



Board of Directors

Subject	Chair's Report
Date of meeting	20 th July 2020
Author	Jonathan Wells
Purpose	For Discussion

1. Summary.

The extraordinary impact of Covid 19 continues to be felt by our team as well as, more importantly, people with mental health conditions and their families. I have been especially keen in the acute phase of the crisis that we should be creative and supportive of each other so that we can ensure no lessening of our impact even when we are seeing fewer people in person.

As shown by our data set, we have been successful in our targets including engaging with more than our target number of people with mental health and/or substance misuse conditions in the past quarter.

It is particularly encouraging that in the past three months we have managed to take advantage of a “refresh” of the Clinical Commissioning Groups Mental Health planning structure, and now have the opportunity to strengthen significantly the voice of service users and carers at this level. We have had great encouragement to do this from senior NHS leaders and I look forward to us progressing this work and showing more impact in the rest of the year.

The SUN Network has been able to lead this progress because it is experienced, confident and respected as a local “voice” organisation. This benefits above all those who engage with us. It also helps smaller such organisations locally make sure they are increasingly heard, and consolidates our position with partner agencies.

2. Achievements.

In Quarter 1 the main achievements that I would like to highlight are as follows:

- We have produced a powerful quarterly report on people's experience of Primary Care Mental Health Services, which includes benchmarking of these latest results against previous reports. This shows a negative downward trend in people's satisfaction with the service as it struggles to provide meaningful interventions given the considerable number of referrals it receives. We are currently working with CPFT (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust) to help them generate a set of actions in response to the report.



- The strategic groups convened by the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) have met more frequently since Covid. We have increased the presence of not only The SUN Network but more importantly people with lived experience of mental health conditions and/or substance misuse issues themselves at these forums, and supported them through the process so that their contributions are as effective as possible. In my various roles I am usually present at these virtual meetings myself, so I have seen first-hand the greater impact we are making. These groups are the Mental Health All Age Delivery Group, the Mental Health All Age Crisis Covid Response Group, the Community Mental Health Covid Response Group and the Co-production Collaborative Group of which Lois is the vice-chair.

3. Challenges.

These do not always change significantly from one quarter to the next. They include:

- Maximising our impact with partner agencies. There are always many factors that can get in the way of the feedback we provide being taken fully on board to make service improvements. We continue to look hard at our own practices and to use a variety of ways to strengthen working relationships so that service developments are more fully informed by what those who use them have to say.
- Although we are a small organisation, we still need robust governance arrangements. In the past quarter we have strengthened some of our internal processes such as annual appraisals, which have been used to identify training needs for all staff and to seek their ideas for our own service improvement. We have put considerable effort in to strengthening the Board, without success so far.

4. Conclusion.

I am very grateful to all colleagues at The SUN Network – above all, Lois – for their dedication to the important work that we do, over the past three months. I am encouraged by the strong working relationships we now have in place with the vast majority of partner agencies, on which we will build.