

Welcome Standards



Providers welcoming people's friends and families into their environment.

NWTDT and Pathways Associates Community Interest Company

Suite 2, Waterside
St James Court West
Accrington
Lancashire
BB5 1NA



Contents

Who are NWTDT/ Pathways Associates CIC	3
Introduction.....	4
Support for this Initiative.....	6
Good Practice in Volunteering.....	7
Welcome Standards.....	8
The Aims.....	8
Implementation.....	9
The Outcomes.....	11
Contact Details.....	12



Who are NWTDT/ Pathways Associates CIC

Pathways Associates Community Interest Company was established following requests from Local Authorities and PCT's outside the North West and Provider Organisations made to our 'sister company' **NWTDT**.

NWTDT has been in existence since the mid 1980's and is funded through annual subscription by every Local Authority and Primary Care Trust in the North West. In addition, from 2004 - 2011, in recognition of this unique partnership the Regional Valuing People Support Team Development monies were handed to **NWTDT** to commission alongside subscriptions.

NWTDT works at the interface between people who use services, their families and services to support the development of better futures for all. We work closely with statutory services including a close partnership with the North West branch of the Association of Directors of Adults Social Services and a growing number of Children's Services across the North West as well as with individuals and families.

First and foremost **Pathways Associates Community Interest Company** is committed to supporting individuals to take control of all aspects of their lives as described by the 12 pillars of independent living (www.southamptoncil.co.uk). These were identified by disabled people and will, if met, enable them to fully participate in society and lead to people being in control of their own lives with the support they, at the level they need for as long as they need it. **Pathways Associates** are committed to securing these needs, both locally and nationally through the training, consultancy and research we provide.

Pathways operates as a social enterprise reinvesting surplus into supporting research, (which will extend beyond health and social care into any area of life, community or society) and developments in the health and social care field which promote our principles and make our services available at a subsidised rate (or largely free) to people who may be entitled to health and social care services and their families.

Introduction

The 'Welcome Standards' are an assessment of the quality of a provider. They will be used in a similar way to the kite mark logo.

We will be looking for evidence from provider organisations that they and their staff actively seek to welcome people's friends and extended families into their environment, and where people have no friends and family, that effort is made to support people develop such relationships. We will be looking for the kind of evidence that we value as humans - how it felt, how it smelt, whether people looked happy and contented, whether people were bored and not well supported etc.

These are the kind of standards that all of us would want for ourselves and the people we love - do staff think about supporting someone to get changed if their top is dirty or they have food round their mouth etc.? This kind of gentle support makes the most difference and, if it is in place, people are at less risk of being dehumanised to the point where abuse becomes more likely to happen.

Who would not prefer to use a provider that welcomes and acts upon comments such as this? The Welcome Standards could become a major 'selling point' for providers. Who would commission support from an organisation who was not interested in signing up to these kinds of standards and be willing to be regularly reviewed against them by anyone who visited? The 'kite mark' is not a statement of the quality of provision but a notification to 'customers' that the provider is part of a group that welcomes unannounced reviews and is open to visitors and building relationships with local communities.

There have been a number of quality review processes, including Expert by Experience, the Quality Network, PASS and the Health Care Commission Inspections, which have utilised the skills, knowledge and experience of self-advocates and family members.

This project will take the process a step further by involving self-advocates and family members to a greater extent; and evaluate and publish the results of reviews in order to inform the decision-making of other self-advocates and family members when choosing services.



The publication of the standards and users' reviews will make a key contribution to people and communities influencing and really choosing their support providers. This innovation has been championed by people and families from all sectors as demonstrated by their feedback to the *Caring for our Future* engagement exercise.

Support for this Initiative

In Yorkshire, Humber and North East more than 40 family members and self-advocates said they wanted a system like this, representing families from 27 Local Authority areas. Similarly in the North West self-advocates and family carer representatives from 23 local authority areas were in favour of this volunteer scheme.

For years self-advocates and family carers have told us consistently that what is missing in their lives is support to sustain, maintain, nurture and develop existing and new friends and relationships. The closed cultures of some provider organisations, as witnessed in the PANORAMA programme on the 31st May 2011 on BBC 1, must be challenged. This has been borne out by our consultation with Provider networks in Yorkshire, Humber & North East where providers have expressed an interest in supporting The Welcome Standards.

The Minister for Care Services, Paul Burstow recently said that users and carers' opinions on care services will be published alongside ratings of their quality on an online good care guide (see <http://tiny.cc/burstow>). He wants to develop a social care comparison site - along the lines of travel websites such as TripAdvisor - to provide service users with real-time information to help them choose care homes or domiciliary care providers.

In the North West, **North West Training and Development Team and Pathways Associates** work with every Local Authority and Primary Care Trust. In addition, through the North West Valuing People Now Group (formally the Regional Programme Board) and the Health Equalities Group we know that people with learning disabilities, families, local authorities and provider services are keen to do more to work together to find positive ways of enhancing the support people receive, particularly the natural support we all get from our friends and families. We know this is the key to unlocking the closed cultures that can be created through some types of provision.

We also know that friendships/relationships and citizenship is a top priority to people with a learning disability who every year, since 2001, at the NW Regional Forum conference have told us: *'Services cannot commission a friend for me and that's what I want most, they can support me to make it happen if only they'd listen to me.'*



Good Practice in Volunteering

The Welcome Standards will support the volunteers to experience the established benefits of volunteering (increased skills, community presence, personal confidence & improved employability) as well as increasing peer support and people's personal connections.

Welcome Standards will further the Department of Health's vision for volunteering in Health and care by using volunteering to enhance quality in social care provision and improve outcomes for the service users it engages by building on the experience and skills of people with learning disabilities and family members.

The initiative will reduce inequality by targeting volunteering opportunities at people with learning disabilities and family carers who are traditionally underrepresented in volunteering. It will explore the role that volunteering can play in reviewing the quality of social care services and contribute to good practice in this innovative area.

Welcome Standards

The Aims

1. To develop a set of standards for services about dignity, respect and community
2. To review local services for people with learning difficulties against these standards through volunteer self-advocates and family carers visiting services.
3. To publish reviews on a website which other people can then use to inform their decision-making about the services they choose for themselves and their family members.
4. To develop a network of providers to support and take part in this process.
5. To improve the quality of services.
6. To develop friendships, relationships and community participation for people who use services.

Implementation

To make this happen, key activities are:

1. Recruit self-advocates and family members to be volunteers in the areas of activity
2. Recruit service providers to participate in the providers network
3. Co-produce the Welcome Standards review process with service users and providers.
4. Run training courses to prepare volunteers to take part.
5. Put policies in place to ensure the safety of volunteers and, if they witness abuse, to support them to report it.
6. Design and develop project website to disseminate review findings.
7. Support volunteers visit services on a number of occasions at different times of the day and on different days. This will include an introductory visit to explain the purpose of the project, a number of visits to observe how the service is delivered and a final visit to review these observations with users.
8. Project staff will then feedback the results of the review to the provider and give them the opportunity to respond.
9. Publish reviews and providers' responses on the website.
10. Regular volunteer supervision sessions in each activity region to support them to undertake reviews and further develop their skills.
11. Hold regular opportunities for volunteers from different activity regions to meet up and share good practice.

12. Hold regular meetings of the providers' network to share good practice.
13. Once a number of reviews have been published, publicise the website to encourage prospective users to use it to inform the choices they make about the services they engage with.
14. Develop the long-term sustainability of the project through the provider networks paying a small subscription fee.
15. Conduct an on-going evaluation of the project.
16. Consider the development of a national Welcome Standards awards to recognise good practise and expertise of the volunteers and provider organisations.

The Welcome Standards have been developed for floating support, supported living services, residential care and hospital services.

The Outcomes

1. There will be accessible, impartial information about health and social care services and supports to inform the decision-making of people who may use them, similar to www.patientopinion.org.uk (for healthcare services).
2. Friendships, relationships and community participation for volunteers and people who use services.
3. Improvement of services for people with learning disabilities - directly through the Welcome standards being used & checked but also indirectly through their influence on people with learning difficulties' expectations and provider organisations' desire to attract people to use their services.
4. Recognition for those organisations who work in ways which nurture and support the maintenance and development of relationships in people's lives because they understand the importance of them in enhancing the quality of the lives of the people they support and their general health and well-being.

This initiative will build healthy and resilient communities, including meeting service user needs, by facilitating communication and collaboration between service users, family members and providers. This will lead to improvements in service provision and facilitating potential new service users to make informed choices about the support they will receive and enable service users to influence how providers develop and deliver their services.

NWTDT/ Pathways Associates Community Interest Company

Laurence Clark, Lynn James- Jenkinson and Dene Donalds

22/1/12



Contact Details

Dene Donalds	dene.donalds@nwt dt.com	(07816 073 334)
Laurence Clark	laurence@difference matters.co.uk	
Lynn James-Jenkinson	lynn.james-jenkinson@nwt dt.com	(07970 900 226)

For more information about **North West Training and Development Team/ Pathways Associates Community Interest Company** - www.pathwaysassociates.co.uk

Welcome Standards



Providers welcoming people's friends and families into their environment.

NWTDT and Pathways Associates Community Interest Company

Suite 2, Waterside
St James Court West
Accrington
Lancashire
BB5 1NA

