



Newsletter
27th February 2019

LAUNCH OF
PEER SUPPORT
NETWORK
FOR CEREDIGION

01970 626225
07958788172
rob@mindaberystwyth
.org
Facebook – Side by
Side Cymru

Peer support in your community

Mind Aberystwyth recently launched Side by Side Cymru, a Peer Support Network in Ceredigion.

In a room filled by organisations from across Ceredigion, we showcased some of the existing peer support activity and explored the opportunities available for community-based organisations and individuals to take part in networking, shared learning workshops and to apply for grant funding of up to £250. Peer support is when people use their own experiences to help each other. This can be through a group, one to one or online and may involve activities such as crafts, walking or meeting for coffee.

Mind Aberystwyth's CEO Greg Thomas believes that "Side by Side Cymru is an exciting new departure for Mind Aberystwyth from our traditional areas of support delivery and therapeutic interventions and an exciting time for our beneficiaries and partners."



Pictured: Mind Cymru project lead Rachel Wyatt and Mind Aberystwyth CEO Greg Thomas

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Mind Cymru's project lead Rachel Wyatt believes that "Side by Side Cymru will improve the wellbeing of anyone who has a mental health issue, by encouraging them to come together with those who have had similar experiences.

"It will increase people's access to peer support in the community whilst supporting organisations and individuals to initiate or develop peer support activity."



Project lead Rachel Wyatt introduces the initiative

After an introductory presentation by Rachel, there were talks by peer support advocates Harry Harrison and Rachel Tyler on their experiences of the many ways people could benefit from this type of interaction.

Attendees were then asked to share their understanding and experience of peer support, and their hopes for the new network. A variety of themes and topics were requested, including the importance of communication: practical advice for signposting; the use of social media; how to be safe and feel safe; leadership and ownership; and what to do if things go wrong. As a direct result of the launch, the next networking events will include items on setting up a peer support group and how to sustain a group long term.

Rob Allen, our Project Worker, also announced that Mind Aberystwyth is now accepting grant applications from network members, and that the first panel meeting will take place on Tuesday 26th of March. Any members wishing to submit an application will need to do so by 5pm, Friday 22nd March.

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Tyler gave examples of peer support in action

Of those attendees who completed evaluation forms, 100% said they had found the event useful.

Attendees commented that they enjoyed the "opportunities to network" and the "stories of practical peer support". They also expressed that the presentations were "easy to understand", there was a "variety of information" on offer and that the event was "really relevant to the future of our organisation in Ceredigion".



Project Worker Rob Allen co-ordinated the event

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Attendees also commented that attending the event will support them in the future by providing "ongoing training and support for our peer support groups....through the learning events.....and could help kick start several peer support groups"

One attendee noted that they would have a "lot of involvement" in Side by Side Cymru and another that they would be "be able to signpost to the project and refer groups and people to it".

How You Can Join Side by Side Cymru

Side by Side Cymru is open for business! Check out the Mind Aberystwyth website and Facebook pages to download the paperwork, in English or Cymraeg.

If you are a member of, or run, a peer support group in the community, or are interested in setting one up, contact our Project Worker, Rob Allen – rob@mindaberystwyth.org

NETWORKING EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

3pm to 5pm, Wednesday 20th March in the Radley Room, Guildhall, Cardigan

6pm to 8pm, Thursday 21st March at the Victoria Hall, Lampeter

If you are receiving this electronic newsletter and no longer wish to do so please contact Mind Aberystwyth on 01970 626225 or info@mindaberystwyth.org

