



Patient and Carer Involvement

Good afternoon, and my sincere apologies for another email in what must be your overwhelmed inboxes. I am contacting you as members of the Service User and Carer Reference Group and/or the Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Foundation Trust's Involvement Bank.

It is a difficult time for most of us. Coronavirus (also called COVID-19) means we are changing the way we work, socialise, travel, access healthcare, exercise, shop and live. I thought it would therefore be helpful to update you about some plans we have in response to the current situation. Additionally if there is anything which you feel CNTW Involvement could usefully do to help you then please get in touch.

1. **Engagement:** we have cancelled **all face to face engagements** including the **Service User and Carer Reference Group**. We will continue to link in with members through email and our plan will be to prioritise this event once the situation has improved. We will send relevant items to you for information and possibly consultation, but understand that usual timescales will not apply.

The much anticipated **Recovery College Celebration Event** due to take place on 8th April, has also been cancelled and will be rescheduled at a later date.

2. **Communications:** our message is that Involvement is open for business and we have plans to keep this going using our social media and website in order to share information, advice and helpful contacts. We are also eager to help you share your messages and to help in what other ways we can: again, please let us know what may be of interest or help to you.
3. **Staffing:** We have adapted our department setting to limit the spread of the virus. For the Involvement team, this means they are working from home to their normal working pattern. Ashton Davidson will remain your first point of contact on **07971 387 634**.

Additionally our Facilitators are here to help:

North

Paul Nicol: Mobile: 07769 242 704 Email: paul.nicol@cntw.nhs.uk

Central

Dawn Willis: Mobile: 07866 133 240 Email: dawn.willis@cntw.nhs.uk

South

Nicola Armstrong: Mobile: 07920 154 568 Email: nicola.armstrong@cntw.nhs.uk

North Cumbria

Faye Atkinson: Office: 01228602100 Email: faye.atkinson@cntw.nhs.uk

Carol Desborough: Office: 01228602100 Email: carol.desborough@cntw.nhs.uk

If this changes markedly because people are ill, self-isolating or having to care for children if schools close, we will let you know.

4. **Involvement Bank:** we will continue to work on our plans for the induction and training of those who have kindly offered to support and help the Trust through the Patient and Carer Involvement Bank. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of you that have agreed to become part of this new process. There may be opportunities to become involved remotely in the coming months.
5. **Sourcing reputable updates on the coronavirus:** we appreciate that there has been considerable information shared on social media, some of which may have caused added anxiety to any one of us. The Trust continues to encourage people not to use social media as a key source of up to date information for COVID19. The Government's website is the most reputable source of information and can be found using this link www.gov.uk/coronavirus.
6. **An appeal for community NHS Volunteer Responders – we need your help!**
The NHS has launched its Volunteer Responders programme to support the NHS during the COVID-19 outbreak. Volunteers will be matched in to roles that can support the 1.5m people in England who are at most risk from the virus to stay well. [Find out more information and how to register](#).

On a personal note I would like to thank you all for your help and support with Involvement to date. Both myself and the team will miss our face to face contact with you greatly, however we can still keep in touch and help each other. Our Facilitators will be looking at setting up new forms of group chats or forums across our localities, please feel free to give them your thoughts and expertise.

We will be sending out key information to you by email on a regular basis, if you would like to opt-out of our communications then please feel free to let Ashton know.

And finally, please take care of yourselves and we will see you all soon.

Kindest regards

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