

## About North East Wales Mind

North East Wales Mind is a local charity which aims to make sure anyone with a mental health problem has somewhere to turn for advice and support. We're affiliated to the national charity Mind (the National Association for Mental Health), the leading mental health charity in England and Wales.

Mind's vision is of a society that promotes and protects good mental health *for all* and treats people who've experienced mental distress fairly, positively and with respect. Our work is wholly committed to making it possible for people who suffer from mental illnesses or emotional distress to live full lives and play their full part in society. We work across Flintshire and Wrexham.

## Our Services

North East Wales Mind aims to develop services which meet the needs and support the well-being of local people. At the moment these are:

- **An Information Service** offers a wide range of information booklets and there is a small library of books and other publications for loan. Information is also provided on the North East Wales Mind website: [www.newmind.org.uk](http://www.newmind.org.uk). People are able to visit the North East Wales Mind office, or contact staff by telephone or email. Staff also attend community meetings, open days and shows.
- **Social support is delivered through a peer mentoring and volunteering scheme, a Saturday Social Group (drop-in) and events and activities.**

**The Step-up Step-out** volunteering project aims to enable people re-integrate into their communities and make friends by supporting them to get involved in community activities.

The **drop-in** is held between 1pm and 4pm each Saturday and gives access to company, holistic therapies, relaxation sessions, walks, the internet and good company.

Events and activities are held for small groups and range from craft, poetry, drama and art to social activities including meals, cinema and theatre visits and day trips. These services are led by staff and supported by volunteers.

- **Training and Talking Therapies** provides short-term psychological therapies (counselling) and psycho-educational training for people who are experiencing mental distress. Our courses include Stress Management Skills and Mindfulness, A team of in-house and independent therapists support around 400 people each year.

Clients have the option of short-term (6 weeks) talking therapy interventions which we provide as part of the Parabl partnership, or more open ended support provided through our own (fee paying) service.

- **Workplace Wellbeing** supports working people at risk of poor mental health. The aim is to reduce the stigma of mental health problems, share important coping skills, improve understanding of mental health issues and develop support networks in the community.

Foremost in our workplace wellbeing work is the Blue Light Programme, which supports emergency services personnel. We are the North Wales lead for this national project.

We also provide a range of training courses for organisations, including Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST); SafeTALK (suicide alertness training), Mental Health First Aid, mental health awareness and mental health training for line managers.

- **Children and Young People:** This is an expanding area of work. We currently have a Wellbeing Worker supporting Young Parents in Flintshire and Wrexham to improve their own wellbeing and that of their children. One to one and group support is provided, including training such as Enjoy your Baby, WRAP and Five to Thrive.

## Becoming a director of North East Wales Mind

North East Wales Mind welcomes new directors/trustees and is keen to explore how they can put their skills and interests to good use to help local people experiencing mental distress. We also positively encourage and welcome people who have experienced mental distress themselves to become directors. The directors of North East Wales Mind are also the trustees of the charity – they are responsible for running the charity.

### What will I be doing?

The main role of a director is to oversee the running of the organisation and this involves attending board of directors' meetings. Directors can be thought of as guardians of the organisation's best interests and promoters of its aims. The board, with support from the Chief Officer, works to:

- ensure that North East Wales Mind keeps to its core values and meets its **legal duties** (including its duties under company, employment and charity law)
- **steer the organisation and ensure it does what it was set up to do** (they don't get involved in the day-to-day running of the organisation: that's the job of the Chief Officer and staff team).
- discuss and agree the sort of activities the organisation should be carrying out
- discuss and **agree a business plan**, budget and policies
- oversee the implementation of the business plan and budget throughout the year to **check that everything is going to plan and is of high quality**

Some Directors like to get more involved with the organisation for instance by:

- **Joining sub-committees** for a short time to take forward specific issues for example as part of a Finance or Quality Review Team
- Sitting on **recruitment panels** for staff and/or volunteers
- **Attending external meetings** on behalf of North East Wales Mind
- Volunteering by fundraising or helping out at the drop-in

These additional tasks are entirely optional, however many of our Directors find it satisfying to be involved with the organisation in a number of different ways.

### What will I get out of becoming a Director?

The benefits of volunteering – and particularly of becoming a Director – can be **considerable**. Many people make new friends, develop their personal or professional skills, increase their confidence and improve their job prospects. Not only that, but many of our Directors enjoy the fact that they can make a real difference to people who are recovering from mental ill health.

Directors also benefit from regular training, starting with induction training to introduce them to the organisation, its staff and services and continuing with opportunities to take part in specific training from Mental Health First Aid to governance, finance, health and safety, equalities and other relevant subjects.

### How much time is involved?

As a Director you can volunteer as much or as little time as you wish. The minimum we ask is that you regularly attend Board meetings (six per year). Papers are sent out in advance so you can have a chance to read through them.

## Will I get paid?

Our Directors do not get paid, but are entitled to claim expenses in line with North East Wales Mind's Expenses Policy. This includes travel to and from meetings.

## What qualities, attitudes and skills are needed?

The main requirement for Directors of North East Wales Mind is a positive attitude towards people who use mental health services and a commitment to Mind's values and mission. We do not have a firm list of qualities, skills and attitudes needed from each trustee, however some of the things which could be useful are:

- The ability to work as part of a team and to respect the views of others
- The ability to think strategically
- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with a wide range of people
- The ability to treat information confidentially
- To be able to analyse information and challenge it when appropriate
- To be able to make collective decisions and stand by them
- To have enthusiasm and a sense of humour
- To be reliable and act reasonably and responsibly when carrying out tasks
- To understand the purpose of meetings and be committed to preparing for them in advance
- To be committed to the involvement and empowerment of mental health service users through self-help and mutual support

You may also have specific knowledge, skills or experience which could help us in our work. You could have developed these through your family life, work or hobbies/interests. Examples would be:

- First-hand experience of mental illness or of caring for someone with a mental illness
- Business/management experience
- Experience of marketing and promotion or fundraising
- Experience with information or advice services
- Financial accounting or budget management experience
- Personnel or HR experience
- Knowledge of mental health issues, legislation or services
- Knowledge of charity or mental health law
- Knowledge or experience of counselling or other psychological therapies

As well as using the skills and qualities our Directors already have we are keen to work with each member of our board to help them develop new skills.

## Is everyone suitable to become a Director?

Sometimes people may be unsuitable to be a Director under Charity law, for example if:

- They have an unspent conviction involving dishonesty or deception
- They have been declared bankrupt or had their estate sequestered
- They have not yet honoured an agreement to pay their creditors
- They have been removed from being a charity trustee in the past by the Charity Commission, or disqualified from management/Company Directorship under the relevant legislation.

## Applying to become a Director of North East Wales Mind

If you would like to become a Director with North East Wales Mind you should contact the Chief Officer, Jenny Murphy to arrange to drop in for a chat.

Jenny's contact details are below or email [jenny.murphy@newmind.org.uk](mailto:jenny.murphy@newmind.org.uk). This will give us the chance to get to know you a little and give you the chance to find out more about North East Wales Mind and to see if you think you would fit in. You will also have the chance to:

- Visit some of our services to get a feel for what we do
- Meet the staff team
- Come along to a board meeting

If you are still keen to join us you will be asked to complete an application form and attend an interview with some of our trustees.

Finally, if you are successful, we will check your references and co-opt you to our Board. If you will be involved with some of our services we may also need to carry out a Criminal Records (DBS) check. We'll give you an induction to make sure you are comfortable and competent to carry out your role as a Director and we will ask you to sign a declaration showing your eligibility as a Director/trustee.

Although this process may seem a little formal it is designed to make sure that you have all the information you need and that vulnerable people using our services are safeguarded.