



Board of Directors

subject	Chair's Report
Date of meeting	14/10/2019
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purpose	For Discussion

1. Summary.

This brief report outlines achievements and challenges (both internal and external) for us at present, from my point of view.

2. Achievements.

In Quarter 2 the main achievements that I would like to highlight are as follows:

- We have had a significant impact in making sure that the voices of people with mental health conditions are heard by key local commissioners this summer, especially around the successful bid for £1.8M per year new funding to significantly improve community mental health services, starting in Peterborough. We know we will be fully part of the work to implement these changes, having made sure that what co-production means is clearly articulated in the Senior Leaders Group and stated, using our wording in the terms of reference
- Less directly, I believe our feedback has also shaped the priorities for improving crisis mental health services. As a member of the local Crisis Care Concordat, we were very much encouraged to learn of the new investment of £600K into these services, which will include increased capacity to actually intervene constructively over a period of weeks to support people through a crisis rather than just responding on one day
- We are now routinely involved by the local authorities to make sure that service users have a voice within the formal tendering process. In the coming quarter we are organising carer engagement in the process of tendering for carer support services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- I believe our profile is now higher than it was across both substance misuse services and mental health, for example through closer joint working towards shared goals with Healthwatch. If voice organisations manage to say the same things loudly and clearly they are more likely to be heard than if they operate in isolation
- We have finally got an agreed memorandum of understanding with CPFT, which will help us if future joint projects encounter problems



3. Challenges.

Within the organisation, these include:

- Problems In delivering reports on the service user or seeker's experience that are as big and powerful as possible. Our findings on people's experiences of being assessed by the CPFT Locality Teams in Peterborough and Fenland, chosen as a subject because of the known pressures on this part of the service, were weaker than we would have liked mainly because of difficulties in receiving contact details of "consenting" patients from CPFT colleagues
- As part of our continued promotion of true co-production as essential to service development, I believe we need to continually improve our expertise and our ways of sharing it, so that we are more effective influencers. There is more we can do in our small team to develop our professional skills in engagement and quality improvement - both through training opportunities and through learning from agencies with a similar remit elsewhere

Outside the organisation, challenges include:

- The ongoing massive financial pressures on our local health and social care economy, with the collective local NHS total deficit recently stated as £181M. In June the Governing Body of the CCG came close to agreeing significant cuts to a range of small voluntary organisations. Whilst we were not on the "hit list" and most of the proposals are now subject to further review, this needs to act as an extra incentive to small organisations such as ourselves to make ourselves indispensable
- Our impact is dependent, at least in part, on the quality of our joint working . We need to continue to enhance our reputation and nurture close, well informed working relationships with key partners.

4. Conclusion.

I am very grateful to all colleagues at The SUN Network for their dedication to the important work that we do, over the past three months.