

Listening Volunteers Meeting
27 Feb 2024

Present – Jack, Reuben, Luna
Introductions + pronouns

Presentation – Reuben Davidson – Social Prescribing

- Reuben spoke about his involvement in Switchboard's Trans and Non-Binary Link Service, which provides 1-to-1 support with TNBI community members; this might be assisting with Gender Recognition forms, name changes, or signposting to additional services that can provide support such as the Clare Project, WellBN's trans services, or domestic abuse charities throughout the city; **whilst this service is not currently accepting new referrals, Reuben is more than happy for you to pass on his details to provide one-off guidance to individuals**



- Reuben's other job is to facilitate the International Rainbow Inclusion Service (IRIS). This is a weekly group open to LGBTQ+ people with a Migrant, Refugee or Asylum Seeker (MRAS) background; this is currently doing really well and the most recent group had 11 attendees. **For this project Reuben is accepting referrals so if volunteers identify anyone to use this service please link them in**

Rest of meeting

Message from Chris: Sorry I cannot be here this evening. I wanted to congratulate all the new volunteers who have completed their first shifts – you've all been amazing! Thank you also to all the existing volunteers who have jumped in and supported / trained new people on all the procedural stuff. I'm really grateful that I can be confident the new volunteers are in good hands.

It's also very encouraging to see the calendar so full.

Social Events: Thank you to Franc & Lucy for volunteering to organise more social events for volunteers. We can still use one or two more to share the load.

The first event will be a gathering at the Actors at 8pm on 27th March, after the next volunteer meeting. Although it would be lovely to see a huge turnout at the volunteer meeting, please note that the event is not conditional on attendance. We completely understand that some people cannot make a meeting early in the evening.

Care Plans: Request to those who deal with individuals regularly to review the care plans if there has been significant progress or change in situations.

Requests for future volunteer meetings: Is there something you'd like to see at meetings or some specific training you could use?

- More biscuits!

Check In: How is everyone? Any feedback from new volunteers? Challenges in general?

Group discussion

- The new volunteers are enjoying getting into their roles, meeting other volunteers and adjusting to the regular callers – and they all seem to have been shadowed by Sammy!
- We spoke about sexualised calls and how to deal with them
 - We spoke about the importance of maintaining your own boundaries and checking in with what you feel most comfortable dealing with; do not be afraid to terminate a call if you have tried to steer the conversation on and the person seems to be taking sexual gratification in the call
- We spoke about various strategies for debriefing after a shift, to help ensure that you are not taking calls home with you and thinking about them outside of work
 - Volunteers spoke about the importance of working with others in the office, and the difference this can make compared to working at home – other volunteers are there to discuss difficult calls with
 - One member spoke about their walk home being an important opportunity to mentally debrief and create that separation between work and home life
- We also spoke about the importance of 1-to-1 supervision
 - One volunteer described the benefit they saw with booking 1-to-1 supervision, which offered a space for them to discuss particularly difficult calls that they had
 - Volunteers are encouraged to get in touch with Chris to book a session with a supervisor if they have anything they would like to discuss or unpick
- One volunteer spoke about the insight she gained during her first session from watching the other two more experienced volunteers; each volunteer handled their calls very well and this has helped the new volunteer to make notes of any strategies that will come in useful at future shifts
- We spoke about a new regular service user for whom volunteers have had to contact emergency services for on multiple occasions; staff explained that this service user will have their own care plan written up if this hasn't been done already