpful way. The advocate continued supporting Judy and noted that she seemed happier and was more confident in expressing her wishes and feelings to the clinical team.



Counselling Services

We provide counselling services to young people and adults in Lancashire through three different counselling projects.



The Butterfly and Phoenix Project supports children and young people to improve their emotional health and wellbeing and reduce the risks of engaging in self-harming and/or self-destructive behaviours.

Trained counsellors provide 1-2-1 counselling as well as risk and resilience group work sessions. These interventions support children and young people to identify underlying issues impacting their emotional health and wellbeing, increase their awareness of 'triggers' and risks associated with self destructive/self-harming behaviours, explore healthy coping mechanisms, increase self-esteem and confidence and improve emotional health and wellbeing.

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

Support 100 young people from Fylde and Wyre and 240 young people from Preston, Chorley, and South Ribble areas. Support at least 80% of young people to:

- Reduce/cease self-harming/self-destructive behaviour
- Reduce/cease suicidal ideation if experienced
- Improve knowledge of triggers and issues underlying self-harm/self-destructive behaviours
- Improve knowledge of how to minimise risk whilst engaging in self-harm/self-destructive behaviours
- Increase self-esteem and positivity
- Reduce feelings of isolation



Children in Need funding allows our Butterfly and Phoenix project to extend its reach and support more children and young people over a three-year period.

The aim of the project is to de-stigmatise asking for help, increase an individual's personal resilience, extend their network of support and work with other professionals to ensure young people receive more consistent support.

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

- Support a minimum Of 70 young people
- Have greater resilience and feel less need to engage in self-harming behaviour
- Change how people view poor mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people, de-stigmatising asking for help and creating an open dialogue around mental health needs
- Ensure young people will receive better and more consistent guidance and support from those around them as a result of this work

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service

We are part of a consortium, led by Child Action Northwest, delivering the Lancashire Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing programme.

Our role is to work with young people aged 5-18, and their families, who are struggling to cope, offering various therapeutic interventions such as counselling.

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

- Support 75 young people and their families, where appropriate, across Lancashire
- A minimum of 70% of young people supported to a planned ending show an improvement in their health and wellbeing



They listened to young people and took them seriously. The support they receive helped to change young people's perspective on things."

GP



Person-centred care and seemed to be an AMAZING counsellor."

PARENT



My daughter can talk to someone without judgement."

PARENT



“

It has helped me a lot to figure certain problems out.”

YOUNG PERSON

“

Thank you for providing such a wonderful service for so many of our students, we rely so much on the service.”

TEACHER

Beth's Story

Beth is a year ten student who referred to the n-compass counselling service as she struggled with friendships and bullying in school. By the time the counsellor met Beth, she had left school and was being home-schooled.

The early sessions focused on healing after the bullying Beth had experienced; although things were much better for her, she was still anxious about friendships and lacked self-confidence. The counsellor then helped Beth recognise and celebrate her wins, looking at the changes made since the referral and how far Beth had come. They explored the possibility of Beth opening up to new friendships and experiences whilst maintaining her need to feel safe.

As sessions continued, Beth and the counsellor explored their time together, their progress and reflected on how the new, positive interactions were helping to counterbalance past negative experiences. The counsellor helped Beth improve her self-esteem, and they worked on communication skills, which would help Beth assert her needs.

They considered the future challenges Beth might face as she ventured into further education and, ultimately, the workplace; the counsellor supported Beth in breaking down difficult issues and thinking about ways to manage them confidently. Sessions ended when Beth felt that things were more predictable and manageable, and she felt more confident in her ability to overcome them.

Izzy's Story

Izzy was referred to the n-compass counselling service by her mum as she had been struggling with anxiety and obsessive-compulsive behaviour. When Izzy first met her counsellor, she was incredibly nervous and found it difficult to open up. The counsellor suggested they play Jenga to help build a relationship and allow Izzy to feel comfortable before sharing.

Over the following weeks, Izzy explored with the counsellor what made her anxious, and together they considered the things she could control and how to manage the things she could not. The counsellor suggested that Izzy write down all the things she experienced during the day and supported her to recognise the good and think about what she could do differently to change an outcome. This empowered Izzy and gave her the confidence to move forward. Izzy went on to visit her GP with her mum's support and is now engaging with the local mental health service.

Izzy said, “Talking through everything I was going through helped me understand why I felt that way. It also allowed me to make positive changes to my life and manage my anxiety a little better”.

“

The lady that met me was very helpful, she had such good advice and helped me a lot.”

YOUNG PERSON



Our Connect 5 training role is funded by Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System. Connect 5 training has been developed to give frontline staff in health and care the confidence to have more effective conversations with the public about their mental health and wellbeing. It focuses on training staff to enable them to support their patients or clients to live well mentally, to better manage their mental health, increase their resilience and, ultimately, improve their wellbeing. Alongside this, we have delivered adapted sessions to wider groups including carers, volunteers, and service users. Training sessions can last from half a day to one full day and are offered to both statutory and non-statutory agencies and staff teams. In 2022-2023, 396 professionals received the training with 97% reporting improved skills and confidence to discuss mental health and wellbeing issues within daily practice.

Our contractual targets for 2023-2024 are:

- Deliver 42 sessions
- Train 336 professionals
- Achieve 75% attendee evaluation response
- Achieve 80% improvement in mental health awareness
- Achieve 80% improvement in skills and confidence to discuss mental health and wellbeing issues within daily practice
- Achieve 80% satisfaction levels with delivery and materials

Wellbeing Services

n-compass' wellbeing services comprise of the Deaf Community Support and Connect 5 Training



“

My head is buzzing now with thoughts and ideas of how I can engage with my next patient who may have mental health concerns.”

CONNECT 5 TRAINEE

“

I have definitely taken a lot away and loved how the focus was on acknowledging mental wellbeing and how we can approach this.”

CONNECT 5 TRAINEE

“

After the work that you have done my GP finally offered me an interpreter! At last!”

SERVICE USER

Supporting the deaf community - Deaf Support Link Worker

Our Deaf Link Service is funded by Lancashire County Council and has been operating since October 2017, working with the culturally deaf in Lancashire, supporting them to achieve access to relevant services. There are significant barriers to accessing support and information faced by Lancashire's deaf community, whose primary language is BSL, and a vast number of organisations and services do not adequately meet their needs. Over the course of the contract, we have delivered some key objectives in achieving equitable access for BSL users in Lancashire:

- Ability to access communication support through Adult Social Care
- Access to planned and unplanned communication with the Police
- Access to interpreter provision for unplanned visits to hospital
- Improved access to some GP surgeries
- Improved access to the hospitals' complaints process
- Improved access to housing/landlords

Services that have improved accessibility for BSL users after working with the Deaf Link Service include:

- The Care Quality Commission
- The Home Office
- National Bowel Screening Programme
- Hospital complaints departments in Lancashire

Recently we utilised funding from the Digital Capability Fund to increase access to n-compass' wider services for BSL users, using the funding to create two BSL videos for the website that are created and branded by professional, native BSL users, about n-compass' other services. Also, to utilise a video relay service in both our Service Access Team and our advocacy Single Point of Contact. BSL users will be able to watch the videos and understand more about our carers and advocacy services and make contact independently to self-refer or make enquiries via the video relay service.

We continue to work closely with Lancashire Deaf Rights Group including developing a forum with support from the Lancashire Disability Champion Fund.

In the last 12 months the Deaf Link service has:

- Supported 68 new clients
- Provided formal training for 300 professionals to better understand the barriers faced by BSL users when accessing services
- Raised awareness about the needs and rights of BSL users with a further 300 professionals

“

The work that you do is so important to deaf people.”

SERVICE USER

“

We need more people like you!”

SERVICE USER

Rachel's Story

Rachel is a 35-year-old culturally deaf female who has been supported by Sue, the n-compass Deaf Link worker, on many occasions as she struggled with mental and physical health.

Sue had supported Rachel in making a formal complaint after not being provided with an interpreter service when she was unwell. The complaint resulted in contact from the Equality and Diversity lead and the NHS procurement team to better understand the needs of BSL users.

Regular meetings uncovered where mistakes were being made. For example, the current provider of interpreter services employed freelance staff, not understanding that professional BSL interpreters were required to be qualified and registered. It is also recognised as good practice that BSL interpreter services should only provide BSL translation to ensure a complete understanding of what is needed from both a language and a cultural point of view. Sue introduced them to an agency that could verify qualifications and registrations and explained what each translation service offered. The hospital now has a plan to contract with an appropriate translation service.

To further understand what's needed and ensure the best practice is implemented, Rachel has been invited to meet staff from the local Mental Health team and describes her lived experiences around accessibility. Rachel has also featured in an inspirational video and has been nominated for a local award.

Brian's Story

Brian is a 38-year-old male who had become seriously ill and needed to be transferred to his local hospital by ambulance. However, Brian is culturally deaf and uses British Sign Language as his first language, and he knew the ambulance would not be accessible to deaf people. Due to the severity of his condition and his distress, Brian contacted Sue, the n-compass Deaf Link worker who stayed on a video call with him throughout the journey. Brian was frightened, very unwell and had no access to information about his condition or where he was going.

Sue was already in contact with the Equality and Diversity lead at North West Ambulance Service and was aware that work was underway between the ambulance service and the local deaf service. Sue was keen to understand their progress in light of the issues she had experienced accompanying Brian to the hospital. It turned out that the information provided by the local deaf service was limited, and the ambulance service was finding it difficult to understand how they could improve accessibility. Sue pointed out that accessibility was now subject to legislation, and they were obligated to take action, but she also provided some straightforward solutions they could implement immediately. For example, they could access a video relay service app on the new tablets being issued to all ambulance crews, giving them access to a translation service 24 hours a day.

Consultation followed, and the ambulance service agreed to pilot the service. Should the pilot be successful, the ambulance service will roll out the app to every ambulance crew allowing for full accessibility in BSL for the deaf community and legislative compliance for the ambulance service.



Volunteering Service

We support all our volunteers through a dedicated volunteer team. As we continue to grow, we want to ensure that the quality all our volunteers experience is maintained to the highest standard. There are various ways in which people can volunteer at n-compass. Every year we undertake a volunteering satisfaction survey and last year 100% of our volunteers said that they would recommend n-compass as a great place to volunteer.



Citizen Involvement

n-compass has a robust and meaningful Citizen Involvement framework that ensures our service users are fully involved in informing changes to our service delivery models. This makes sure that the services we offer are entirely relevant to the needs of those we support. A range of activities are in place, from evaluation of individual service user feedback, regular service user involvement meetings and our Citizen Involvement Board. Feedback received from service evaluation questionnaires and from service user forums is shared with the Citizen Involvement Board, so it can inform the identification of cross service and organisational trends and themes. Our Chief Executive attends all Citizen Involvement Board meetings and is able to consider information and recommendations, feeding back to our Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees.

Service Volunteers

Volunteers are vital to the delivery of all our services. They provide us with additional capacity as well as bringing a diverse range of experience, skills, and knowledge to the organisation. Without their assistance, we would not be able to support as many people as we do or offer the same range of innovative solutions.

Many volunteers also join to extend their social networks, make new friends, enjoy meaningful experiences, and utilise their skills and talents for the benefit of others. Volunteers have also found that their role with us has supported their prospects of future employment both within, and outside, our own organisation.

We are well-placed and committed to offering quality volunteering opportunities, ensuring that new volunteers are properly trained to undertake their roles and are fully supported throughout their volunteering activity. We have a well-regarded reward and recognition process to ensure that we acknowledge the added value that volunteers bring to our organisation.

We have successfully resecured the 'Investing in Volunteering' standard for a further three years underpinning our aspirations around delivering an excellent experience for all our valued volunteers.

Student Placements

We work alongside many universities to place Social Work students within our services so they can have a fulfilling placement whilst adding real value to the work n-compass delivers. We place over 25 students a year for between 70-90 days each, which gives them the opportunity to get involved in our carers, advocacy and central service functions.

During 2022-2023 we delivered the following outcomes:

- Over 190 volunteers have regularly supported our services
- Over 9000 hours have been provided by our volunteers
- 100% of our volunteers would recommend n-compass as a great place to volunteer
- Our volunteers have made over 1800 phone calls to our carers offering emotional support
- Over 300 letters have been posted between our carers and volunteers as part of our Pen Pal service



I feel proud to be a Pen Pal volunteer, I do it as it is a lost art putting pen to paper and a lost way to communicate. It is a wonderful thing to be able to correspond with another person."

VOLUNTEER



n-compass and their staff definitely ensure you feel valued as a volunteer."

VOLUNTEER



Sayeeda's Volunteering Journey

Sayeeda is a second-year student studying Law and Criminology at Edge Hill University. To support her academic studies, Sayeeda was keen to gain some practical experience in a role that would allow her to reflect on the theory she was learning. Through the university careers team, she was introduced to the Volunteer Coordinator at n-compass.

Sayeeda was offered a volunteer placement in the Duty Advocacy Team. Through her induction and training she found the team to be very supportive, Sayeeda said "the advocacy team have been great, I would ask a million questions a day and they wouldn't hesitate to help and spend time with me... they are one of the best teams I've ever worked with."

The volunteer placement allowed Sayeeda to achieve the goals she had set herself, but she also learnt new skills and realised her passion for helping people. She said "the entire process of advocacy brought to my attention how much I can change people's lives by helping them see a way through their issues."

Volunteering for the Advocacy team has had a profound impact on Sayeeda to a point where she has now applied for a new degree course at Edge Hill University to pursue her passion to become an advocate.



Service Access and Central Support Teams

n-compass is supported by a dedicated front-line Service Access Team who provide service users with information, support and signposting. All calls are handled by this team of well-trained advisors who take time to listen to issues that are impacting upon the individual's health and wellbeing and offer appropriate advice and support. This could be through services provided by n-compass and/or through signposting to other local quality provision. Our aim is to ensure that we offer advice and support in a holistic way rather than through a specific service focused approach.

During 2022-2023 our Service Access Team dealt with over 30,960 enquiries which equates to supporting over 120 people each working day! They supported over 17,333 incoming callers and made over 13,640 outbound calls to service users.

Our Central Services support comprises of dedicated Business Development, People Services, Finance, IT and Marketing & Communications Teams. The Central Service team has one primary aim – to support front line delivery so colleagues can focus on the service users they are supporting.



n-compass Heroes

n-compass undertakes an annual staff engagement survey, which provides an opportunity for all staff to comment upon, and contribute to, the ongoing development of our organisation. We do this through the national Best Companies programme which allows us to benchmark our results against other 'not for profit' organisations nationally. So, we not only learn more about colleagues' views on working for n-compass, but we also receive detailed feedback on how we compare and can learn from similar organisations.

During 2022, 86% of staff agreed that n-compass was a great place to work, and we achieved a 2-star Best Companies rating, which in their words means that we are an outstanding organisation to work for.

In February it was announced we were in three of the Best Companies to Work for Lists and in Q1 we ranked:

- 3rd best charity to work for in the UK.
- 9th best mid-sized place to work for in the UK.
- 11th best place to work for in the Northwest.

Joanna, our Interim CEO says 'We are so proud of these extraordinary achievements which have been reached amidst a cost-of-living crisis and unprecedented pressure on the health and social care sector. Despite our achievements we will continue to hold up that mirror, providing opportunities for staff to have their say so they can continue to shape our culture and our future. Thank you, team n-compass, for playing your part in making n-compass such a great place to work!'



What our Staff say...



“

n-compass holds itself accountable and is very responsive to feedback, which it seeks actively. There is a lovely, caring community feel throughout the organisation and I really feel that all employees believe in the roles they do and our common mission to support the community.”

STAFF MEMBER



“

The passion and the enthusiasm shown by everyone is great, we all strive for the best outcomes for the people we work with, the organisation is very caring and does show a keen interest in ensuring we are happy in what we do.”

STAFF MEMBER



Our Counselling team supported Children in Need with a cake sale



Our team heading to the HSJ Awards for the 2nd year running as finalists for the System Led Support for Carers Award

Giving Something Back!

Every year n-compass staff nominate a charity that they want to raise money for throughout the year through a variety of sponsored activities. For 2022, staff voted to support Leave a Light On (LALO), a charity based in Cumbria.

We were able to raise a whopping £4,300 for LALO and have chosen The Joseph Lappin Centre as our Charity of the Year for 2023-2024.



Some of the team at Lytham Festival supporting n-compass as one of the chosen charities at the event



Our Rochdale and Bury Carers teams out and about for Carers Week



Our colleagues at The Volunteer Event celebrating the volunteers who support n-compass



“

n-compass is a great workplace to me that feels more like a family than a workplace. Staff are encouraged to be friendly and helpful towards each other with their PRIDE values encouraged at every level. n-compass encourages me, and equips me, to deliver a great service by providing all the training and resources I need. The company has even put staff training in place so that we can deliver a service that is over and above what is expected of the service. I feel that n-compass listens to my needs as an employee but also as a person. I took a pay cut to work at n-compass because it had a reputation of fairness. Since joining n-compass, I would not want to work anywhere else!”

STAFF MEMBER



Partnership Working

We are partnership orientated and proactively build and strengthen relationships with like-minded organisations. In 2022, we undertook our seventh annual stakeholder survey which included the views of stakeholders who were new to our service delivery.

The results showed us that:

93%  BELIEVED THAT N-COMPASS WAS A GOOD PROVIDER OF HEALTH AND CARE SERVICES

93%  AGREED THAT THE OVERALL IMPRESSION OF N-COMPASS WAS POSITIVE

86%  AGREED THAT N-COMPASS STAFF WERE PROFESSIONAL AND ACTED WITH INTEGRITY

79%  FEEL THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT AND APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN N-COMPASS AND ITS STAKEHOLDERS

“

Professional, responsive, well organised.”

“

Honest, open, trusting relationship between commissioners and n-compass.”

“

A very professional organisation that provides a quality and safe service.”

Our Partners



Our Board



Cathy Scivier
Chair



Sally McIvor
Vice Chair and Social Value Lead



Rachael McCullough
Chair of the Audit Committee



Brian Watson
Vice Chair of the Audit Committee



Helen Carouzos
Trustee



Jordan Lewis
Trustee



Dr Mandy Dixon
Trustee



Angie Boyle
Trustee

Senior Management Team



Joanna Solanki
Interim CEO



Stuart Whittle
Finance Director



Martyn Robson
Business Development Director



Karen Jackson
People Services Director



Asher Ayers
Interim Services Director

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Cert No. 9463

