

Cumbria Advice Network

Spring 2016

Issue 24

“We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.”

Winston Churchill

CAN is now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. We have a new Trustee Board and we are looking forward to continuing to support our members through our comprehensive training programme, network events and website.

We are delighted to announce that our application for funding to Cumbria Community Foundation was successful. We are therefore able to promote the first four courses in our 2016 – 2017 Training Programme.

Turn to pages 8 to 12 for all the details.

In this issue we focus on two of our members - Imagine Independence and Healthy Hopes. See pages 2 and 3 to learn more about the services they provide.

Our new email address is:

cumbriaadvicenetwork@outlook.com

Don't forget to let us know if your services have changed so that we can update your information on our website.



Find out about Mindline Cumbria. A new mental health information line on pages 6 and 7.

FOCUS ON



Imagine Independence

Cumbria Employment Programme

For many people employment is a daunting and overwhelming prospect. The job market can be intimidating and confusing. According to Scope – one quarter of all disabled people would like to work but are unemployed. Even more striking are figures published by the Department of Health in 2012 stating that only 7% of adults with learning disabilities were in some form of paid work; the majority of which was part time.

The Cumbria Employment Programme covers Carlisle, Allerdale, Barrow and Copeland and works with people with any form of disability and/or mental health challenge to provide tailored 1-1 support to those who want to access employment. We help people to gain the skills needed to access employment and offer ongoing support once in work.

We can help with all aspects of gaining and retaining employment. This support can include job searching, CV building, completing application forms, confidence building, interview skills, work placements, benefits advice and help finding training and educational opportunities.

The benefits of employment and working can be massive. Employment can provide people with purpose, structure and routine. They can also provide an opportunity to contribute in a specific way to society as well as providing a sense of identity and in many cases a social network. Common processes that people engage with as they start or restart in employment are building self esteem, self understanding and motivation.

It is important to note that not any old job will provide all of these benefits but the right job at the right time. The Cumbria Employment Programme doesn't have targets of getting a certain number of people into jobs so we can work at the pace of the individual to find the right job for them – we don't push square pegs into round holes!

Referrals for this programme usually come through the Adult Social Care or Community Mental Health teams although self referral is also available. We can also provide in work support through the DWP Access to Work programme where people qualify. If you'd like to know more about any of this you can contact Phil Salmon in the Carlisle office on 01228 317073 or psalmon@imaginementalhealth.org.uk

FOCUS ON



Healthy Hopes Cumbria is a new Community Interest Company based at Moorclose Community Centre. Our ethos is to promote the Health and Wellbeing of our local communities

We are committed to a person centred approach and deliver group workshops and a befriending service which provide a safe and confidential environment where people can relax and take part in healthy living and feel good activities.

We achieve our aims by delivering Health and Wellbeing sessions in the community and also in the workplace. Our sessions include: stress awareness, relaxation techniques, self-esteem and confidence building, motivation to change, positive thinking, goal setting, mindfulness, dealing with difficulties, self-image, anxiety, healthy lifestyle, etc.

We focus on people's strengths and positive aspects of their life. We have a person centred approach and will plan sessions to benefit the needs of the group.

Healthy Hopes in the Community

We currently run 3 community workshops. One based at Moorclose Community Centre, one based at Northside Community Centre, Workington and one based at Ellen Court, Maryport.

With the support of our volunteers we also run a befriending service. Our aim is to support socially isolated individuals, who may not be confident enough to leave the house or, quite simply lonely.

Healthy Hopes in the Workplace

We also deliver a professional service in the workplace. Employers will benefit from:

- *Reduced staff turnover and sickness absence
- *A healthier workforce
- *Better staff morale
- *Better customer service
- *More committed staff
- *Skills retention

Any profit that Healthy Hopes makes when delivering this work, is placed back into the community.

If you would like to know more, please contact Viv or Kerry admin@healthyhopes.co.uk

www.healthyhopes.co.uk

CAN Member Training Needs Survey Results

To plan our 2016 training programme, we conducted on line research asking CAN members for their training needs. Thank you to all who responded as your input has been invaluable.

Using a survey monkey questionnaire we also asked our membership for their opinions regarding contributing to training and refreshment costs.

All members were contacted in November 2015 and asked to complete an online questionnaire. Due to the dreadful floods experienced by many Cumbrian communities in December, the research was extended until January 2016.

Nearly a quarter of organisations took part in the survey who represent the broad client base of CAN's third sector membership organisations. This includes those providing support and advice for older people; children and young people; vulnerable people; those with complex needs; learning difficulties; physical, sensory and mental health issues; those suffering from domestic violence and members of the armed forces. The findings revealed a demand for a range of training courses to enable professionals to support their diverse clients.

The area of most importance to membership organisations is their requirement for CAN to continue to provide training on various aspects of welfare reform. This includes PiP, Universal Credit and changing benefits for older people and the impact on those with families.

General benefits training was a clearly identified membership need. Particular areas of interest were tax credits, ESA & PiP and how HMRC rules affects benefits.

Many organisations would like to access money advice training, specifically regarding debt advice and debt relief orders. With regards training on housing related issues, particular interest was a focus on new legislation, housing benefit problem areas, homelessness and coping with arrears. It was also requested courses be appropriate for general front line workers who need to be aware of issues, as well as trained advisors.

When organisations were asked about potentially paying for future training and refreshments, there was a mixture of views. Approximately 55% of respondents indicated they would be prepared to pay for or contribute to these costs. However around 45% of respondents replied they would not, or did not know, whether their organisation would cover these costs.

The CAN Trustee Board has reviewed the survey findings. We will continue to provide tea and coffee throughout each training day, but delegates will need to bring their own lunch.

To help us to continue to deliver our training programme, members will be encouraged to make a donation. Details on page 10.

Details of our first training courses are on pages 6 to 9. Don't forget our training courses fill up very rapidly, so book early to avoid disappointment.

CAN Website Development

The CAN website has been a useful tool for advisers for nearly six years, with over 1,600 users accessing it every month. Future plans for the Advice Network include creating a new design for the website whilst retaining the current content and ensuring the website is mobile and tablet friendly and integrated with social media streams like Facebook and Twitter.

Things you can do on the current CAN website:-

- Promote your organisation and the service you offer to clients
- Find out about other organisations in Cumbria and how to refer your clients to them
- Advertise one off events or updates on the Members' Noticeboard
- Advertise job vacancies
- Download useful resources
- Book onto CAN training courses

If you have any thoughts or opinions on what could be improved on the website, please email maria.hewitt@hotmail.co.uk

Don't forget, we rely on you to inform us of any changes that need to be made to your webpage on the CAN site.

Nellbooker

This year the costs of the license for our electronic referral system, Nellbooker, will be funded by Allerdale Borough Council.

We are using the Nellbooker system to refer clients from one agency to another in Allerdale.

Agencies involved are Age UK West Cumbria, Citizens Advice Allerdale, Impact Housing, West Cumbria Trades Hall and Mind in West Cumbria.

Allerdale Borough Council and Allerdale Disability Association will shortly be added to the system.

Contact Mandy Beinder, mandybeinder@hotmail.com if you would like to know more.





MINDLINE CUMBRIA IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Mindline Cumbria 0300 561 0000

info@mindlinecumbria.org

Monday to Friday, Noon- 5pm

Mindline Cumbria is a new independent mental health information line for people in Cumbria.

The information line is hosted and run by staff at Cumbria and Eden Mind. People from across Cumbria are welcome to use *Mindline Cumbria* when they need help with understanding mental health issues and finding out where they can find help.

When and how you can access Mindline Cumbria

You can contact *Mindline Cumbria* Monday – Friday from 12 noon to 5pm.

You can contact us by telephone 0300 561 0000 and e-mail info@mindlinecumbria.org

What we do

Provide individuals with a listening ear.

Provide independent mental health information and signposting.

Who can contact Mindline Cumbria?

Anyone who has questions about mental health issues and services.

People experiencing mental health problems.

Carers, family and friends of people experiencing mental health issues.

Who staffs Mindline Cumbria?

Mindline Cumbria is remotely situated. It is staffed by vetted call handlers who receive regular supervision and training.

Will you help in a crisis?

Call handlers can respond to individuals in crisis. We can listen and try to calm the situation. If necessary we will refer the individual to another service or contact another service on their behalf.

Will you help in an emergency?

We are not an emergency service but when required Mind will use a crisis pathway which may involve calling the emergency services to respond to a caller's need.

Are calls recorded?

Calls are recorded and used for training purposes only.

Are calls free?

No. They calls are charged at the rate set by the caller's service provider.

What about confidentiality?

Mind encourages all callers to self-manage how they use the service. *Mindline Cumbria* is a confidential service, we want callers to feel safe when they talk to us. We would only need to share what callers tell us with someone if:

- The caller asks us to get help because they can't do this for themselves.
- We believe someone else is at risk of serious harm.
- We are told about acts of terrorism or bomb warnings.
- A caller is under 18 and we think they are at risk of serious harm.
- A caller is over 18 and has told us their name and where they are, and we think they are at risk of serious harm.

What about complaints and compliments?

We welcome all feedback and will, when appropriate, seek some feedback from callers during their call to establish how helpful the service has been. Mind has a complaint procedure which can be requested by callers.

How we monitor the service

We provide regular reports to the Trustees. The content of the report covers number of calls per month, times calls are received, the issues discussed and the outcome of the call. Where possible the age range, gender and ethnicity of the callers is also gathered.

Future developments

We will be launching a new website soon and with that a facility for on-line web-chat. On-line web-chat is for where individuals can speak to a call handler virtually. This range of approaches is to enable people with mental health needs to be able to speak to us at a time and in a way that suits their needs. As the service develops the helpline hours will be extended to cover evenings.

How you can help us

We would appreciate it if you would spread the word that *Mindline Cumbria* is open for business. Feel free to forward this information to your networks. We have built up a database of information about mental health services and other resources across Cumbria and beyond. If you know of any new services or have questions about the new information line then do contact Kay Steven, Coordinator on kay.steven@cemind.org or phone 01228 543354

Carlisle Eden Mind

49 Bank Street

Carlisle CA3 8HJ

Charity No. 1113649

Company No. 5689607

Contact us

Tel: 01228 543354

Web: www.cemind.org

E-mail: enquiries@cemind.org

Facebook: Carlisle Eden Mind

CAN TRAINING PROGRAMME

funded by



Course Title: Dealing with Debt

Trainer: Jeff Brown, Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)

Date: Tuesday 5th and Wednesday 6th July 2016

Time: 10:00am – 4.30pm (registration from 9.45am)

Venue: Penrith Methodist Church

Places Available: 20

This essential two day course is a practical introductory level course for those advising or supporting clients with debt and money problems. It provides a perfect foundation for those new to money advice and to those for whom money advice forms part of their role, for example, those working in housing, benefits or community work. A free copy of CPAG's Debt Advice Handbook (11th edition) comes as part of the course.

The course covers:

- Causes of debt and its effects on clients
- The four key steps of the money advice process
- Working out a personal budget (financial statement)
- Maximising income and analysing expenditure
- Dealing with priority debts and non-priority debts
- The range of credit products and how to deal with them
- Typical debt collection processes used by creditors
- Debt strategies and solutions including bankruptcy, IVAs and debt relief orders
- Dealing with court action (county court judgments) and enforcement

Course level

Introductory – for people new to money advice work, or who have little or no experience of the subject covered by the course.

CAN TRAINING PROGRAMME

Course Title: Benefits for Young People

Trainer: Steve Johnson, Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)

Date: Wednesday 13th July 2016

Time: 10:00am – 4.30pm (registration from 9.45am)

Venue: Penrith Leisure Centre

Places Available: 20

This course will help advisers, social services staff, housing workers, youth and education workers and anyone advising young people to get to grips with the complex and changing benefit rules relating to young people.

The course looks at how the benefits system applies to young people particularly those aged 16–21.

The course covers:

- Income support and employment and support allowance
- Jobseeker's allowance (including severe hardship and sanctions) and housing benefit
- Housing benefit rules relevant to young people (including the pending cuts for 18 to 21 year olds)
- What the introduction of universal credit and other welfare reforms will mean for young people
- The benefit entitlement of those in particular situations, such as disabled young people, looked-after children and care-leavers, workers and apprentices, people on training courses and in further education, those who are pregnant and lone parents, and those living away from their parents

Course level

Standard – for people with a working knowledge of the benefits system, or the subject covered by the course. These courses are suitable for people wanting a refresher, or to update skills or information.

CAN TRAINING PROGRAMME

Course Title: Mental Health and Benefits

Trainer: Essie Rashidschi, Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)

Date: Wednesday 14th September 2016

Time: 10:00am – 4.30pm (registration from 9.45am)

Venue: Penrith Methodist Church

Places Available: 20

This course provides a practical and tactical look at working with people with mental health diagnoses to help secure full entitlement to benefits, and to help avoid some of the pitfalls of the system.

The course includes:

- Common diagnoses, symptoms, medication and side-effects
- Barriers to people getting the right entitlement
- Personal independence payment in a mental health context
- Medical tests for employment and support allowance and universal credit
- Tactics for dealing with other benefit issues
- A working knowledge of the benefits system is assumed.

Course level

Standard – for people with a working knowledge of the benefits system, or the subject covered by the course. These courses are suitable for people wanting a refresher, or to update skills or information.

CAN TRAINING PROGRAMME

Course Title: Tax Credits: Dealing with Delays

Trainer: Steve Johnson, Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)

Date: Tuesday 11th October 2016

Time: 10:00am – 4.30pm (registration from 9.45am)

Venue: Eden Rural Foyer, Penrith

Places Available: 20

This course looks at the legal and practical issues faced in trying to resolve issues of delay when advising benefit and tax credit claimants. The problem of delay can occur at all stages of a case:

- Where a claim has been made and a decision is awaited
- Where an award has been made but payment is not made
- Waiting for assessment to see which group an ESA claimant should be in
- Waiting for a revision or supersession request to be dealt with
- Waiting for an appeal to be heard and the tribunal decision put into payment

Unlike many areas welfare rights advisers deal with, problems with delay in all these situations share the common feature that there is no wrong decision which can be challenged. However, there are legal and practical remedies that can get things done speedily- these vary dependent on where the delay occurs within this system.

This course aims to look at the different methods of resolving issues with delay in the above areas and includes details and examples of the use of the threat of judicial review, complaints procedures and tribunal procedure rules to resolve delay.

Course level

Standard – for people with a working knowledge of the benefits system, or the subject covered by the course. These courses are suitable for people wanting a refresher, or to update skills or information.

CAN TRAINING PROGRAMME

How do I book a place?

By completing the booking form under the training section on our website and returning it to **cumbriaadvicenetwork@outlook.com** Places on our courses are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

How are places allocated?

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis and a maximum of two places per organisation can be booked (unless otherwise stated). If you have more than two people wanting to attend please let us know and we will contact you if places become available.

Is the course suitable for me ?

We are keen to ensure that CAN members get the maximum benefit from our courses. We include details of the level of experience required for all our courses. If you would like further information, please contact Maria via the email address above.

What is the cost?

Places on our courses are **FREE** to network members. When completing the booking form please remember to state your training number (available from your Network Champion). A £50.00 charge will be made for non attendance or cancellation without 48 hours notice.

Whilst CAN training events will remain free for delegates to attend, we are a charity and it costs £1,200 per day for us to put on a course. Donations towards attendance and refreshments will be welcome – our suggested donation amount is £20 to £25 but this is not mandatory. Any income will go back into the training budget to provide more courses. Cheques made payable to Cumbria Advice Network. A donation box will be available on the day.

If you have a training requirement, or offer training which you think will be valuable to CAN members, please email Maria, maria.hewitt@hotmail.co.uk

Keep in Touch

If you would like to know more about any aspect of CAN just let us know by contacting your local champion

- Allerdale:** Maria Hewitt 01900 604735 maria.hewitt@hotmail.co.uk
- Barrow:** Helen Robinson 01229 830367 rumelon1@yahoo.co.uk
- Carlisle:** Margie Cooper 01228 633909 highrowresearch@aol.com
- Copeland:** Maria Hewitt 01900 604735 maria.hewitt@hotmail.co.uk
- Eden:** Margie Cooper 01228 633909 highrowresearch@aol.com
- South Lakes:** Helen Robinson 01229 830367 rumelon1@yahoo.co.uk
- County:** Mandy Beinder 01900 604735 mandybeinder@hotmail.com



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