

Connect & Change

2017/18 Impact Report

**SECOND
STEP**

PUTTING MENTAL HEALTH FIRST

Making our connections count

Our experience of supporting people with mental health problems has taught us the value of making strong connections. So often the clients we support come to us with very few or no connections. They may have no home, no family, no purpose, no place in their community.

We recognise the importance of making our connections count; with our clients primarily, but also with our staff, our volunteers and our partners and on to like-minded organisations and our communities.

This Impact Report shows some of the highlights in the 12 months from April 2017 to March 2018. As you'll see from the following commentary, our work is all about connections and how vital they are.

By making the right connections and making sure they are strong, we believe we can achieve change – with our clients and in our communities.

From Emma's story on page 8 about finding hope again in the Community Rehabilitation Service, to Andrew's journey from psychiatric hospital to finding a new life on page 15, every page of this report gives you an insight into the work we do and the connections we make.

As you can see our work is as wide-ranging as our clients are diverse. There are three things, however, we have been concentrating on and continue to view as our priorities. These are:

- Helping the NHS to do things **differently** by working with them to reconnect people with the hope and courage they need to make real changes in their lives

- Finding new solutions to the housing crisis by working innovatively with people and organisations to **tackle homelessness once and for all**
- Combating isolation with our clients and our communities by **putting mental health first.**

Thank you for taking time to read this report. If you'd like to find out more please visit our website at **second-step.co.uk**.



Aileen Edwards
Chief Executive Officer
aileen.edwards@second-step.co.uk



10% of frontline staff are peers*

*approximately

Changing Together

Peer support staff are employed because of their personal experience of mental health specifically to work with clients from an empathetic and experienced point of view.

Peer staff work alongside professional support staff to offer clients a different perspective which clients find invaluable.

Second Step led the way in recognising the importance of peer support, setting up its peer support service nine years ago in 2009. Again and again we hear about the power of peer work and the good it can do.

One of our peer workers, Dana, explains why peer support is so effective:

“In my work, I share my own experience with drug and alcohol and mental health issues and I find it really powerful.

When I’m attending an assessment with a client, they will often say: ‘you have no idea how I feel’ and at that moment I can turn to them and reply: ‘Well, actually I do. I’ve been in your situation, and I’ve come through it’ and immediately the barriers are down and the relationship changes and we can build trust.

Peer work is a two-way thing: I learn from my clients just as much as they learn from me. When I attend a group with a client, such as an exercise class, I often learn something new that helps me in my own recovery. I share my experience to empower my clients. But the more I give, the more I get back.”



Talking to Connect

Our Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service in Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset, is called Positive Step.

Last year Positive Step worked with 3,794 clients offering them psychological support based on the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) either one to one or in groups.

An impressive 53% of clients made significant strides in their recovery according to our assessment evaluation which is taken at each session. This is higher than the national average. Clients felt the sessions had helped give them the insight and the tools to change the way they felt about themselves and their circumstances.

One group we run in collaboration with Children's Centres, called the Keeping Well group, worked with a number of

mums to help tackle isolation and develop ways to help improve mood and increase confidence.

Running over seven weeks the group of mums found the sessions to be a safe place to share, felt they learnt a lot and also really started to bond as a group.

One mum said:

"The course addressed and understood my exact symptoms. I was made to feel comfortable and any questions I had were explored in a way that made sense. It has been an invaluable service. Before the course I had no idea what was happening to me."

53%

of clients saw their mental health improve

Connect to hope

The Community Rehabilitation Service helps people achieve their hopes and goals, and gain the skills and confidence they need to live as independently as possible.

Last year we worked with 162 clients from Bristol with complex mental health problems. Of these, 53% were discharged from the service into primary care and their GP. This is an extremely positive result when you consider many clients have been using secondary mental health services (hospitals and specialists) for many years.

We're proud of the amazing changes our clients have made in their lives. It's testament to their self-belief and resilience, coupled with the highly committed and professional team around them. This is the story of one of our clients called Emma.

"When I first came to the service, life was a cycle of perpetual crisis. I'd bounced in and out of secondary mental health care for 13 years. I was entirely isolated and my life felt futile.

Today I look back and realise the service empowered me to find the strength, courage and resilience to achieve a better quality of life than I could have dared dream possible. I'm now:

- **doing regular permitted work to represent Second Step clients**
- **volunteering to help run wellbeing sessions**
- **free from my old habit of self-harming**
- **no longer using alcohol to block out distress**
- **free from all my eating disorders**
- **off medication that posed serious risks to my physical health**
- **discharged to my GP**

For the first time for such a long time I feel confident that my mental health difficulties bring with them hope and the real possibility of achievement, rather than a lifetime of heavy-duty medication and low mood.

Recovery isn't about finding a magic cure, but achieving a realistic balance. I've accepted a lot in order to change my lifestyle and reduce the risk of more episodes while making huge strides in my wellbeing that mean I'm less vulnerable. I'm finally living rather than just surviving."

The Community Rehabilitation Service is led by Second Step with its partners Avon and Wiltshire NHS Partnership Trust and mental health organisation Missing Link.



53%

of clients are discharged to their GPs



94%

of learners were satisfied or very satisfied with the Wellbeing College courses

Connect & Learn



Bristol Wellbeing College enrolled 901 learners last year and an impressive 94% of them said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience.

The College runs a number of courses throughout the year in venues across the city, from building resilience to mindfulness and telling your story. The courses are free and are open to carers and to anyone using Bristol Mental Health Services.

One learner, RR, enrolled and completed our Peer Support Course saying it helped her connect with others, learn new skills and helped her own recovery.

"I've been unwell over the last few years and have lost a lot of confidence. The course tutor understood my specific learning needs. She gave me a timetable in advance of the session

and supported me when I felt upset. A phone call with her was key in enabling me to continue the course despite my fears.

This is the first group learning course I have been able to complete, having previously dropped out of courses due to my difficulties. I found the format of the group really supportive and having the opportunity to practice the skills was really useful. The course tutor was always open to our questions, and the sharing of her knowledge and personal experiences added to the impact of the learning material.

Receiving the certificate at the end made me feel I have achieved something personally. In the future I intend to set up a peer support group in my community."



**BRISTOL
WELLBEING
COLLEGE**

Complex Connections

The Golden Key Programme works in partnership with organisations across Bristol to find better ways to support people with complex needs.

Now in its fourth year, Golden Key is working with hugely complex issues; a mix of mental health difficulties, alcohol and/or drug dependency, homelessness and involvement with the criminal justice system. And yet 60% of our clients are now in stable housing and 90% remain free from criminal convictions.

During the last 12 months the programme delivered two important pilots:

1 Winter Pressures

This pilot worked with overstretched A&E departments during the winter by supporting

people with complex needs who use A&E a lot, therefore relieving pressure on the service. As well as frequently visiting A&E, with Golden Key support, the number of times people were admitted to hospital went down; and when they were admitted, they spent less time in hospital. They also experienced less chaos in their lives.

The pilot highlighted the gap in support when people are discharged from hospital. Golden Key is working with commissioners to ensure that the gap is closed.

2 Housing First

Set up in 2018, Golden Key is delivering the Housing First pilot with Bristol City Council and housing associations. By July 2018, three of Golden Key's most complex clients had

been housed in their own flats and the longest-term consistent rough sleeper in Bristol has a housing offer.

Housing First is for people who have been homeless for a long time or who repeatedly end up homeless. Clients are offered housing as a first priority, and then given additional intensive support. Housing First is not a quick fix. Finding suitable accommodation for clients and ensuring they are ready to move into their own home takes time. However, Housing First is providing accommodation to people for whom the current system is offering no other long-term options.



**GOLDEN
KEY**

**60% of clients are now
in stable housing**



63% of clients moved on successfully

Connect to move on

Homelessness has risen by 169% nationally since 2010, with 86% of homeless people reporting a mental health problem, according to the charity Homeless Link.

Bristol is facing a housing crisis with more people on the streets than ever before and an unknown number living in unsafe and insecure accommodation.

Second Step works with Places for People, Riverside and St Mungo's in a new and unique partnership to provide better and more consistent support for men and women who are homeless in Bristol. We are the lead agency of this Mixed Pathway partnership. There are three other pathways in Bristol: for men only, women only and people with problems with drugs and alcohol.

Last year, despite working with clients who faced some very complex and challenging problems, collectively we saw 63% move on successfully to new accommodation, mostly in supported housing.

We work with clients to ensure every person has a plan tailored to their needs and aspirations to support them the best we can to find a way out of homelessness. At all times we focus on people's strengths rather than concentrating on potential risks.

Andrew, who lives with schizophrenia and also deals with some chronic physical problems and infections in his legs which severely restrict his mobility, explains:

"Sometimes I can't walk at all because of the combination of the swelling and the infection."

Andrew came to live at our Bristol housing project Toll House Court following a nine month stay in a secure psychiatric unit. He's found solace through music and also has rediscovered his love and aptitude for drawing. He pulled together some past and present work for an exhibition by homeless people in Bristol. He is now looking forward to move into more independent housing.

Listen, Connect & Change

We're proud that nearly three quarters of our services were represented by or had their own involvement groups in 2017/18.

We're determined to ensure that all services have client representation by the end of 2019 and this is a priority for our Service User and Carer Involvement Officer.

Meaningful involvement provides the mechanism for clients to inform us about their experiences, to voice their concerns, shout about their successes and most importantly to work with us to improve the way our services run.

Achievements over the year included:

- Introducing a new feedback system in our Supported Housing service
- Working with staff to develop Second Step's values and culture
- Successfully campaigning for changes to the head office telephone system
- Recruiting a new service user board member
- Working alongside staff on recruitment panels, to writing and delivering training courses for new staff and collaborating on a policy review.

Stuart, a former Second Step client and Chair of the Stepping Forward Group, said:

"Service user involvement has been such a big part my recovery journey. Without being involved I am not sure I would be where I am today. It has given me a voice to help make services better and it has also allowed me to meet and work with some fantastic people."



73%

of our services were represented through our involvement groups

Our Services

Support & Housing

- Community Rehabilitation, Bristol
- Community Support Services, Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire (incorporating My Support and Community Support Accommodation) from April 2018
- Floating Support, North Somerset, ended April 2018
- Floating Support, Bath and North East Somerset
- High Support Accommodation, Bristol
- Supported Housing, Bristol

Health & Wellbeing

- Bristol Ageing Better, Bristol
- Community Mental Health Services, Bristol
- Get Connected, Bristol (volunteering project)
- Golden Key Service Coordinator Team
- Health Link, Bristol (part of Homeless Health Service)
- Hope Suicide Prevention Project, Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire from September 2018
- North Somerset Wellbeing Service from July 2018
- Peer Employability Programme, Bristol
- Positive Step, North Somerset
- United Peers (UP) Project
- Wellbeing Therapies, Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Bristol Wellbeing College

South Gloucestershire Wellbeing College

Golden Key

Second Step is the lead agency of a partnership of 19 organisations: delivering a programme of pilots and innovation, service co-ordinator service, peer mentoring. See more at goldenkeybristol.org.uk

Service User Involvement

Service Improvement Group, Stepping Forward Group & Media Group

Volunteering

 across all services

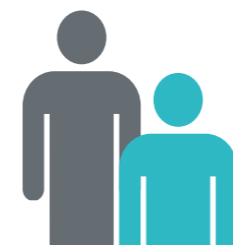
Hope & Courage

We believe that through hope and courage people can achieve change



Innovative:

- our recovery approach
- our peer support team
- our promise to change the system for the better



Strong:

- everything we do improves the experience of our clients
- our belief in our values, hope and courage and recovery, are the bedrock of who we are



Ambitious:

- taking our approach to the NHS
- keeping at cutting edge of new thinking
- exploring new housing solutions



Speaking up for mental health:

- ensuring our clients' voices are heard
- proving how mental health affects wider issues
- influencing the influencers

Future Connections 2018/19

Second Step
9 Brunswick Square
Bristol BS2 8PE
Tel: 0117 909 6630
Email: admin@second-step.co.uk

 **@wearesecondstep**
www.second-step.co.uk

Second Step Bath & North East Somerset
South Vaults
Green Park Station
Bath BA1 1JB
Tel: 01225 750926 / 750927
Email: banesinfo@second-step.co.uk

**SECOND
STEP**
PUTTING MENTAL HEALTH FIRST