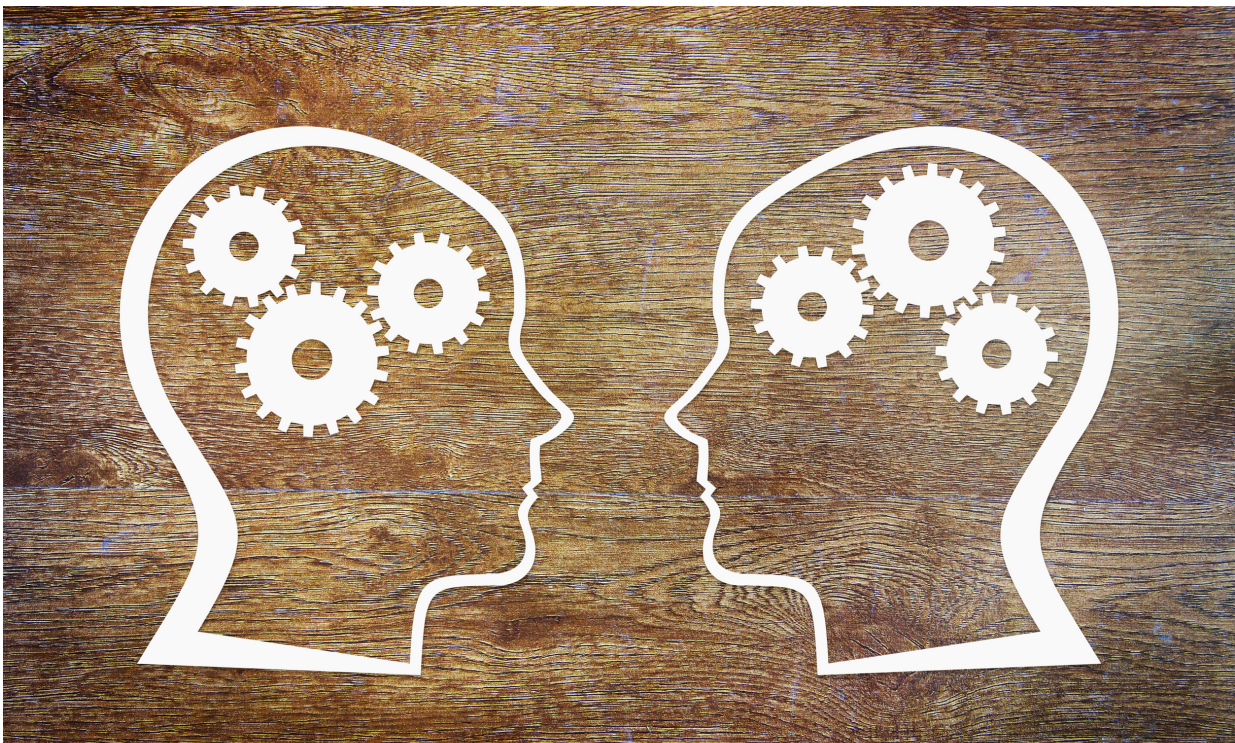




A SLICE OF PIE

PIE is all about relationships....A Psychologically Informed Environment is a place or service that has been purposefully designed to support the mental, emotional, relational, learning and social needs of both service users and staff.



Residents at Heather Lodge speak about their experiences during lockdown

Anxiety and depression increased in the UK as the covid-19 pandemic took hold, particularly affecting young adults, people living alone, people living in urban areas, people with lower income and those with a pre-existing mental health diagnosis. National research has shown that how we spend our time is important for our mental health and wellbeing.

Our residents have had to cope with the general stresses and lifestyle changes caused by the covid-19 pandemic that we have all been facing, but have also seen changes in terms of increased risk infection management within their living environment, a reduction in project activities and specialist





professional support outside of the project and many day centres and training which had provided social contact previously have been temporarily closed.

We asked some of our Heather Lodge residents about their experiences during lockdown:



- "I'm feeling low about it all with everything closed and nowhere to go and being stuck inside. I still go for walks outside which helps but it can be boring."*
- "I feel ok, not much has changed for me. I still go shopping and socialised a bit in the project. I can be down about it sometimes but after talking with other residents I feel better."*
- "I'm really bored waiting for things to open again and activities to start up. I would like to do movie groups again. I feel I'm drinking more and my mood has dropped.. I moved into Heather Lodge this year and have just stayed in the project since. It's pushed me back into drinking again out of boredom and I had been abstinent for a long time. It helps working with the staff and my keyworker and I do socialise with other residents in the garden."*
- "I feel good, everyone is keeping safe and it's something we all have to do. I miss visiting my family and going on holiday to Brighton to see them, but I stay in contact on the phone and face time and that's ok for now."*
- "It's OK; I just want it to be over! I still walk around London and I'm trying to keep active. It gets hard to stay happy, but it's ok."*

We discussed how we could look at ways to safely reintroduce positive activities within the project (as restrictions are eased and it is safe to do so) and what things people felt will help in terms of rebuilding wellbeing following the pandemic. These were some of the suggestions we received:

- Restarting activities fully such as movie groups, music group, breakfast club, regular outings and the communal lounge being open for everyone.*
- Making the most of the garden – getting some new seating and having a barbeque for summer, we didn't have one last year.*
- Going to see my family and friends or having my friends visit me.*
- Restarting activities I used to do every week in the community.*
- Having more regular and face to face contact with services I work with.*
- Going back to the gym – this helped with reducing my drug use before the lockdown.*



Staff support & wellbeing at work

In the last A Slice of Pie (December 20), influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, I wrote about the idea of 'safe uncertainty'. None of us can ignore the increased uncertainty we live in, so being in touch with our realities, surfing the waves of uncertainty and collectively embracing opportunities seems to be a good way forward.

Most of my work is supporting staff teams and PRHA as an organisation. Unsurprisingly an overwhelming need is how to keep going. One aspect of keeping going is reviewing, adding and adapting the range of staff supports offered and one outcome would be to support wellbeing at work.

Staff Supports

- *Employment Terms & Conditions * Supervision * Management * Training**
- *Reflective Practice * Opportunities for career progression, leadership & influencing**
- *Informal time to talk with colleagues & socials * Work wellbeing activities**
- *Employee Assistance programmes**



CO-PRODUCING

CO-DESIGNING

ENGAGING

CONSULTING

INFORMING

EDUCATING

COERCING

DOING WITH

DOING FOR

DOING TO

But then I wonder how is staff support and wellbeing at work defined? Do we travel along a co-production route? How do we know what is offered hits the spot? And I would be really interested to learn what the recipients of services would say staff need.

How do we listen to what we are told? How do we act on what we are told? If it seems impossible to implement ideas, can a step in the direction of the idea be made and still be meaningful?

This is important because research generally tells us that well supported staff are more satisfied and effective at work. So to begin I am inviting you to be clear for yourself how you define support and wellbeing and what works for you and when. A few things I have learned over the years.

Work related stress is often related to unclear roles and tasks – so not doing the job you thought you were employed to do or wanted to do or being asked to do additional tasks that aren't what you expect to do, feel skilled to do or even want to do.

Burn out is often moral injury, so being engaged in work that doesn't sit well with your values. Staff may feel unable to express strong emotions that may actually be related to working with people who are hugely discriminated against and where there can be struggles with independence, dependence and the connecting space - interdependence.



Staff support & wellbeing at work

One of the offers that isn't always available is ***coaching and mentoring***. Having focused attention on driving up one's performance through coaching or one's career development through mentoring ***can be hugely impactful and liberating***. This last year has increased my interest in what works for the majority of staff and what works for minoritised groups. I am expecting choice is needed to hit the spot.

Dr Ché Rosebert
Clinical Psychologist

We welcome Susan Smith, Contract Manager Daniel Gilbert House (DGH)



enduring mental health, specialist women's services and young people, but my favourite group are adults with complex needs. I feel society has let these people down continually throughout their lives and they are owed the chance to get the help and support they need to start improving their quality of life.

I enjoy seeing the positive change that good services can bring to people, and watching staff develop their skills over time. Good support workers change people's lives, they are dedicated and special people who give so much of themselves to the role, I'm proud to be part of a management team that enables them to do this.

What would you like to do more of in your role?

I would like to be able to put more resources into developing my staff and services and to be able to take a more strategic role in working with partners to improve provision across the board.

Ten years of austerity, plus nearly a year of Covid have made this difficult and left everyone feeling stretched. government just how important our role is and encourage them to look at funding over the next few years.

I hope that the experience of the pandemic, and the recognition of what frontline staff have endured and delivered throughout, alongside the cost supporting people in the community, may persuade the government just how important our role is and

How long have you worked in the housing homelessness sector and what do you enjoy most about your work?

My first job in the sector was as a receptionist in the old Dock Street Hostel when I was about 20, that was over 30 years ago and I've been in supported housing ever since.

I've worked with a range of client groups including street drinkers



encourage them to look at the funding over the next few years.

I enjoy working with our statutory

and voluntary partners across the Borough and using our shared range of knowledge and expertise to improve outcomes for service users. I like the creative side of the role, finding solutions to problems, and as my team will tell you, I know the value of a good spreadsheet!

What challenges you the most in your work?

Trying to do things without sufficient resources. I know what good service delivery looks like, and have watched funding cut back repeatedly over the years, it can be very frustrating knowing what could be achieved if we just had a little more time and money to deliver it.

How does PRHA's work developing psychologically informed environments relate to your role?

I think PIE is the single most important development in the sector in decades. It gives staff a structured framework in which to understand the issues presented by service users, and how to support them to achieve their goals and potential, and to improve their quality of life.

The concept of co-production and shared ownership of services and the move away from more traditional hierarchical / punitive approaches leads to much more effective, creative and dynamic service delivery and support.

PIE has to be embedded across the whole organisation to be effective and should impact on the way we treat colleagues and staff as much as it does on service users. It enables all concerned to get the best from people by recognising their unique value and contribution and focusing on their strengths.

All decisions and all aspects of my role are based on a PIE framework and what the impact of my actions will be on the people I am responsible for.

While I obviously have to consider things like budgets, contract requirements, compliance etc., I do this in order to meet the needs of the vulnerable people we work with, and to enable frontline staff to do their jobs more effectively.

PIE matters because people matter.





Wellbeing Wednesday

As part of our aim to support you during these difficult times, we launched **'Wellbeing Wednesday'** every week.

We are looking for ideas that you think would be beneficial to promote staff wellbeing in future sessions. If you know some already, do email me:

sMcPhillips@prha.net

Stewart McPhillips
Business Development Manager



Pielink is a practice exchange network for homelessness/resettlement and others wishing to develop Psychologically Informed Environments –PIEs.

PieLink aims to develop a community of knowledge and a community or practice; to provide information, inspiration, and a forum for discussion and exchange.

Search: <http://pielink.net/> to view and join.

More information can also be found on the G Drive under PRHA Referencing Folder:

G:\PRHA Reference.



We are always looking for feedback, comments, suggestions, articles and photos for the Bulletin.

Please email:

Jaydee Anciro

Specialist Services Team Manager

with your contributions at:

janciro@prha.net