

# WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER

n|compass  
towards a brighter future



## Message from our CEO

### What a difference a year makes!

I do not think any of us will forget 2020 in a hurry!

Yet despite the challenges we have all had to face at work and in our personal lives, from an n-compass perspective, I could not be prouder.

I have been amazed and humbled by our colleagues continued passion and drive, and the way they have all rallied together in continuing to meet this year's challenges, not being fazed nor beaten by them.

I said in March when we went into the first lockdown, we would come out the other side fitter, stronger and with renewed energy and vigor. Well, we are certainly on track for that to be the case!

The next few wintery months will be our next challenge. n-compass will continue to do all it can to support our colleagues health and wellbeing during this time, thus helping to ensure we uphold our exceptional service quality for the 30,000 plus people we support each year.

I wanted to take this opportunity to wish you a peaceful and relaxing 'virtual' Christmas, it will be a very different festive period for all of us, I am sure!

**Teresa Jennings - CEO**

## Carlisle Carers

In August we successfully merged with Carlisle Carers. Carlisle Carers, established in 2002, has a rich history of delivering Carers services in Carlisle. We are delighted to now be delivering to young and adult Carers in Cumbria.



## Care for Carers



In partnership with  
THE NATIONAL LOTTERY  
COMMUNITY FUND

**We continue to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis with passion and commitment ensuring service users receive all the support they need delivered in the best way we can. As one of the largest providers of Carers services in the country we know only too well the devastating impact COVID-19 has had on the country's army of unpaid carers and whilst lockdown is difficult on everyone, we have seen that it impacts disproportionately on those with Caring responsibilities.**

Thanks to funding from the Government and the Big Lottery we have been able to offer remote therapeutic support to the most vulnerable cohort of the Caring community. Qualified and experienced Counsellors provide talking therapy for up to 6 sessions focussing on increasing personal resilience and reducing anxiety and stress as a result of a Caring role, compounded by COVID-19.

This project is filling a much needed gap in care and support for Carers across all of our areas of delivery.





## Staff Conference with a difference

Our Annual Staff conference took place virtually on 10th September. It was a great event and there was a genuine feeling of togetherness despite it being delivered over ZOOM.

Staff shared stories of some of the inspirational work which has taken place during COVID-19. One which resonated with all our staff was a video delivered by Sue Gardam our Deaf Support Worker. The video was a powerful portrayal of the unbelievable challenges the deaf community have faced since COVID-19 struck.

Many BSL users have no technology and those that do often do not have the skills to use it effectively. Information about the pandemic, precautions to take, changes in service delivery was not widely available in BSL. Many Deaf people with COVID-19 symptoms still do not know about the process of getting tested or where they would go.

Sue and colleagues have done some amazing work throughout the pandemic supporting the Deaf community across Lancashire.



## Staff Wellbeing

Staff wellbeing has always been at the heart of n-compass but it has been more important than ever this year.

We allocated a “keeping connected budget” for teams to stay connected with many reporting they feel more connected than ever before. Our staff Christmas briefing over ZOOM brought together 146 staff members all in their Christmas guises and we had a magician to entertain us all which was huge fun.

The Senior Management Team led by the CEO hold regular virtual coffee and chats and all our teams have been as busy as ever fundraising for our chosen charity for this year Ruby’s Fund. So far we have raised over £2500. It was heartening to read 91% of staff agreed in our staff engagement survey that n-compass continues to be a great place to work.

## Innovation Hub

At the start of the year we set up our very own Innovation Hub. We know our staff are a creative bunch but often they do not have the space or time to nurture new ideas and approaches.

The Innovation Hub is the place where staff from across the organisation come together and develop new ways of working to improve and strengthen our service offer. At the start of next year we will see some of their ideas become a reality with the launch of the n-compass Digital Ambassadors programme, which will look at how we use digital technology to better promote the work we do and reach more service users. We will also see the first meeting of our Youth Voice Project which will dovetail with our Citizen Involvement Board ensuring service users voices are at the centre of our work.

## Advocacy Services

The Advocacy sector, as with other health and social care agencies, has faced a lot of challenges in practice as a result of the pandemic over the last 9 months. Every week has felt like a moveable feast with additional legislation to navigate and changes to current guidance to consider.

One of the positives to come out of the last 9 months has been the collective voice of a range of small, medium and larger Advocacy organisations who have

come together to lead advocacy through the coronavirus. n-compass are proud to be involved in this group and as a result have been able to keep abreast of all of the changes and what this may mean for our advocates practice, influence policy change, and be involved as a collective voice for our communities most marginalised citizens.

We’ve introduced a set of Advocacy Principles for coronavirus and beyond, influenced the Mental Health Act



Review, been involved in the Care Quality Commissions investigation and review into the use of do not attempt cardiopulmonary resuscitation orders during the pandemic.

We have also scrutinised our own practice when applying decisions to our own areas of work such as paid Relevant Persons Representative (Paid RPR) visits.

