

## **Community JSNA**

### **People with Learning Disabilities 2019**

#### **Project summary**

##### **Background**

The Community JSNA team at CVS Cheshire East was asked by commissioners at South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Cheshire East Council (CEC) to undertake engagement work with local community groups to examine the support local voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) organisations are providing to people with learning disabilities.

The purpose of this project is to better understand the nature, content, and delivery of existing VCFS support services, and to identify any gaps in provision and opportunities for improvement. The findings from this project will support commissioners in their decision-making and it is hoped that this work will also support the implementation of Cheshire East Council's Learning Disability Strategy. The data will be integrated within the full Cheshire East JSNA as appropriate.

##### **Aims and objectives**

###### *Aim*

To better understand the nature, scope, and reach of the support VCFS organisations are providing to people with learning disabilities (and their families and carers) in Cheshire East.

###### *Objectives*

- Generate intelligence on the nature and content of the support services local VCFS organisations are providing to people with learning disabilities living in Cheshire East.
- Examine how VCFS providers understand and develop their services to meet the needs of people with learning disabilities.
- Identify and understand any duplication and/or gaps in this provision and determine how well needs are being met.
- Understand the capacity and delivery of VCFS support services.
- Identify opportunities for improvement.

###### *Scope*

The Community JSNA People with Learning Disabilities Project reviewed VCFS services offered to people with learning disabilities who seek support in Cheshire East. This included people with autism who also have a learning disability.

The project aimed to review VCFS services for all ages but focused on those aimed at people with learning disabilities aged 14+.

The review covered all types of support, including community respite/short break support.

The project sought to engage with two types of VCFS service provider:

- Organisations whose services are commissioned (e.g. by Cheshire East Council and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups)
- Organisations that are operating independently.

The relevant VCFS providers were identified via the CVS database, existing commissioning contracts and desk research.

### **Research design and rationale**

The project focused on the provision of VCFS services in Cheshire East in order to further understanding of what is available, what is missing, and what might improve delivery of these services to residents with learning disabilities. To achieve this, the project comprised three strands: a review of existing literature and secondary data sources; an analysis of the types of support VCFS organisations are providing; an analysis of VCFS providers' working practices and their experiences delivering support services in the region.

In focusing on the experiences of service providers, the project did not seek to generate new data on the experiences of service users but drew on existing data on the needs and preferences of people with learning disabilities to inform analysis of the data generated on service provision and the development of the topic guides that structured discussions with VCFS providers. Providers were also invited to share their own observations regarding gaps in provision.

#### *Review of the literature and secondary data sources*

A review of existing research and secondary data sources informed the research design and analysis and reporting of the data generated by the interviews, evaluation of gaps in provision, and recommendations regarding opportunities for improvement.

It also facilitated evaluation of the scope and limitations of the Community JSNA data, ensuring claims made in the report are reliable and accompanied by caveats where necessary.

Secondary sources included:

- Surveys of people with learning disabilities and the professionals that support them (e.g. Personal Social Services Adult Social Care Survey, 2018).
- National policy publications and official statistics (e.g. published by the Department of Health and Social Care; NICE; Public Health England; ONS).
- Local policy publications and official statistics (e.g. CEC Learning Disabilities Strategy, 2018-2022; Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information – PANSI)

- Relevant academic studies (e.g. exploring the views and experiences of people with learning disabilities; reviewing supported employment programmes; examining the experiences of VCFS service providers).
- Accounts from service providers that included a review of their activities and reach (e.g. Mencap annual reports).
- Relevant examples of best practice or alternative models of VCFS support (e.g. VCFS support for people with learning disabilities in other regions).

The project liaised with Public Health Intelligence team at Cheshire East Council to identify data on the size and composition of the population of people with learning disabilities in Cheshire East. This data included estimates on the number of people with learning disabilities residing in Cheshire East, their housing and employment circumstances, and the number of children with learning disabilities attending local schools. Due to the nature of the available data, these figures are estimates of the numbers of people with learning disabilities who are known to local services (e.g. GPs), which means they are likely to underestimate the number of people with learning disabilities in Cheshire East.

#### *Analysis of the types of support VCFS organisations are providing*

In order to map VCFS service provision across Cheshire East, the project generated and collated data on the nature and content of the support delivered by VCFS providers operating within Cheshire East. This data was analysed (e.g. by geographical location and reach) to identify any duplication or gaps in service provision across the region (e.g. by type of support).

#### *Analysis of VCFS providers' working practices and their experiences delivering support services*

VCFS service providers were invited to participate in semi-structured qualitative interviews focusing on the design and delivery of their service. Topics included: development of provision; capacity of services; barriers to access; challenges in delivering services and meeting needs; partnership working; communicating services.

Analysis of the data generated through the interviews contributed to the identification of gaps in service provision, understanding of the capacity, content and delivery of VCFS support services, and the identification of opportunities for improvement.

Representatives from twenty-three VCFS services participated in face-to-face qualitative interviews. Interviews lasted, on average, around an hour and ten minutes each. One additional provider submitted details of their service via email.

### **Outputs and recommendations**

The project report focused on key findings, gaps in provision and opportunities for improvement.

The project also mapped provision across the region, producing a series of asset maps and a table offering a comprehensive summary of the services delivered by each VCFS provider.

Recommended opportunities for improvement were discussed with the commissioner with responsibility for learning disabilities at Cheshire East Council. They were also shared with the lead commissioner for learning disabilities at South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group. The findings and recommendations were shared with all VCFS contributors for comment prior to publication.

### **Ethical practice**

The research was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the ethical practice guidelines compiled by the Social Research Association.

### **Partners**

We would like to thank the following organisations for the valuable contribution they made to this project and its recommendations.

- Aquarius swimming club
- Autism Networks
- Bren Project
- Central Cheshire Buddies
- Cheshire Centre for Independent Living (CCIL)
- Cheshire Arts for Health
- Cheshire Autism Practical Support (CHAPS)
- Cheshire Down's Syndrome Support Group
- Disability Information Bureau
- Friends for Leisure
- Grozone
- Knutsford Grow
- Macclesfield Community Garden Centre
- Pathways CIC
- Petty Pool
- Rossendale Trust
- Ruby's Fund
- SCB Special Needs
- Seahorse swimming club
- Space4Autism
- Speaking Up Speaking Out (SUSO)
- Time Out Group
- Wingate Centre
- Wishing Well

