



# Impact Report 2022/2023



Break Out Voices, Bristol Temple Meads bucket collection

*"They have granted my leave!!!! I am thrilled it has been a long road but now it's over. I want to thank you for all the help you have given me, I know for a fact that without your assistance we would still be fighting for my immigration status. Thank you is such a little word it doesn't seem anywhere near big enough for all the support and help you have given us in our very dark times. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for getting our lives back."*

- Migrant & Asylum Support Client



*"Because of the mentoring I'm able to say HIV out loud now, which I couldn't even say before. I used to say 'the you know what'. I feel a lot more confident in myself, I don't feel so uptight. That's what's changed."*

- HIV Peer Mentee



Common Ambition Bristol Team



Anti-Stigma March, London

*"Thank you so much for all your time supporting me with all the necessary needs regarding my health, food, and wellbeing. I feel a lot better with your support and you bring me hope that living with HIV is not a death sentence, but a virus like any other."*

- Advice & Support Client





## Vision

A world where people living with HIV and other long-term health conditions live long and healthy lives, free from poverty, stigma, prejudice and discrimination.



## Mission

To enhance the quality of life for people living with HIV and other long-term health conditions.



## Values

- Inclusive
- Respectful
- Non-Judgemental
- Person-Centred
- Responsive



**It's a fact: people living with HIV, who have an undetectable viral load have ZERO risk of transmitting the virus to their sexual partners.**

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## An Overview from our CEO – Rami Ghali

Over the last year, Brigstowe has supported more people than ever. The number of people supported has risen from 273 to 489, which includes individuals who accessed our type 2 diabetes and long COVID services. Many of our HIV clients accessed multiple Brigstowe services.

World events over the last year have been tumultuous. In particular, the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has had a huge impact on our world. Obviously, those most affected are the Ukrainian people, but the cost-of-living crisis has affected people worldwide, especially the most vulnerable.

The cost of living has impacted on people's ability to afford essential household bills. We are therefore very grateful to the Gilead Foundation for continuing to fund our Client Welfare Fund. This fund enabled us to meet the urgent needs of clients in severe financial hardship. These funds are awarded by our Advice and Support Service and our Migrant and Asylum Support Service.

These advice and support services are accredited through the Advice Quality Standard. Our biennial audit took place in March 2023. The auditor was extremely impressed with the quality of advice and how well the organisation is run. He has audited approximately 500 organisations and commented that Brigstowe is amongst the best.

The cost-of-living crisis has also had a big impact on Brigstowe itself. Our expenditure, much of which relates to staff costs, is rising, yet our funding is fixed and, in some cases, coming to an end. We are grateful to those funders who have recognised the precarious situation affecting charities and awarded Brigstowe a cost-of-living rise. We are working hard on fundraising to plug the gap so that we can ensure we continue to hold the equivalent of 3 to 6 months of expenditure in line with our reserves policy. This will ensure the future sustainability of Brigstowe and allow us to continue to provide support to our beneficiaries.

Over the last year, the impact of COVID-19 has eased. However, other viruses and conditions continue to greatly impact many individuals. This year Brigstowe has supported 250 people living with HIV, 141 with long COVID and 98 with type 2 diabetes. The Peer Partnership (the brand for our non-HIV work) now has a comprehensive range of one-to-one and group peer support services

that are transferable to different conditions and situations. We can deliver these services ourselves or provide consultancy to support other organisations to set up services.

Our newer HIV services are making great progress. Common Ambition Bristol (CAB) is a community-powered partnership programme that aims to increase HIV testing and reduce HIV stigma amongst African and Caribbean heritage communities. We're so grateful to our community members and our other partners who make CAB so special. Attendance at our monthly community testing clinic at Charlotte Keel Health Centre is rising steadily along with outreach to barber shops, hairdressers, and other black businesses. More recently, in July 2023, we launched a second monthly clinic hosted by Montpelier Health Centre.

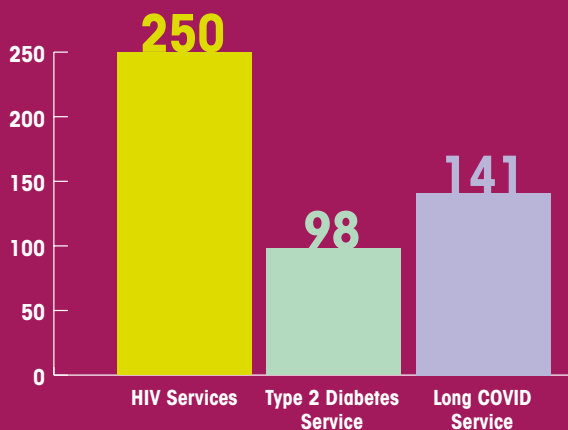
We started an Engagement Support Service in January 2022, working closely with HIV clinicians at Southmead Hospital to support people who are having difficulty engaging with their treatment. We've already seen the difference this service has made with many individuals now taking their medication as prescribed and achieving an undetectable viral load. This will have a hugely positive impact on their health outcomes and means that they can't pass the virus on to sexual partners.

Finally, Brigstowe continues to work hard to achieve its vision: a world in which people living with HIV and other long-term health conditions and protected characteristics live long and healthy lives, free from poverty, stigma, prejudice, and discrimination. We continue to co-chair the stigma workstream for Bristol Fast-Track Cities, raise awareness of HIV through our World AIDS Day programme of events, which also included, for the first time, a two-week billboard and bus stop sign campaign, and, following our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion consultation last year, we have now published our strategy and three-year action plan on our website.

**Rami Ghali**, *Chief Executive Officer*

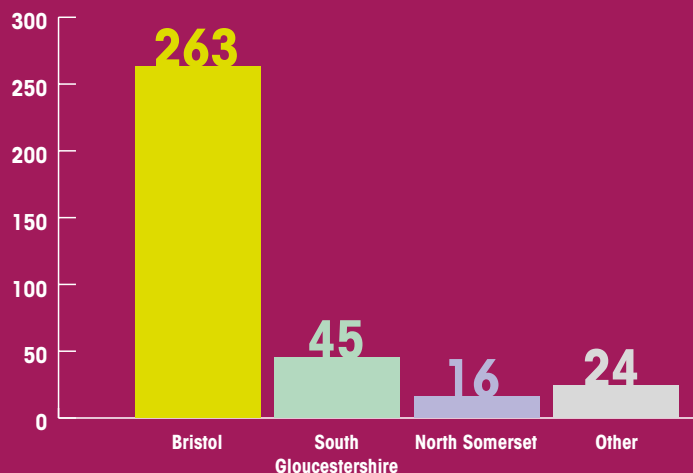
# Who are our Service Users

## Service Accessed

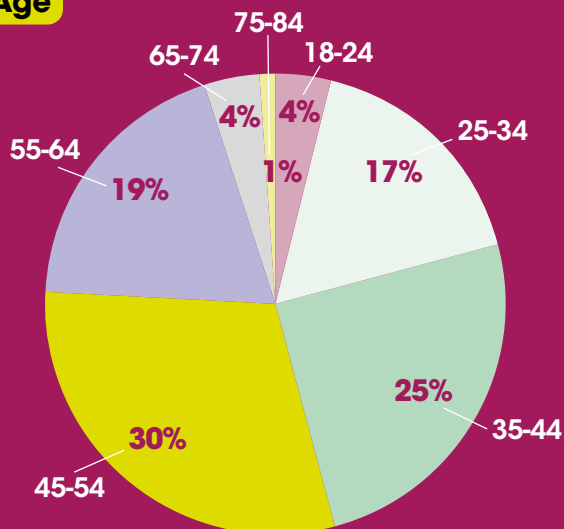


## Where Do They Live?

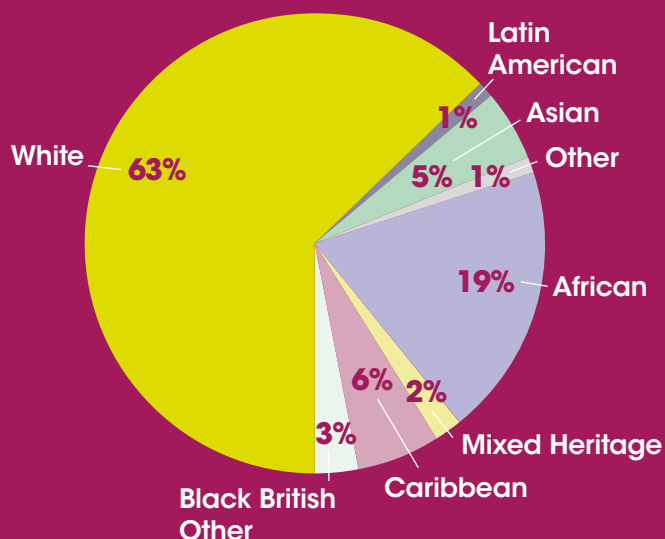
\*Data Not Collected for Long COVID



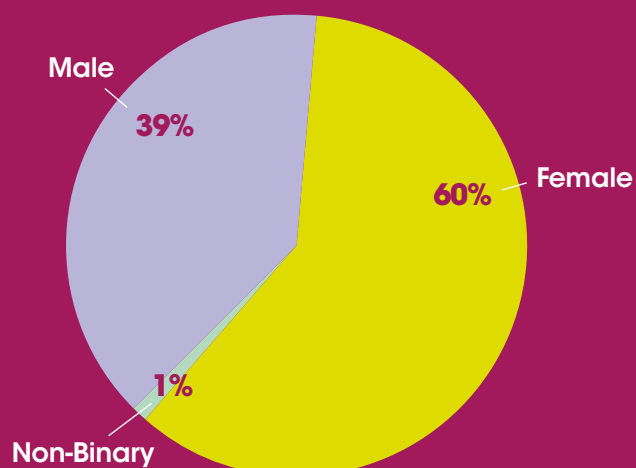
## Age



## Ethnic Group

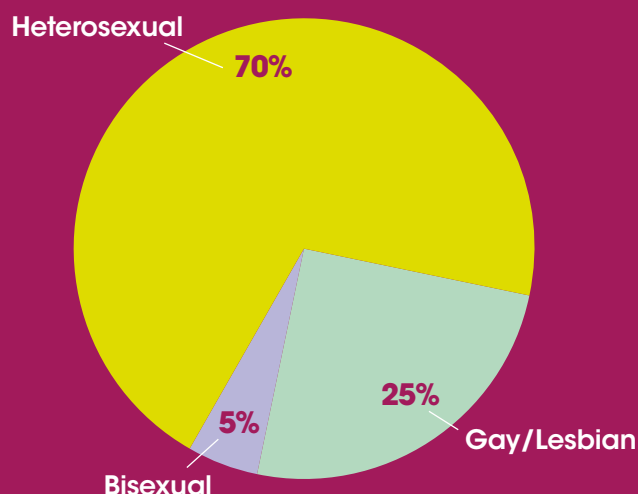


## Gender



## Sexuality

\*Data Not Collected for Long COVID





# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and Action Plan

Following on from last year's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report, we now have our first EDI Strategy and Action Plan. It sets out Brigstowe's commitment, vision and ambition to do more to create an inclusive society and workplace and outlines the commitments we are making over the next three years. This strategy is a 'live' document that can be adapted in line with the changing needs of our beneficiaries, volunteers, and the external environment.



For the full version of our EDI Strategy and Action Plan along with our EDI Policy, please scan this QR code or visit <https://www.brigstowe.org/about/our-values/>



YEAR 1 – 2023/24	YEAR 2 – 2024/25	YEAR 3 – 2025/26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch the strategy and action plan within our networks and partnerships</li> <li>• Review internal data and that of our clinic partners to identify gaps in representation</li> <li>• Develop targets and include them in the business plan</li> <li>• Appoint staff and board champions</li> <li>• Review our recruitment process, ensuring we are incorporating positive action measures</li> <li>• Develop a plan for improving board diversity</li> <li>• Develop a calendar of cultural events to celebrate diversity</li> <li>• Regularly include EDI statements in communications</li> <li>• Consider how EDI is kept live through specialist training, our networks, and close partnership working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on our progress and publish a summary in our annual report</li> <li>• Consider appointing additional champions for protected characteristics</li> <li>• Review the use of Equality Impact Assessments in our networks and other organisations and develop our own</li> <li>• Review all policies</li> <li>• Improve our recruitment process, and if necessary, appoint a partner to help increase applications from underrepresented people</li> <li>• Consider introducing maximum terms for trustees</li> <li>• Review our publicity materials</li> <li>• Develop and communicate a disability policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and revise strategy, targets and action plan</li> <li>• Evaluate the effectiveness of champions</li> <li>• Consider reviewing some policies annually through an EDI lens</li> <li>• Seek feedback from applicants on the recruitment process</li> <li>• Consider recruiting trustees living with other long-term health conditions</li> <li>• Amend and update the calendar of cultural events</li> <li>• 100% of events to be fully accessible</li> </ul>

## Advice and Support Service

Our Advice and Support Service can help with a range of matters from finances to housing to employment. The service can be accessed by anyone living with or affected by HIV as many times as they need. We offer a person-centred service, which can range from one-off advice to regular meetings for those who need ongoing support. We aim to improve the quality of life and independence of those we assist.



Number of service users: 156

Positive housing outcomes:

62

cases



Positive financial outcomes:

118

cases



Positive outcomes accessing rights and entitlements:

169

cases



Increased access to work:

11

cases



Obtained a total of

£79,145

through welfare benefits and grants

*"If there was no Brigstowe, I don't know what I would have done, they're there to support people."*

*"She (support worker) worked a lot with me, very helpful and understanding. 10/10. I got the carpet down she was helping with, and my house never had gas or electricity, but she helped. It meant I had a working oven!"*

*"Before (accessing Brigstowe), I was sick and tried to apply for benefits and I was refused. Since my worker's support, I'm getting all the support I need which to me is a very good service."*

”

## Engagement Support Service

The Engagement Support Service launched in January 2022. The 2022 pilot was funded by the Rank Foundation and Bristol City Council, and the service has now moved into its second year with funding generously provided by Gilead and Bristol City Council Public Health.



Michael Engagement Support Worker

### Engagement

25+

individuals

To date, the rate of engagement with clients is well above our objective of 25 individuals in the year ending December 2023.

- There have been 34 referrals into service since it launched in January 2022
- Of these, 10 were referred between January and March 2023, but a total of 19 have engaged within the same period. This is due to longer than expected periods before first contact is established, but good progress made thereafter

16

clients have become undetectable

### Outcomes U=U (Undetectable = Untransmittable): Viral Load

More importantly, our primary objective of helping 60% of clients achieve an undetectable viral load is proving successful:

- Since the launch of the service in January 2022, at least 16 clients have become undetectable
- Of those, 9 were achieved between January and March 2023

### Attendance

Nearly ALL clients have shown considerable improvements in attendance

## Reports of Improved Wellbeing

A young, single mother came to the service reporting a debilitating daily phobia of taking her HIV medication, resulting in 2 hours per day typically spent staring at her tablets and feeling nauseous at the thought of taking them. A rare case of eligibility for injectable treatment has resulted in successful bi-monthly engagement and "worrying so little about my meds that I often forget I am even on them."

An older gay man from a low-income upbringing as the eldest of five finally overcame a lifetime's habit of putting other's welfare and dietary needs over his own, making positive weight gains, alleviating the pressures of being a carer, re-engaging with the clinic and taking his HIV medication after a gap of three years.

A young man with diagnosed ADHD, anxiety issues and alcohol misuse probably set our new record for the fastest conversion to undetectable and largest overall drop in viral load copies after restarting a meds following a four-year absence.

## Migrant and Asylum Support Service

This is a specialist service for individuals living with HIV who are seeking asylum, experiencing immigration issues, or have been trafficked. We offer a safe, confidential, and supportive space and ongoing emotional and practical support.

Clients worked with: **22**



### Outcomes

**22**  
clients

- 4** clients were granted leave as a result of referring them to solicitors, helping to gather evidence for their cases, and contacting MPs to expedite cases
- 15** clients were supported in accessing education, volunteering, or employment
- 19** clients saw a reduction in poverty

*"I feel sad that you are closing my file, but sad in a good way. I will never be able to thank you enough for everything that you did for me, and I will never forget you. The job that you guys do is life-changing, I went from a scared immigrant with no hope to a confident person with a future."*

”

## Positive Voices

This service encompasses a range of different programmes all designed and delivered with people living with HIV to help and support other people living with HIV. Learning to live with HIV can be difficult and even overwhelming at times. It can help to speak to someone who has been in the same position and experienced similar challenges. With the COVID-19 pandemic still having an undeniable impact during this reporting year, we are proud with what we have still been able to achieve. A huge thank you to all of our volunteer Peer Mentors for being so understanding and adaptable whilst maintaining their unwavering passion and dedication to supporting people living with HIV.

positive  
voices



## One-to-One Peer Mentoring

Our One-To-One Peer Mentoring Service enables individuals to meet regularly with a mentor who is living well with HIV. They can share experiences, provide emotional support, and discuss coping strategies in a safe and confidential space.

This year was especially exciting as we were able to recommence Clinic Peer Support at the HIV Clinic in Southmead Hospital. This service involves a peer mentor being present in a private room at the HIV Clinic offering peer support and taking referrals for Brigstowe and the Terrence Higgins Trust. We have a fortnightly presence and are working closely with the volunteers and clinicians to maximise referrals.



9

mentors

4

senior  
mentors

3

HIV Clinic  
mentors

### Outcomes

**17** mentees fully completed the mentoring programme

Nearly **50%** of clinic sessions attended resulted in a referral

*"My ability to manage living well with HIV changed because I now know there is life after HIV. I used to be someone who skips medicines, and I was always sick, but now I'm happy and everything is going well."*

– Peer Mentee

”

## All In Peer Support Group

All In is our HIV Peer Support Group run in partnership with the Terrence Higgins Trust.

Following a consultation with our clients and volunteers, we implemented a series of changes to increase engagement with our All In programme. We are really happy to say that the take-up and attendance for these sessions have been excellent.



4

social  
events

2

HIV-focused  
sessions

67

attendees

*"I was so glad to come on the trip. For me, this is an incredible opportunity to continue my social life in a new country."*

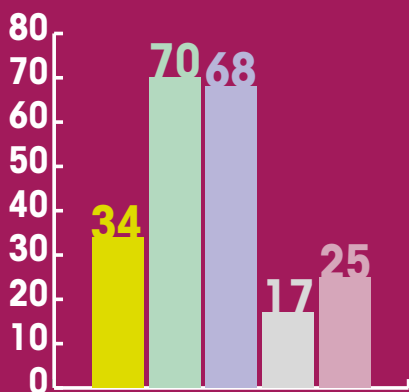
– Social Event Attendee

*"I understand much more about U=U and am a lot more confident in this. I have shared this information with others, and this feels good."*

– HIV-Focused Session Attendee

”

## Peer Support Self-Reported Outcomes (One-to-One Peer Mentoring and All In Peer Support Group)



- 34** people reported an increase in confidence and self-esteem
- 70** people reported an improvement in their mood
- 68** people reported an increase in forming close supportive relationships and a reduction in isolation
- 17** people reported an increase in confidence in sharing their HIV status
- 25** people reported an increase in understanding of HIV and related issues

## HIV Awareness Training

HIV-related stigma is one of the main challenges facing people living with HIV. This training busts myths, dispels fear, and educates participants so people living with HIV can live in a world that doesn't discriminate.

The training was delivered either digitally or face-to-face this reporting year. The delivery of digital training has been very successful, and all training has been well received. Sessions continue to be delivered with a Positive Speaker sharing their experiences of living with HIV.

**12**  
sessions  
delivered

### Outcomes

**94%** of attendees reported an increase in knowledge on how to get an HIV test

**88%** of attendees reported an increase in knowledge and understanding of HIV issues

**88%** of attendees reported a positive change in attitude around HIV issues

*"I will feedback to colleagues that this training is essential in Primary Care and the importance of being more conscious in phrasing and working around HIV."*

– HIV Awareness Training Participant

*"I am more aware of language and how to challenge other people's negative language and stigma. It really helped hearing real-life experiences rather than just facts and textbooks."*

– HIV Awareness Training Participant

”

## Common Ambition Bristol

Common Ambition Bristol (CAB) is a three-year community-powered project led by Brístowe and the African Voices Forum (AVF), working in partnership with Unity Sexual Health, Bristol City Council and the University of Bristol (UoB) to improve HIV and sexual health services for people of African and Caribbean heritage in Bristol.



### Community Testing Service

We launched Bristol's only walk-in HIV and STI testing service dedicated to African and Caribbean heritage populations at Charlotte Keel Medical Centre in April 2022.

*"If this clinic wasn't here, I wouldn't access services at all."*

– Clinic Attendee

”

### Outreach Work and Awareness-Raising

We implemented an outreach programme with 12 black-owned businesses, including barbers and community markets, with free provision of condoms and oral self-test kits, awareness raising, education, and myth-busting. So far, over 4,000 condoms have been distributed. We have hosted awareness-raising stalls at over 20 community events, including Life2020, Afrofest and the Black Business Showcase, and we have had multiple appearances on the radio, including Ujima, BCFM, BBC Bristol and BBC 1XTRA.



### CAB Talk! Test! Protect! Film

'Talk! Test! Protect!' is a short film that we launched in October 2022 that was written by, filmed with, and produced by the community. The film aims to bust myths about HIV and sexual health. It stars members of the Common Ambition Team along with local actors and community members. We held an event called 'Cinema Jam' in collaboration with local community organisation DET to launch the film; the event increased clinic attendance by 300% that month!

You can watch the film on our website at [www.commonambitionbristol.org.uk/videos](http://www.commonambitionbristol.org.uk/videos).

*"So proud of the work Aisha and her team are doing, the rest of the sector have to see the change it is having, and the impact will be felt for a long time."*

– Dr Cindy Farmer, Unity Sexual Health

”



Stay updated with all of our news by following us on socials or visiting the website via the QR code or at [www.commonambitionbristol.org](http://www.commonambitionbristol.org).

## Fundraising and Campaigns



2022-23 was another great year for fundraising. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the individuals and organisations who have donated, raised funds, and volunteered to help us achieve this phenomenal total, which will help us to continue to meet the needs of people living with HIV and other long-term health conditions.



## World AIDS Day 2022

**1**  
headline  
sponsor

Bristol Health Partners



**6**  
events



**2**  
community  
fundraisers

Over £4,000 raised, a huge thank you to Don't Tell Your Mother and the Queenshilling for your amazing support

**2**  
city  
takeovers

2 community choirs raised over £1,000 at Broadmead shopping centre and Temple Meads station



We would like to pay tribute to all the individuals who had the courage to share their personal experiences during our 2022 World AIDS Day campaign.



## Fast-Track Cities Bristol Initiative

We are now in Year 3 of our action plan for Fast-Track Cities (FTC) Bristol. FTC is a global initiative to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030. By being a Fast-Track City, Bristol commits to delivering on the following:

- Work to exceed the UNAIDS 95:95:95 HIV targets:



**95%** of people living with HIV knowing their status

**95%** of people with diagnosed HIV on treatment

**95%** of people on treatment with suppressed viral loads (undetectable)

- End new HIV infections in the city
- End HIV-related stigma and discrimination: Zero Stigma
- End preventable deaths from HIV-related causes
- Work to improve the health, quality of life and well-being of people living with HIV in the city

## Bristol is Currently Achieving:

**95%** of people living with HIV knowing their status

**99%** of people with diagnosed HIV on treatment

**98%** of people on treatment with suppressed viral loads (undetectable)

## Fast-Track City Bristol Tackling Stigma Work Group Achievements in Year 3:

- Successful launch of the first public U=U (Undetectable = Untransmittable) campaign
- Partnered with Bristol City Council's Adult Social Care Team to deliver three HIV Awareness training sessions to home care agencies
- Partnered with BNSSG Training Hub to deliver two HIV Awareness training sessions
- Partnered with Avon & Somerset Police to produce a mandatory e-learning module
- Designed a Bristol HIV Knowledge and Attitudes Survey and had two HIV-related questions included in the Bristol-wide Quality of Life Survey



## Bristol's First U=U Campaign

This year saw the very first U=U public campaign in Bristol. Billboards covered the city from Bedminster to Church Road to Easton to Stokes Croft and Gloucester Road; there weren't many areas where you could not see one. In total, there were 33 external billboard sites and 100 posters in indoor venues.

Alongside this, we also had U=U messaging displayed at all bus stops.



## The Peer Partnership

The Peer Partnership launched in November 2020 with the goal of taking the model of peer support that we have used for HIV since 2014 and applying it to other long-term health conditions and protected characteristics. Over the past year, we have undertaken new service delivery, consultancy work and training.



## The Peer Partnership - Type 2 Diabetes Peer Mentoring

Our type 2 diabetes pilot ended in June 2023. This program saw peer mentors meet with individuals to share their experiences of living with the condition. The mentors provide mentees with the right information and support to help them learn more about type 2 diabetes and live well. Sessions have continued to be delivered with a blended approach of both digital and face-to-face. This year, in partnership with Sirona care & health, our peer mentors have been present at the course 'Living with Diabetes', delivered by Sirona care & health for people diagnosed with type 2 diabetes within the last 18 months. As part of the curriculum, our mentors shared their lived experience and provided support to the attendees.



### Outcomes

**71%** of mentees reported an increased ability to maintain lifestyle changes

**76%** of mentees reported an increase in their knowledge of how to prevent problems with their health

**95%** of mentees reported increased confidence in being able to manage their diabetes

*"My knowledge and understanding of diabetes, health and diet have increased significantly. I am better equipped to make decisions about food, which I wasn't, prior to having a mentor."*

– Mentee

*"Before the mentoring, I ate what I wanted, sugar and everything. [The mentor] has given me guidance on what to eat and what not to eat. I have lost 20kg through walking, being active and eating well. I take no sugar in tea or coffee now. I am aware that I am young, I have a long time to live with diabetes, and now I really understand it. The mentoring has also really helped me with my mental health. I have been isolated, and [the mentor] has helped me get out and into the community."*

– Mentee

”

## The Peer Partnership – Long COVID Peer Mentoring

Our Long COVID Peer Support Pilot started in November 2021 and ended in April 2023. It supported participants to accept their current circumstances and improve their knowledge, confidence, and ability to manage the condition independently through peer support workshops and structured peer support groups in partnership with Sirona care & health.

Sirona  
care & health

120

participants

7

Peer Facilitator  
volunteers

12

workshops  
delivered

7

support groups  
delivered

(each group consisted  
of 6 sessions)

### Outcomes

Workshops

**94%** found them useful in helping them understand their condition,

with **80%** saying they experienced considerable improvement in their knowledge of long COVID

**100%** would recommend the workshops to others in a similar situation

Support Groups

**84%** of participants saw an increase in their health-related quality of life following intervention,

with **58%** seeing an increase of over **10%**

*"What I've taken from this session is that I am not isolated, that others have had their lives impacted, and that good people are helping us."*

– Long COVID Workshop Attendee

”

## The Peer Partnership – Consultancy

Step-Together Volunteering – We have supported the development of peer support for female ex-offenders in Manchester, including four days of consultancy and outside supervision for their peer support coordinator. Step Together was very happy with the service.

*"The Peer Mentoring training delivered to our staff and volunteers was very well received, as well as the external supervision provided to our new Peer Support Coordinator. The drafting of our Terms of Service over several meetings enabled us to consider our needs every step of the way and we now have an extremely useful document to support our pilot programme, from recruitment and training through to delivery."*

– Operations Manager, Step Together Volunteering



University of Bristol (UoB) – We began our consultancy contract with UoB in June 2022 to provide students who identify as trans or non-binary with one-to-one peer support at the university. We completed this consultancy contract with the University at the beginning of the academic year in September 2022 and this service is now running for students.

Homerton CoRe Services – We have supported NHS services in Hackney to implement our long COVID peer support model into their long COVID clinical services. As well as the successful translation of our model into these services, we have been nominated for an award for Best Place-Based Partnership and Integrated Care Award in the HSJ Awards 2023.

Bristol After Stroke – We started to support Bristol After Stroke to implement peer support for stroke survivors in July 2023. This program will translate our type 2 diabetes one-to-one support model into a model for people living with the impacts of having experienced a stroke. It will be going live in October 2023.

## The Peer Partnership – Training

Core Peer Mentor Training – The Peer Partnership has provided seven core trainings within Brigstowe and three external core trainings with Step Together, Homerton Long COVID Clinic, and the University of Bristol. We also have two further trainings booked for Autumn 2023. A total of 50 days has been spent organising and delivering training.

External Workshops – We have developed a range of training workshops for professionals and begun to deliver them. These include:



### How to Design Peer Support



Delivered three times since September 2022 with participants from 25 organisations



### Boundaries in the VCSE Workplace



Delivered five times since April 2023 – two sold-out Eventbrite sessions and three organisation-specific trainings, three further bookings have been made



100% of participants would recommend the training to others in a similar role

**We would like to take this opportunity to thank our funders**



**brigstowe<sup>+</sup>**  
positive change together

Brigstowe, Easton Community Centre,  
Kilburn Street, Bristol, BS5 6AW

**Tel:** 0117 9555038

**Web:** [www.brigstowe.org](http://www.brigstowe.org)

**Email:** [info@brigstowe.org](mailto:info@brigstowe.org)

**Twitter:** @brigstoweinfo

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/brigstowe](http://www.facebook.com/brigstowe)

Registered Company No: 3107835

Registered Charity No: 1049945



## Become a Friend of Brigstowe

Everyone needs friends and we at Brigstowe are no different.

**Just £10 a month (the price of a cup of coffee a week) could be used to provide transport costs to one of our most destitute clients to access community services.**

To donate please visit:

**[www.brigstowe.org/donate](http://www.brigstowe.org/donate)**

Support people living with HIV and help raise awareness of HIV in Bristol by making a regular monthly donation to Brigstowe.